

# **Ethiopian Village Studies II**

(Designed and edited by Philippa Bevan, Alula Pankhurst and Tom Lavers)

## **Turufe Kecheme**

***Shashemene Wereda***

**East Shewa Zone**

**Oromia Region**

researched by

**Yohannes Gezahegn and Bizuayehu Ayele (2005)**

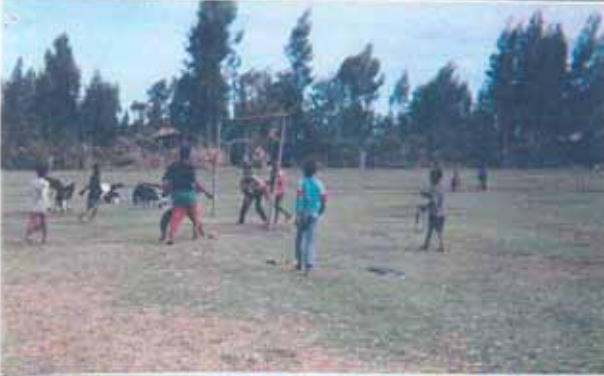
and

**Getachew Fulle and Mesfin Tadesse (1996)**

**February 2006**

**One of a series of six studies edited and produced by the Ethiopia Wellbeing in Developing Countries Research Programme, based at the University of Bath, UK, and financed by the Economics and Social Research Council, UK. The rural Village Studies II are updates of four of the 15 Village Studies I published in 1996 (Dinki, Korodegaga, Turufe Kecheme and Yetmen). The two Urban Studies I cover new sites in Addis Ababa and Shashemene.**

**This village study is dedicated to the memory of the late Getachew Fulle who researched and wrote most of the 1996 profile.**





## *Foreword*

The reports in this series are outputs from the Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) research programme organized and coordinated by the University of Bath, UK and financed by the Economic and Social Research Council, UK, between 2002 and 2007. Ethiopia is one of the four countries selected for the research<sup>1</sup>. The aim of the programme is to develop a conceptual and methodological framework for studying the social and cultural construction of wellbeing in developing country contexts, and thereby investigate linkages between quality of life, power and poverty in order to contribute to improving policy and practice.

WeD Ethiopia selected twenty rural and two urban sites for its WIDE<sup>2</sup> research. Community profiles for fifteen of the rural sites had been produced in 1995 and 1996 (WIDE1)<sup>3</sup> and five new sites were added in 2003, when further community level research was undertaken in the twenty sites (WIDE2), involving exploratory protocol-guided research during one month in July and August 2003 by teams composed of one female and one male researcher in each site.

Six sites were selected for the DEEP<sup>4</sup> research, including four of the rural sites and both urban sites.<sup>5</sup> In-depth fieldwork was carried out between July 2004 and November 2005 by teams composed of one female and one male researcher spending about three weeks of each month in their respective sites. The four rural sites were chosen from the two largest regions: Oromia and Amhara. In each Region one of the selected sites was more remote (Korodegaga in Oromia and Dinki in Amhara), and the other closer to market and state influences (Turufe Kecheme in Oromia and Yetmen in Amhara). The urban sites, Kolfe in the capital city, Addis Ababa, and Arada in Kebele 08/09 of Shashemene, a business city in the south, were selected on the basis of the research team's interests in market areas, community-based organisations and urban-rural linkages. One of the rural sites, Turufe Kecheme, is close to Shashemene town.

Profiles are available for the following six sites:

### *Rural sites:*

**Dinki**, Ankober *Wereda*, North Shewa Zone, Amhara Region

**Korodegaga**, Dodota-Sire *Wereda*, Arssi Zone, Oromia Region

**Turufe Kecheme**, Shashemene *Wereda*, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region

**Yetmen**, Enemay *Wereda*, East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region

### *Urban sites:*

**Arada**, *Kebele* 08/09, Shashemene, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region.

**Kolfe**, *Kebele* 10/11, Kolfe-Keranio *Kifle Ketema*, Addis Ababa City Administration.

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<sup>1</sup> The other three countries are Bangladesh, Peru and Thailand.

<sup>2</sup> Wellbeing and Illbeing Dynamics in Ethiopia.

<sup>3</sup> The 15 Village Studies were produced by the Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford, UK and the Department of Sociology, Addis Ababa University and financed by the UK Overseas Development Administration and can be obtained from the web-site ([www.csae.ox.ac.uk](http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk))

<sup>4</sup> In-Depth Exploration of Ethiopian Poverty.

<sup>5</sup> Likewise the other countries in the WeD project selected a similar number of urban and rural sites.

The (DEEP) research involved a Resource and Needs survey with 250 households followed by in-depth process research involving monthly community and household diaries with households differentiated by gender, wealth and size, life histories of children, adults and old people, and modules exploring thematic research topics including community institutions, elites and destitution, poverty dynamics, migration, intergeneration relations, collective action, and a quality of life survey. A research database has been produced including data at individual, household and community levels which is being used to produce a book and research papers.

The rural village studies were produced starting with the 1996 community profiles, which were constructed from a background paper based on secondary sources, rapid assessment material collected by site managers and enumerators involved in the three rounds of a household economic survey (the ERHS<sup>6</sup>), a field visit during one month by an anthropology student, a questionnaire completed by the enumerators at the end of the household survey and a community economic survey administered by the site managers.

The 1996 profiles were updated, and revised with a focus on the major research interests and approaches of the WeD programme. The new versions are largely the product of insights from the researchers who carried out intensive fieldwork in the sites over 16 months from mid 2004 to late 2005.

Many people participated in the construction of the profiles, the most important being the people in the villages who answered questions, raised issues we had not thought of and provided hospitality to our fieldworkers. The site managers, enumerators, and anthropologists involved in 1995 played a vital role. First drafts of the 1996 profiles were constructed by Etalem Melaku-Tjirongo and Joanne Moores, and backup in terms of translating, editing, word processing and map-making and was provided by Tina Barnard, Ziggy Bevan, Girma Getahun, Haile Redai, Sarah Smith, and Ruth Tadesse. Economist colleagues at Oxford (Shukri Ahmed, Stefan Dercon and Pramila Krishnan) and Addis Ababa (particularly Bereket Kebede, Getinet Astatke, and Mekonnen Tadesse) were influential in shaping our ideas, and the administration in the Economics Department at Addis Ababa University was extremely supportive.

The 2004-2006 research design benefited from the inter-disciplinary discussions and debates of the WeD research group in Bath, including anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists, and the research teams from Bangladesh, Thailand and Peru. A number of the core Bath team provided intellectual stimulus, advice and support, and several members collaborated in various aspects of the research design and/or visited Ethiopia including Allister McGregor, the Director of the Project, Ian Gough, Sarah White, Suzy Skevington, Bereket Kebede, Laura Camfield, Susan Johnson, Julie Newton, Andy McKay, Catherine Dom, Virginia Williamson, and Anne Yates. Logistical support was provided by Becky Lockley, Jane French, Diana Duckling, Emer Brangan, Teresa King, Mark Ellison and Jun Zhang.

The Project benefited from discussions and collaborations with John Hoddinott, from the International Food Policy Research Institute, Marleen Dekker from the Free University in Amsterdam, Luc Christiaensen and Caterina Ruggeri-Laderch from the World Bank, Pramila Krishnan from Cambridge University, Stefan Dercon from Oxford University, Charles Schaefer from Valparaiso University, Nuala O'Brien and Kevin Kelly from Development Cooperation Ireland, Simon Winetraube from the British

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<sup>6</sup> The Ethiopian Rural Household Survey involves a panel survey carried out by the Economics Department of Addis Ababa University in collaboration with the Oxford Centre for the Study of African Economies in 1994 and the International Food Policy Institute in 2004.

Council and Claudia Fumo and Laure Beaufiles from the UK Department for International Development. A local NGO, PADET, and the Learning Centre provided office space for the project.

In Ethiopia the main members involved in the research design and management were Feleke Tadele, Yisak Tafere, Bethlehem Tekola, Solomon Tesfay, Ashebir Desalegn, and Theodros Wolde Giorgis. Members of Addis Ababa University Department of Sociology who took part in the project at various stages included Ayalew Gebre, Melese Getu, Derese Getachew and Asrat Ayalew (the last two of whom went for graduate studies to Bath). The project benefited from support from the Economics Department of Addis Ababa University particularly in carrying out the Resource and Needs Survey. The project also benefited from advice from a network of advisors from various disciplines who are too numerous to mention.

The following researchers took part in the 2004-2006 research in the six sites, although most of the drafting of the rural profiles was carried out by one female and one male researcher, generally those who spent longest in the site, whose names are on the front of the profiles and are italicised in the list below. The urban profiles involved more researchers, with greater input from the field coordinator and editors.

**Arada:** Abebech Belayneh, Abraham Asha, Bethlehem Tekola, Demissie Gudisa, Habtamu Demille, Mahder Tesfu and Rahwa Mussie

**Dinki:** *Damtew Yirgu, Kiros Berhanu and Tsega Melesse*

**Kolfe:** Bethlehem Tekola, Demiye Tefalet, Eyob Tiemelisan, Rahwa Mussie, Tigist Tefera and Yisak Tafere

**Korodegaga:** *Aster Shibeshi, Tsega Melesse and Workneh Abebe*

**Turufe Kecheme:** *Bizuayehu Ayele, Demissie Gudisa, Tsega Melesse and Yohannes Gezahegn*

**Yetmen:** *Agazi Tiemelisan, Asham Asazenew, Hiwot Atfraw, Kiros Berhanu, Leleena Aklilu and Lewoyehu Ayele.*

Most of the editing, standardisation, formatting, improvement of the maps, photographs, seasonal calendars etc was carried out by Tom Lavers.

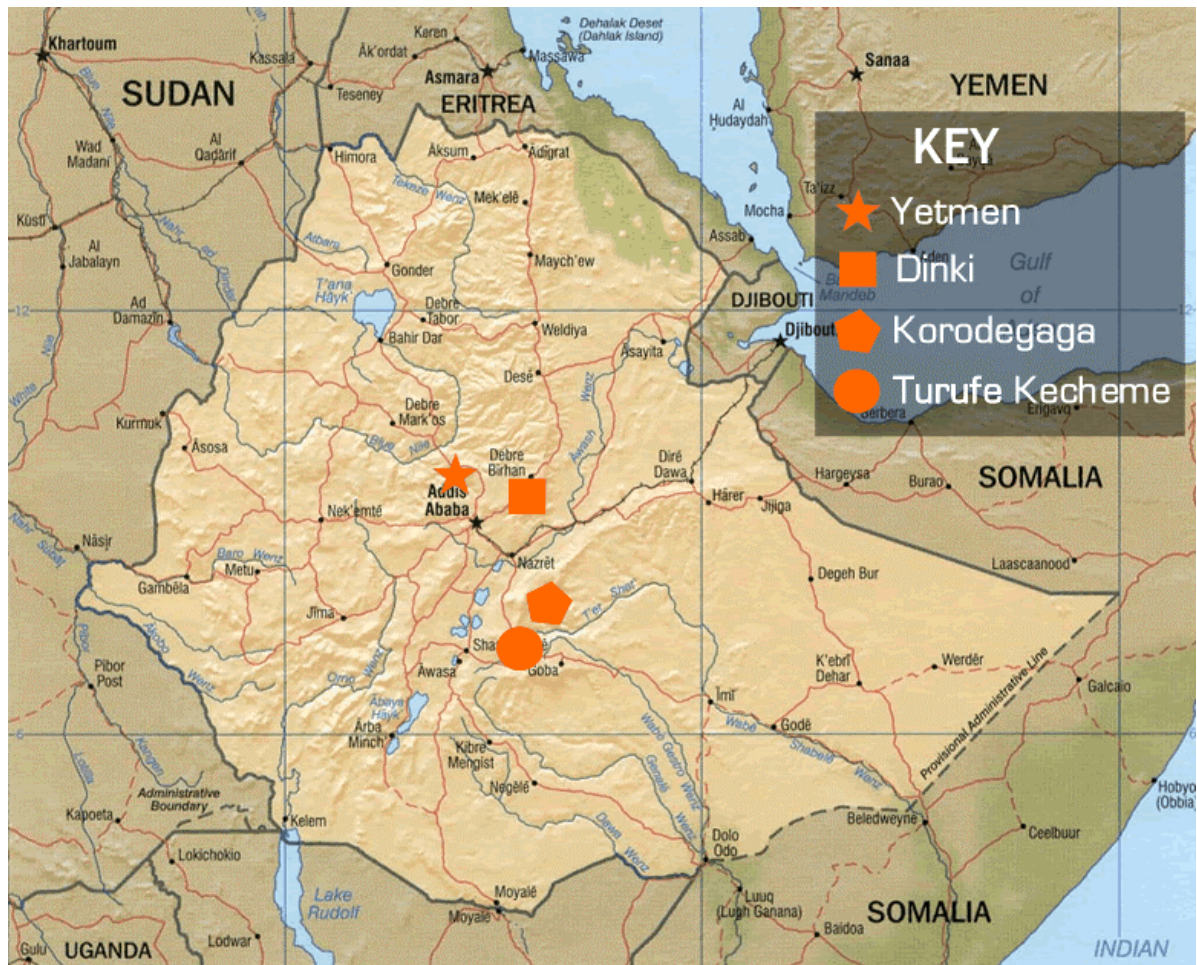
Further information about the Wed-Ethiopia project can be obtained from the web-site: [www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org). The Bath University WeD website [www.welldev.org.uk](http://www.welldev.org.uk) provides overall information about the project worldwide.

Further information can also be obtained from:

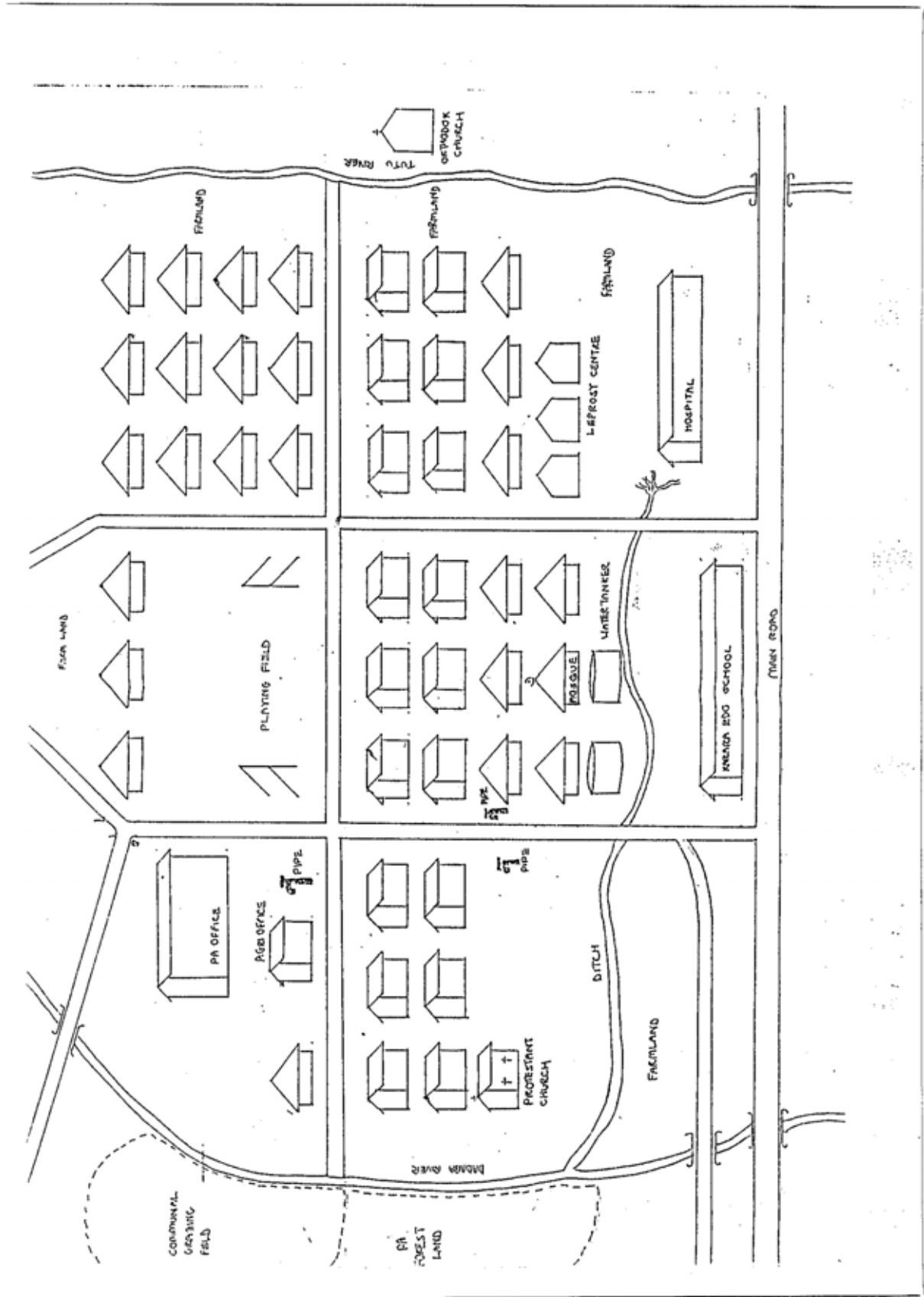
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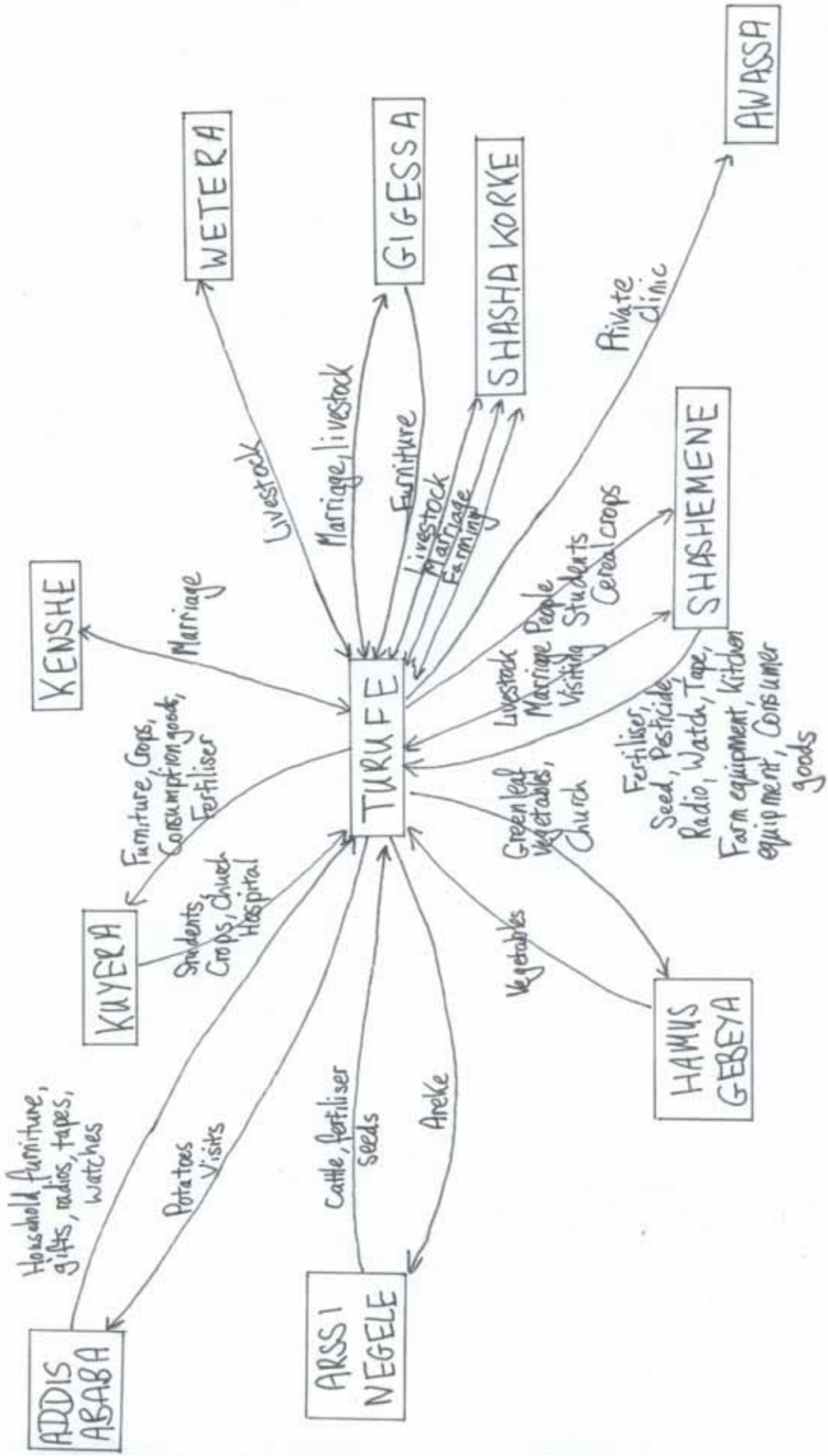
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## Ethiopian Village Studies II Research Sites



Four Major WeD Research Sites in Ethiopia





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## 1. Locating the Site in Time and Place

### *Geography and Population*

Turufe-Wetera-Elemo is a *kebele*<sup>7</sup> located in Shashemene *wereda* in the Eastern Shewa Zone of Oromia Region. Before 2002, it included two villages, Turufe and Wetera, but according to the rearrangement of 2002, the *kebele* now consists of three villages, which have been renamed as Turufe Kecheme, Wetera Sake and Abyu Elemo. Different ethnic groups live in the three villages. The centre of the *kebele* is at Turufe, although sometimes the *kebele* court (*fird shengo*) is held at Wetera.

The division of the village administration into *cell*, *gere* and *gott* is a recent development.

*Cell*: has 10 members with one representative

*Gere*: holds 3 *cell*. That means *Gere* has 30 members, with 5 representatives

*Gott*: holds 10 *gere*. That means *Got* has 300 members, with 5 representatives

With regard to settlement, there is a mix of different ethnic groups. But most Tigrayans live to the southern part of the village. Other people sometimes call that area 'Tigrayan's village'.

The *kebele* is about 12.5 km north-east of the town of Shashemene (Alelu) in the area of the Rift Valley Lakes of Zwai, Langano, Abiyata and Shala. It is situated at about 2,000m and is in a plain area with fertile soil suitable for agriculture. In the vicinity there are large forests under the protection of the government and three rivers, one of which passes through the *kebele*.

In 1996, there were 449 households in Turufe Kecheme, 410 of whom were male-headed and 39 female-headed. The total population was estimated to be 2,674. Now, there are about 500 households. Around 80 are female-headed and the rest are male-headed. The number of landless is not known, though it is approximated to be around 30.

Many community members prefer to live at the village Turufe, which is nearer to the town, especially those who have children attending school. There are some middle and rich persons from Wetera who rent rooms or buy a residence at the village Turufe. On the other hand about 30 persons left the village Turufe in order to reside near their farm, believing that they can supervise their farm better.

### *Climate and Weather*

The *meher* rains fall between June and the middle of September. This rain irrigates the *meher* crops which are produced in December and January. The *belg* rains fall from March to the end of April and irrigate the *belg* crop which is produced in June, July and sometimes August. The coldest time in the *kebele* is in July and August and sometimes in October. The hottest time is from January (29°C) to May (31°C). During the rainy season the *kebele* is not cut off from the nearest towns (Kuyera and Shashemene). There are no problems caused by heat but some respondents remember crops, especially wheat, being destroyed by cold which reduced the quantity of the harvest.

Many community members agreed that there has been a gradual decline in the amount of rain in the last 10-15 years. However, most respondents stated that sometimes there is unexpectedly strong rain and lack

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<sup>7</sup> The term *kebele* during the Derg period referred to the lowest administrative unit and was translated as "Peasants Association". On average three former *kebele* were regrouped into one unit under the EPRDF. The new larger *kebele mestedader* with salaried leadership is translated as "*kebele* administration". Since these studies relate to both periods for simplicity we have used the term *kebele* to refer to the study community.

of rain which destroys their crop or reduces the quantity of the harvest. For example most respondents mentioned the crop failure in 1997 due to strong rain. The crop, which was ready for threshing, was destroyed due to unexpected strong rain. Sometimes there is also a shortage of rain when the seeds have been planted and farmers need to plant seeds again (at extra cost) because the seeds they planted have dried out.

Until the year 2005, there was no major change in the seasonality of the rain. But in the year 2005, the rain was strange. Unlike the previous years, there was strong rain in *Ginbot* (May), causing *wag* (pests) on the potatoes, reducing the harvest quantity. In *Sene*<sup>8</sup> and *Hamle* of 2005, there was less rain, as compared to the previous years. This caused pests on the maize farm.

### *Farm Production*

The people are primarily subsistence level agriculturalists; in 1996 they produced cereals (wheat, barley, *tef*, maize, *dagusa*, millet), pulses (horse beans), oil seeds (linseed), and vegetables (potatoes, onions). They also grew *enset*, *chat* and coffee. The main crops they produced for consumption and cash are potatoes, maize, wheat, barley and *tef*. The *kebele* supplies potatoes and maize to Addis Ababa through merchants both from Addis Ababa and around Kuyera.

In the last 10 years, the community has ceased to produce beans and peas because there was a problem of theft. Thus they are condemned to buy beans to prepare *shiro* (the staple food for most community members). *Enset* is mainly grown by those who came from the southern part of Ethiopia (Kambata, Wolayita etc) and Oromos. Locally they call it *worke*. There are only a few people who grow *chat* and coffee in their gardens. No farmers produce *dagusa* currently, this is because it takes a long time to cultivate and it needs more labour. In earlier times there were some people who produced honey. But presently there are very few (about three or four) people who produce it, and make the local drink, *tej*, or mead from it. In addition to income from sales the sediment of the mead is used as food for cattle. Off-farm activities in the *kebele* include honey production and transporting crops to markets. The villagers also go to the markets to buy or sell crops, cattle and livestock.

The youth also involve themselves in brokering, mostly in the *kiremt* season, when potatoes from the *kebele* are ready for sale. Many youths collect up to 2,000 *birr* by working as a broker between the farmers in Turufe and Wetera and the traders who transport potatoes to Addis. Many students buy clothes and educational materials from the income they generate from brokering.

Increasing numbers of housewife prepare *areke* (a local spirit) and sell it in the markets of Kuyera and Negele. There are also more than 10 drinking houses, chiefly of female-headed households. The numbers of shops in Turufe village are about six. A few young females are also involved in hair-styling (*shuruba*) to get income.

### *Infrastructure*

In Turufe there is a good road system that links Turufe to the town (Kuyera) and in the east to Kofele, and Gonde. But the road has deteriorated in the past four-five years. In 1977 and 2005 there was a widening of roads at a community level. They stopped it because of farmers' work load.

In Turufe there was a communal tap for water in the past, but it broke down and the community and

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<sup>8</sup> For details of the Ethiopian calendar see Appendix A.

most of the dwellers were forced to use river and spring water. However, there was a construction of a water pipeline for the local hospital, through the cooperation of people from Turufe under the *Iddir*. Though the pipeline is for the hospital, the administrators promised to leave the water pipe which the hospital had been using (which comes through Turufe) for the use of the village. In September 2005 the hospital started to use water from the new pipeline and left the water which comes from Wetera for Turufe. However, the former pipeline of the hospital was broken at Turufe by those whose land it passed through but who could not benefit from it. Two rich households, a former *kebele* leader (Ato Bushura Hamyu), and an agricultural office employee (Ato Bayu Bitimo) have constructed a pipeline. Other households are on the way to an agreement with the neighbourhood to contribute money in order to construct a pipeline.

There is a shortage of tap water. The pipeline is found around the mosque, which is far from most people. Most of the time they use river water for cooking, washing etc. But all of them try to get clean (tap) water for drinking.

There is no electricity or grain mill in the site. Previously there was a water mill around the *kebele* office. But in 1991 the mill was damaged, and now it is not functioning. In 2005 a man called Tamrat came and agreed with the community to cover half the cost of a new electric mill (25,000 *birr*) and the other half would be covered by the community. The community would get electric light. It was estimated that each household head (who volunteered to contribute to get light) has to contribute 250 *birr*. The construction of the house (for the mill) began during the month of *Hamle*. Some people contributed 125 *birr* during the month of *Nehase*, when they got good income from sale of potatoes. The other 125 *birr* will be contributed in the forthcoming harvesting time, (in *Tir/Tahsas*). The committee tried to get financial support from *Iddir*, in order to speed up the process. Some members agreed but others did not. The members who did not agree are those whose house is found around mosque. This is because they already got permission from the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPC) get light from Kuyera *kebele 01*; very few of them get light by connecting from other house. They complain that the objective of *Iddir* is to help each other when members face a crisis, mainly death. So the committee did not get financial support from the *Iddir*. The electric line is to be drawn from Gigesa. The community in Turufe attends markets at Kuyera, Negele and Alelu (Shashemene).

### *Social Structure*

In the area where Turufe Kecheme is, particularly Shashemene town, there are numerous migrants. According to farmers' estimates in 1996, the main ethnic groups in Turufe Kecheme included Oromo, representing about 80 %, Tigrayans about 10%, Amhara about 4%, Wolayita about 6%. The Kambatas also were among the important ethnic groups in the site, until they were forcefully evacuated from the area. The major religions are Islam, Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism. The Oromos are dominant in the area. They are also the only ethnic group with different clans. Weyrera, is the dominant clan in the area, though there are some Oromos from Seemanu and Gomora. The clans (*Gosa*) have lineages (*belbela*).

There were ethnic conflicts after the overthrow of Mengistu (May 1991) and many of the Kambatas were forced to leave the area by the local Oromos. Of a total of 413 households who were then members of the *kebele* 117 were Kambata before they left. Of the 87 households who were living in Turufe 53 were left and of 30 living in Wetera 27 were left. Of those who left some went back to Kambata and some were in a relief camp near Shashemene. The aid stopped last year and the Kambatas left the camp either to work as daily labourers around Shashemene, or they went back to their region. The land they left behind was occupied by landless peasants, ex-soldiers, and some peasants who needed extra land. All of these were Oromo farmers, except for one Eritrean elder; the remaining ethnic groups had no opportunity

to get the Kambata's land because it was the Oromo who drove the Kambata out in order to get land.

In 1991, not only the Kambatas, but also other migrant ethnic groups, chiefly Amharas and Tigrayans were victims. A few Amharas from Turufe and a handful at Wetera had their houses burned. Many also lost part of their land at Wetera when a certain area of the village was chosen to be grazing land. When they asked for compensation, the officials of the time “advised” them to keep quiet, otherwise they would lose the land they had. They also told them that the decision was to evacuate all the non-Oromos.

Some Tigrayan informants pointed out that they survived the crisis of 1991, because they were armed. The Oromos from as far as Kofele came to overrun and rob all the non-Oromos. But the Tigrayans claimed that they live together at a certain area which enabled them to unite. But all are in a great fear that one day the Oromos will force them out of the area. The Tigrayans and Amharas seem to identify themselves together, as both fear the Oromos. Tigrayan informants fear that now they cannot defend themselves from the Oromos, as the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government disarmed them. They said they gave up their arms because then they trusted the government. But now they consider the government betrayed them and they are at the mercy of the local people. The Oromos consider the Amharas and Tigrayans as groups who come to rob their resources. The tension was high when the time for the election of May 2005 was approaching. The non-Oromos were in great fear that the Oromos will forcefully expel them on the day after the election. However, the tension has decreased after they heard the result of election.

Oromiffa is the main language spoken. Other languages include Tigrigna, Amharic and Wolayita. Most of the people in the *kebele* also speak Amharic, there are very few who do not, mostly Oromos in Wetera.

According to local informants there are a few intermarriages between the different ethnic groups. Oromos intermarry with Amharas and Wolayitas but not with Tigrayans. Tigrayans intermarry with Amharas but not with Wolayitas; and Amharas do not intermarry with Wolayitas. The inter-marriage practice among different ethnic groups depends on religion. For example most of Amharas and Tigrayans are Orthodox Christian, whereas Wolayitas and Kambatas are Protestant. Thus there is no marriage link between these ethnic groups. The cultural marriage gift may have some impact on inter-marriage. For example *Gebera* is the known gift among Oromo society but Tigrayans do not practice it.

The major religions are Islam (about 80%), Orthodox Christianity (about 15%), and Protestantism (about 5%), but there have been no religious conflicts. There is a religious freedom in the area. Everybody can follow whatever religion s/he wants. Even within one household, different members follow different religions. But older people are not happy when their children/grandchildren change their original religion, and their relationship begins to deteriorate.

The native Arssi Oromo and the settlers from different ethnic groups in the *kebele* mix with each other socially. It is only the Tigrayans’ cattle *Iddir* that has members exclusively from one ethnic group. But other cattle *iddir* have members from two to three ethnic groups. There is one *Iddir* which only allows the followers of Orthodox Christianity to join it, it is the Baleweld *Iddir*. There was a problem in Senbete when one informant was thrown out of the *iddir* because her grandsons converted to Protestantism and the other members refused to attend the feast in her house.

All Christian members of the *kebele* celebrate the Ethiopian New Year (*Meskerem 1st*) and *Meskel* (*Meskerem 17*) festivals irrespective of ethnic differentiation and the same is true for the Muslims during *Mewlid* (the birth of Prophet Mohammed) and *Id Al Fatir* (end of Ramadan fast) festivals. The Christians are predominantly Amharas and Tigrayans while the Muslims are predominantly Arssi Oromos. The community greet each other during the festivals of the respective groups in accordance with their kinship relationship. In addition, Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter. They also greet each other during

festivals at neighbourhood irrespective of ethnic variation.

It is common among the community members to visit their relatives in times of holidays. Many married persons visit their parents and attend the feast in the house of their parents. But greeting and good wishes are delivered to all community members, chiefly the followers of the same religion.

*Ginbot Lideta* is celebrated by almost every ethnic group, as well as followers of different religions. Some households celebrate *Ginbot Lideta* (on *Ginbot 1*) at neighbourhood level (several households together) irrespective of ethnic variation.

The Tigrayans and the Amharas in the community claim that they are closer together in their customs, values and beliefs than other ethnic groups in the community. Festivals are held at different times by different religious groups. Almost all of the Oromos are Muslims, Wolayitas and Kambatas are Protestants, Tigrayans and Amharas are Orthodox Christians. Even though they celebrate festivals separately, they call each other (at neighbourhood) to eat and drink what they prepared for the festivals.

Even Tigrayans and Amharas do not celebrate festivals and *mahiber* together. It is not only religion that leads different ethnic groups not to celebrate festivals together, but also the present political conditions have an impact. Tigrayans feel superior to other ethnic groups, while the Oromos want the other groups to leave the area so they can own all the farmland. Wolayitas and Amharas consider themselves to be hardworking people and feel that it is only since they came to the area that the Oromos learned how to plough land and make themselves wealthy. Such conflicts cause the groups to dislike each other and not celebrate festivals together.

There is a stereotype that Tigrayans feel superior to other ethnic groups in economic status. From among migrants they are very successful and they are hard workers. They obtain land from the local people as sharecropping. It is thought by some that the Oromos do not work hard. They are stereotyped as wanting to wander around the village, granting their farmland to share-croppers. They want the other groups, mainly the Tigrayans, to leave the area so that they can own all farmlands. They feel that it is only since they came to the area that the other groups have been able to lead a good life.

The other ethnic groups do not like the local people. All the administrative personnel are from local ethnic group and they give priority to natives. The other groups know that the local people call them *Anasa* (minorities). They consider them as alien to the community. There is some kind of discrimination even though it is not official/open.

### *History*

The people in Turufe Kecheme are part of the Southern Oromo group of Arssi who live on both sides of the Wabishebale River, particularly in the Arssi, Bale, and Eastern Shewa zones of the Oromia region. It is believed that the Arssi Oromo may number more than 2.5 million people. They suffered from the protracted struggle between the Christian kingdom and the Oromo which climaxed in the conquest of the Emperor Menelik at the end of the nineteenth century. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries the Oromo migrated over most of Ethiopia conquering various groups already living in the areas. The Oromo have experienced inter-tribal fighting within the Arssi group and with other Oromo groups such as the Jille, Borana, and Karayu, particularly over competition for grazing lands.

After the conquest of Menelik and the intrusion of the agriculturalist Amharas in the area, the mostly pastoralist Oromos became mixed farmers and sedentary agriculturalists using ploughs. Three quarters of their fertile land was appropriated by Ethiopian Government employees, soldiers, nobles, and

ecclesiastics who were settlers. The Arssi Oromo became *gebar* (tenants) who were obliged to pay a portion of their produce to the settlers. Their communal form of landownership was replaced by a feudal type. The incorporation into Menelik's empire also ended their egalitarian *gada* political and administrative structure based on age grades. This was led by a council (*Abba Bokus*) whose membership was changed every 8 years. *Gada* religious ceremonies were allowed up to the 1930s. Traditional Oromo *gada* political institutions and occasions do not take place now in the *kebele* in the same way as they used to.

During the period of the *Derg*, however, a secret organisation was formed representing the different clans and lineages of Arssi Oromo in the area. After the EPRDF came to power this secret local organisation named "Local Leaders for Arbitration" was officially encouraged by representatives of government and the political party, the Oromo Peoples Democratic Organisation (OPDO) even though it had not yet been recognised as a legal entity.

In the period after the overthrow of the *Derg* regime, the *Gada* political institution began to develop in importance. But it seems that their importance is limited to conflict resolution, of problems related to murder. They are respected and NGOs invite them in meetings related to harmful traditions, believing that their presence has importance in implementing their plans. Sometimes cases are even returned to these elders from the *kebele* court or even from the *wereda* court for contribution. They have good acceptance among the community.

A group of elders in the community remembered the following important events:

*Rukisa* (c 1857): a period when the Oromo in the area ate horse and donkey meat as a result of famine.

*Rukisa* means hunger in Oromiffa among the Arssi. The elders claim the famine took place owing to the loss of cattle due to a disease which caused diarrhoea. During that period the Arssi Oromo were pastoralists.

In 1888 – the area was generally inhabited by lions. They still exist in the places called Chabi, Agge, and Jame.

1935 – The elders remembered the Italian occupation. The Amharas and local Arssi *balabat* (landlords) in the area fought against them.

1943 – Haile Selassie returned.

1950 – Completion of Addis Ababa to Shashemene tarred road.

1957 – Shenqute's Famine, locally known as *Rukissa Qallo* (the thin famine); took place as a result of food shortage. During this time the Arssi Oromo were predominantly pastoralists but not now.

1960 – The time of the "earthquake." This was an incident that took place around Langano: there was a massive landslide and falling down of stones from the tops of mountains in the area as a result of the earthquake.

1961 – When the day was dark. The elders remembered that this took place on Friday around 5 P.M in the afternoon and that it lasted for about 30 minutes. The elders could not remember the month in which this incident took place.

1962 – Smallpox vaccination. They mentioned that everybody was vaccinated.

1970 – Cholera vaccination. They mentioned that everybody was vaccinated.

1971 – Ethiopian Student Movement. They remembered it and the subsequent Ethiopian Student Movements and mentioned that the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution took place as a result of it.

1974 – The revolution started. The elders remember the downfall of Haile Selassie's regime and the policy of "land to the tiller", the formation of *kebele*, the Literacy Campaign, etc.

1974 – Haile Selassie was detained.

1976 – The United Development Campaign - the call for the Motherland.

1978 - The Red Terror. They remembered that at a place called Sole, near Shashemene General Hospital, 8 people were shot at one time and were buried in the same hole.

1979 – The Ethiopian Green Revolution. The elders remembered that it was one of the integral policies during the Revolution.

- 1981 – Red Star call for the Eritrean war. The elders remembered that their children were recruited for this and the other wars against Somalia's aggression in the East.
- 1982 – National Military Service declared. They remembered that many of the youths in the *kebele* participated. The elders counted 22 of the youth who were officially declared by the *Derg* to have died on the battlefield. They mentioned that 40 of them returned alive. There are still a considerable number of their sons who went for the service and have not returned without them knowing whether they are dead or alive.
- 1983 – Population and Housing Census.
- 1984 – Drought. The elders remembered this and argued that there were no human casualties in the *kebele* as a result of it but that they had lost some of their cattle. At this time they were already settled agriculturalists and those who had *Qocho* could survive the hunger.
- 1985 – Villagisation. The community in the *kebele* was reorganised into two compact villages. The area of the site on which the houses of the peasants in these two villages were built was 40x25 km. The peasants were allotted a piece of land to be ploughed far from the new villages. They were promised electricity, piped water, a clinic, etc. around the newly built villages but none of the promises was fulfilled. Now, after the overthrow of the *Derg*, many peasants have returned to their original sites and there are some who would like to.
- 1988 – Shashemene was declared an *awraja*. This was during the formation of PDRE of the *Derg*.
- 1991 – the EPRDF overthrew *Derg*. Under the present government, Shashemene was declared a *Wereda* in the Eastern Shewa Zone of Oromia Region.
- 1992 – Kambatas were evacuated from their land due to ethnic conflict
- 1991 – Formation of Protestant church ('Edo-lincho' church) in the area
- 1991 – the water mill stopped functioning due to damage
- 1993 – change of *kebele* leader
- 1995 – elections
- 1997 – crop failure due to strong rain. The crops which were ready for threshing were damaged. Rise in fertiliser prices with removal of subsidies.
- 1999 – construction of mosque
- 2000 – elections
- 2001 – the government began to give credit to farmers
- 2002 – rain shortage
- 2003 – Very few people got electric light from the mosque
- 2004 – Sudden rise in fertiliser prices
- 2005 – change of *kebele* leader
- 2005 – land measurement to identify landowners. July-January land measured; conflicts over informal contractual land-buying. When the buyer paid the land tax the seller had to pay compensation and as most could not do so the land remained with the buyer. Mostly migrants (Tigrayans, Amhara) were buying land.

The activities of the *Derg* (1974-1991) which the community claim affected their lives to a great extent are: the National Military Service, the formation of Communal Farming and Producers' Cooperatives, Villagisation and also the *Kota* System according to which they were obliged to sell a certain amount of their produce at low prices to the government. On the other hand they pointed out that the *Derg* had ended the "feudal mode of production," allotted to the peasants equal size of land on the basis of the sizes of their respective families, and established a Service Cooperative, which benefited and is still benefiting the community. The Communal Farming and the Producers' Cooperatives were disbanded by the *Derg* during its Mixed Economy declared during its final years. Since the coming of the EPRDF there has been peace and stability in the *kebele*. Currently the service cooperative buys crops from farmers and some farmers buy selected seeds and fertilisers from the cooperative (it is found at Hamus Gebeya). Before 1991 the community used to buy consumption goods like salt, sugar, coffee, soap or oil at a lower price.

After the end of the *Derg* regime *kebele* officials lost power to the elders. Then the elders gave way to a "Peace and Stability Committee" which was later replaced by the *kebele*. All these bodies have obtained office through elections. Now the *kebele* officials once again have greater power than the elders. It is these officials who can arrest, decide penalties, and fix the amount of tax for each farmer (which differs according to standard of living). The only difference from the *Derg* regime is that all officials now have to be able to speak Oromiffa. Cases of different conflicts are taken to the *kebele* court only if it is difficult to solve through the help of elders.

The only period when the people suffered from considerable hardship was during the 1984 drought which brought about famine in the *kebele*. Because they could not practice rain-fed agriculture as a result of lack of rain they suffered from a shortage of food. They lost most of their cattle during the drought due to lack of pasture and water in the fields. They did not receive relief during those periods. The people were able to survive the famine thanks to the resumption of rains beginning on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1984. The *kebele* experienced shortage of rainfall again in 2002. Within the last ten years, it was only in 1997 that almost all farmers lost their crop due to unexpected strong rain. This crop failure occurred after the farmers had collected crops from the fields and made them ready for threshing.

In 2000/01 during the Ethio-Eritrean war some men voluntarily joined the national army. Some of them returned back after the end of war as demobilised soldiers. Some Eritreans, maybe 10 to 15, were displaced from the area and deported to Eritrea during the war, and 3 or 4 still remain. One was a diary informant – the son left while the mother stayed and she got his land. There are a few women still living in the *kebele*, whose husbands and children were deported to Eritrea.

## 2. Seasonal Activities and Events

The calendars are contained in Appendix B.

In 1994:

1. Men worked, within a day, not more than two hours in *Meskerem* and *Tikimt*; 8 hours in *Hidar* and *Tahsas*; 4 hour in *Tir*; 8 hours from *Megabit* to *Hamle*, and 3 hours in *Nehase*.
2. Women worked, within a day, 3 hours in *Meskerem* and *Tikimt*; 12 hours from *Hidar* up to *Hamle*; and 6 hours in *Nehase*.
3. Other than crafts and brewing, women also prepared food for the household, milked cows in the morning and in the evening, went to markets to buy consumer goods, and took care of children at home.
4. The fox is another enemy of the crops on the farm in the *kebele* particularly in *Meskerem* and *Nehase*.

The calendars show that the life of the people is dominated by the agricultural tasks of soil preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting and processing. People grow a range of crops in two seasons and there does not seem to be a "slack" period.

The busiest time for men and boys is between December and February. Women are busier between November and February because they spend more time on brewing and craftwork. May is the most important month for men's off-farm activities.

During the rainy season, people who have a respiratory problem (asthma) are sick and they take treatment in Shashemene General Hospital at Kuyera. The consulting fee is two *birr* at the hospital, and ten *birr* at a private clinic. Some people get sick from malaria between September and November. During the hot season, when there is strong sun, a few people get sick from *Moyn bagen*. Its symptom is headaches and they are able to recover by traditional treatment; by bleeding on their hands, arms and

little cuts on the joint of the elbow.

Some people use piped water for drinking (it is found around mosque). Two rivers surround the village; both rivers reach a maximum level during summer season. The people use water from this river for many activities (washing cloth, cooking etc) and some people even for drinking.

From November to December, some poor people come to the area (from Kofele area) for harvesting of crops, and during the time when potato is hoed, from April to June, some people came from Wolayita.

There are six shops in the village. The owners sell soap, salt, sugar, coffee, oil, kerosene, soft drinks, etc in their shops. Some women sell *areke* and *tella* in their home. They sell these items throughout the year. But some women do not prepare *tella* during the rainy season because the weather condition is colder. So people prefer to drink *areke*. Some woman prepare *areke* in large quantities and they sell it at Negele town. They also sell crops/grain at Kuyera and use the money to buy consumption goods.

Christians celebrate 'Ginbot – lideta' (on Ginbot 1) in the neighbourhood. Three-four households cook grain / *Nifro*, boil coffee and some slaughter sheep or goats, contributing money and eating together. Other festivals are celebrated at household level, but they call each other to eat food and drink together.

### 3. The Farm Economy

#### *Crops*

The crops and their seasons are shown in the crop calendar and a history of crops grown in the area is shown in the crop history. There are two agricultural seasons *belg* and *meher*.

Almost all farmers use fertiliser which used to be distributed through the Service Cooperative. Now it is sold by private traders. In 1993 the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) sold the fertiliser to private traders at 69 *birr*/50kg and the retailers sell it at 96 *birr*/50kg. Households earn additional income from the sale of hops.

The price of fertiliser saw a rapid rise after 1997, declaration of the cease in government aid. By then it reached 150 *birr* per 50 kg. Many farmers complained that the government left the farmers at the mercy of greedy traders. The price rose again in 1997 when the government lifted subsidies and again in 2004, when it reached 250 *birr*. Many associated their decline in their wellbeing to the rise in the price of fertiliser and selected seeds.

The major crop disease in the *kebele* is what the peasants call *wag*, which is a potato disease which affects the crop when there is strong rain. In *Ginbot* there was unexpected rain and the potato was affected, and it results a decline in the quantity the farmers got from the harvest. *Wag* attacks potatoes and wheat in April. Peasants in the *kebele* control it by using a modern pesticide supplied by the local MoA. They also buy the pesticide from private traders when there is a shortage at the MoA. This year (2005), many farmers complained that their maize was affected by pests (flit worms), because of the scarcity of rain and strong sun in *Sene* and *Hamle*.

The peasants in the *kebele* use the same land for both harvests. For example they cultivate maize from March up to June and on the same farmland they can cultivate potatoes immediately from August/September up to October/November. They can also immediately plant potatoes, wheat, or barley on the farmland on which they harvested *tef* or maize.

There is no difference in the type of crop they grow by wealth status. But some farmers do not want to grow *Dagusa*. This is because it takes longer time, and requires intensive labour to grow.

The *belg* harvest in the *kebele* is greater in Turufe than in Wetera. In Wetera, the 1994 *belg* harvest was average. In Turufe, however, the *belg* harvest was greater than average. For example, the *belg* harvest in this village for *tef* from one *timad* of land (0.25 ha.) was about 300 to 400 kg and the previous year's harvest of the same crop over the same size of land was about 250 to 300 kg. The *belg* harvest of wheat and barley in 1994 on the same amount of land was about 1,200 to 1,300 kg which is greater than the average harvest.

### *Livestock*

The people are adept cattle keepers (oxen, cows, calves) and their livestock include goats, sheep, chickens, and pack animals such as donkeys, horses and mules. Unlike other rural areas, in Turufe horses and mules are not common. This may be due to the fact that the area is near to a town (Kuyera), and they can walk or take a carriage/cart. But in Wetera, the people have horses and mules as a means of transport. Several years ago people kept bees, but presently there are very few people who produce honey.

The main livestock diseases include *Aba Gorba (Furtu)* and *Aba Sanga (Shembe)*. These livestock diseases are commonly known also as *china* by Arssi Oromo in the *kebele*. There have been epidemics of livestock disease which the MoA helped to stop. Epidemics mainly occur in December and January because the cattle get less and dry feed which makes them less resistant to disease. It is also the time during which cattle are expected to work hard at threshing and land preparation for the *belg* season which makes them weak. However, only a very small proportion of cattle are usually lost to disease (less than 1%). The last major epidemic was about 25 years ago and about 85% of livestock were lost.

There was a vaccination programme in the *kebele* during the *Derg* period. The programme was carried out once a year and the service was provided by the MoA coming to the *kebele*. In 1994, the MoA was not obliged to provide vaccination by visiting the *kebele*. Peasants had to take their livestock to the MoA office. However in 2005, agricultural officers did visit the *kebele* and vaccinated all the cattle at the cost of 0.60 *birr* per animal.

There is a poisonous grass called *yesar til* (grass-worm) which kills cattle. This grass is obtained from weeding *tef*. They believe that if this grass is dried well, the worm will die.

The farmers have access to cross-bred cattle if they pay 10 *birr* to the MoA for artificial insemination. But the farmers do not want to have cross-breeds because they need too much feed, scarcity of which is a major problem in the area. Such cattle have no resistance to disease and are also expensive to buy in the market.

Cows are mostly kept in people's houses. If kept in enclosures they may be stolen, so someone has to sleep there to guard them.

During the 1984/85 major drought in Ethiopia the price of livestock was low in the area and many farmers sold many of their cattle to buy grain for food which was scarce during those times. People normally do not sell livestock even if this is profitable. For example, in 1994, the price of an ox had increased recently from 300 *birr* to 800 *birr* and there was a case where an ox was sold for 1,500 *birr*; the price of a milking cow with its calf had increased from 250 *birr* to about 700 *birr*; but people will not sell their cattle or livestock. There has since been a little increment in the price of cattle.

Cattle are mostly fed at home. Recently many farmers fed straw or *segatura* (waste product of food yield processing) mixed with *atela* (sediments from making *areke* or *tella*). The farmers who fatten cattle are the major users of *atela* and *segatura* (left overs from mills). Almost all farmers fed straw and stems of maize or sorghum. In the past there was enough grazing land but through time these lands have become farmland due to population growth. As a result, there is a shortage of grazing land. So most people began to limit themselves from having many cattle except a pair of oxen, one or two donkeys for agricultural work, and one cow for milk.

In Turufe there are four cattle *iddir*, all are named after ethnic groups, *yetigrewoch*, *yamaroch*, *yewolaytawoch*, *Yeoromowoch* (Tigrayan, Amhara, Wolayita and Oromo respectively). It is only the Tigrayan *iddir* that has members only from one ethnic group. Others have members from more than two ethnic groups. The members of the *iddir* keep the cattle of co-members turn by turn. In addition to this the Tigrayan cattle *iddir* gives support for a member whose cattle has died. But the others are exclusively cattle herding *iddir*.

### *Land*

Before 1935 land was free and anyone could take any amount. Up to 1974 land was given by *bale rist* and around 95% of farmers were tenants. Between 1936 and 1974 the largest landholding was eight *gasha* and there was a highly unequal distribution of land. After 1976 the smallest size of land was around one hectare and the largest around three hectares. Subsequently, due to villagisation and population growth, landholdings have become even smaller. There was continuous land redistribution in the *kebele* depending on the number of new households from 1977 to 1983. The 1990 mixed economy policy ended redistribution of land. A new development after 1991 was the selling of land, although it remained illegal. Those who sold their land began to reclaim it in the summer of 2004, when the measurement of land began. Therefore cases of dispute over land were high in the year 2004-05.

By the year 1991, more than 150 Kambatas were evacuated from the area and their landholdings (both resident and farmland) were taken over by the local people. The then officials (peace and stability committee) decided to distribute the land to the ex-soldiers. But many solders in the area complained that the land was distributed among the officials and other Oromo farmers. There were some former soldiers who got land at this time. The researcher came across one Tigrayan, who bought land from an Oromo who invaded the land of the Kambata. Many Oromos increased the size of their land by occupying land left by Kambatas and near to their respective position. No other ethnic groups occupied additional areas of land, even adjacent to them. Even some lost part of their holdings in 1991, when certain areas of land were allocated to be left for grazing. They did not get compensation.

In the years before June 2005, every farmer was expected got pay 20 *birr* regardless of the size of their land, but after the end of the recent measurement of land, a new taxation system was imposed, which considers both the size of their land holdings and the quality of their land. At the time of land measurement (2004) the land was classified in to three categories. A, B and C. The lands classified under A, B and C are these who yield good, average and low harvest respectively.

Individuals and households who have no land or face a shortage of land, cultivate the land owned by other farmers. They either rent or are involved in sharecropping arrangements. A few youngsters also have the right to cultivate the land owned by widows or old persons, in exchange for the labour service they deliver. Some rich households also rent land to their labourers. The price for renting land is increasing, and by the year 2004-5 it reached 300 – 400 *birr* per *timad*.

Owners of land prefer share cropping to renting out their land. But most of them rent their land when they face a shock and need money to avoid this sudden shock. e.g. when they want money to take a sick member of the family to the hospital or when they face a shortage of money to buy a fertiliser.

Youngsters with no land work with landowners and they get their compensation either in cash or grain. This is most common at the season when potato is collected. For one day they can harvest up to 80 kg of potato. Those households whose children migrated to other areas for work have large plots of land. But those who have married sons do not have large plots since they divided their land between married children (sons) to help the new couples to establish a stable life.

There was a villagisation programme in the *kebele* in 1986 which was not voluntary. Around 15 households have gone back to their former places since 1991. Although most people want to go back to be closer to their farmland, they have stayed since it is very costly to build a new house and their current home is near to the town (Kuyera) where there is a market, school and hospital.

Last year (2004) there was land measurement to identify landowners. There are some owners who sold their land secretly, but at the time of measurement both the seller (original owner) and the buyer claim the land is his/hers. At that time land disputes increased. They took the case to the *kebele* court (*fird shengo*). The *kebele* committee testified the land to be the property of the seller since they know only the original owner. However, the *kebele* officials found it difficult to solve such conflicts. In most cases they decided on the payment of compensation to the individual who bought and cultivated the land. The compensation included the price for the plants (tree, coffee, *enset*). Most of the time the owners of the land declined to pay, considering the fact that the land was bought by a farmer who is a dweller of the community (not a trader or investor), they decided to let the land be kept in the hands of the one who bought the land.

Some people rent their land for cash if they face a financial problem, though this practice is not widespread.

No people have been resettled in the *kebele* from other areas. There has been no land reallocation since the EPRDF's takeover, but there are some immigrants who come to the area, and they are dependent on their relatives for shelter. Their relatives arrange some means to feed him/herself. And through time they take others' land as a share-cropper or they rent land.

Generally now the smallest land holding is around 1 *timad* and the largest 2 hectares.

While the land proclamation abolished feudal relations of production a land problem still exists today. According to the proclamation a peasant household is allowed to possess farmland not exceeding 10 hectares (a quarter of a *gasha*) However, repeated redistribution of land within the *kebele* due to the increase of numbers who are landless as a result of the development cycle, means that the amount of land a peasant possesses is now far less than that. According to the Central Statistical Office Report of 1993 the average cropland per household in South Shewa was 0.83 hectares, while the figure for the whole of Ethiopia (excluding Tigray and Ogaden) was 0.80 hectares.

As in other parts of Ethiopia after the revolution women in Turufe Kecheme *kebele* are entitled to own land for agriculture. After the 1975 Land Reform married women and their husbands were allocated a definite amount of land and the women have the right to take their share of the land after divorce. A divorced woman (other than Oromo) can take her share of property, including land from her husband to take care of herself. But in the Oromo ethnic group, divorced women have no right to divide and take a share of land after divorce. This is because her husband paid more to her parents to marry her (as a gift of Gebera) However, she can take household equipments and anything that she got as a gift from her parents/relatives Women who share/take land either give it to other farmers as sharecropping,

or rent it (if they face a financial problem), or they can hire a farmer on an annual basis (if they have a capacity to provide shelter and food for the farmer).

Widowed and divorced women who are entitled to own land privately are allowed by the *kebele* to hire the labour of landless peasants. Most female owners of land are widows. After the death of the husband it is the widow's responsibility to lead the family as their husband did. Muslim Oromos, who are permitted to marry more than one wife, give a piece of land as *guluma* to their first wife so she can take care of her children and herself while he marries another younger woman. Some women have inherited land from their parents or relatives. If a man dies with no one to keep his property and/or family he gives his land to his elder daughter.

In Oromo culture, widowed women, are inherited by their husband's brother, who will be her second husband. If the deceased has no brother, his close relative will inherit the widow. If she married another man, he would inherit the property of the deceased, thus the purpose of inheritance is to avoid loss of land from the family, and for the good care of children.

Through these different ways there are between 25 and 70 women owners of land in the *kebele*.

The size of land that one household owns decreases from year to year due to population growth. The fertility of the land is also decreasing rapidly. There are at least 50 households in the *kebele* which are landless at present but all these are those not registered in the *kebele* as members. Every household registered in the *kebele* as a member has been allotted a plot of land by the *kebele* even though the size varies. There are members who have only one or two *timad* of land while there are also a few who have up to three *timad*. This variation arose because the land allocation was based on the number of household members. Moreover some households gave land to their married children (sons), while others did not.

Those who had a household with many members could get more land than those households whose family size was smaller because initially the land was allotted at a rate of one *timad* for each member of a household irrespective of differences in age, sex or ethnicity.

Those who are landless make a living by exchanging land for their labour, or labour for crops. They give half of the harvest to the owner or a fixed rent either in cash or in kind. If they have two oxen they can exchange land for oxen and ploughing. In 1994, they also might have obtained land from their parents and/or relatives without any arrangement. The parent or relative gives a piece of land (not more than half a hectare) which is said to be *guluma*. The landless who receive this land can use all of the output because the land itself is not his property. He returns it to the owner as soon as requested to do so. However, giving *Guluma* for landless is no longer practiced since the size of land that a household owns decreases with time due to population growth.

Sons who want to get married are expected to have a plot of farmland and a certain amount of money and cattle to use for the payment of bride wealth. They are given by their family about one *timad* of land which was allotted to the household in their name. They have to accumulate money, buy cattle, and build a house from the income they earn by ploughing the land. If the sons are strong and active, they can gain additional money through trade or agricultural wage labour. There is also a customary practice among the Arssi Oromo that the lineage group of a son contributes to the payment of bride wealth when he is ready to get married. After they are married the couple can request a piece of land from the *kebele* but this is rarely obtained because there is no unoccupied arable land today in the *kebele*.

In Oromo culture the married son has to pay a cultural gift (*Gebera*) to the bride's parent. *Gebera* includes money and cattle, it does not include land. This gift is contributed by his relatives and parents. In the past the payment was before the wedding ceremony. Nowadays it is also possible to pay after the

wedding. If the groom is poor and cannot pay *gebera*, the problem will be settled through elders. He sends 100 *birr* and *tej* (local drink), and this money is distributed among relatives from the wife's clan as a *sebeta busa* (in Oromiffa), *Afe mezgiya* (in Amharic), which means something used to open one's mouth to talk. After that he will have a good relationship with her relatives.

One cannot tell the price of an average holding of land because land sales were legally prohibited during the *Derg* and continue to be so. Informants maintained that nobody wants to sell land because it is their life. It is only when an individual decides to leave the area and the *kebele* that he or she secretly sells his/her allotment to another person by bribing the leaders of the *kebele*. There is no regular price for such exchange of land. There are a very few people who want to sell their land when they face a severe shortage of money. This is done secretly and there are men who even do not tell to their wife.

What is common in the *kebele* is renting land on the basis of a contractual agreement. A person who cannot plough his land can rent it out for 300-400 *birr* (100 *birr* in 1994) to another person for the whole year (2 harvests) or for half a year. However, it is not usual to rent land for six months because the fertiliser used during *belg* is also used for *meher*. Also, most of the people who rent land need to produce *belg* potatoes to sell for cash and then wheat at *meher* which enables them to get a lot of money. The owner has to wait until the end of the contract for payment.

In 1994, land disputes were not of much concern. However, disputes over land are increasing. During the year 2004-5 disputes were high, because of the measurement of land holdings. The major causes of dispute are conflicts between husband and wife in selling or renting their land. Husbands sell or rent their land without consulting their wives and when the wives learn that the land is rented they come to the court. In land disputes, people first go to the *kebele*. The executive members of the *kebele* first direct the disputes to elders for arbitration. The disputes are transferred to the *kebele* court tribune (*Fird Shengo*) if the elders cannot resolve them. A person who feels that the *kebele* court did not give a correct judgement can request that the dispute be reconsidered at a higher court - the *Wereda* court - whose decision is final. The decisions of courts at *kebele* or *wereda* levels are more influential than those of traditional elders in land disputes. In land disputes, the role of the elders is only to arbitrate; they cannot pass decisions that can be enforced by a law. Land disputes were seen by *Fird Shengo* at local (*kebele*) and *Wereda* levels during the *Derg* and there has not yet been any change under the new government.

There is also exchange of land within the *kebele*. A person who has a plot of farmland very far from his house in a remote village can exchange both his land and house with a person in the village who faces the same problem. For example, a person who lives in Turufe but who has a farmland in Wetera can go to a person that has a house in Wetera but whose farmland is in Turufe and exchange house for house and land for land if the houses and the land are of the same quality and size. This and other kinds of exchange are undertaken as convenient. The partners can be of the same kin group, neighbours, people of a similar age group, and of any economic group.

### *Farm Labour*

Before 1943 people worked together. Between 1935 and 1974 the landlord could collect *debo* as he wanted. Between 1974 and 1989 the *kebele* could make people work in groups by force. There was wage labour and there was still *wenfel* and *debo*. Since 1989 anyone can hire labour as he needs though this is rare.

Labour sharing systems such as *debo* (*dego* in Oromiffa) and *wenfel* are still practiced in the area. For *debo* the person who needs help begs all his/her friends and relations to help for ploughing, sowing, weeding, harvesting, or house building etc and prepares food and drinks. The amount and type depends on his/her capacity. Usually *tella* (local beer), *injera* (thinly baked circular bread), and *areke*, (local

distilled liquor) are offered to the participants of the *debo*. The food and drinks for the participants also depend on whether the person is satisfied with what was done or not. The work usually starts at 8 am and the participants get their first refreshments (*shome*) between 10 and 11. They are allowed to eat a small quantity of *injera* with *wot* (sauce) and *tella* or bread and *tella*. Drinking *areke* is prohibited in case they get drunk and waste time eating *kolo* (roasted cereals). Eating *shome* takes not more than half an hour and then the work continues until the caller tells the participants to stop. It is usual in this area to work until 3 when the participants are invited to go to the caller's house to eat and drink. Here *areke* and *kolo* are allowed as well as *injera*, bread and *tella*. The quality and quantity of food depends on the wealth of the caller. The person who called the work party has no obligation to go and work for those who came to work for him. In *debo* there is no obligation for the requested person to come. But labour will not be reciprocated another time by the person from whose *debo* he was absent.

In contrast to *debo*, which might not be reciprocal, *wenfel* (the Oromiffa name is *gessa*) is an arrangement in which two or more farmers have a contractual agreement to help each other in certain kinds of tasks. The amount of time taken for work and the type of food prepared for participants are always similar for all members of the work party. For instance 5 people may work for 3 hours and be provided with bread and *tella* and this will be the same for each person. The time to be taken is decided by the participants in discussion. The quality and quantity of the food is usually less than *debo*; sometimes only coffee and *kolo* are prepared. However, the type of work can be different for each party: one can call for ploughing, another for weeding, the third for harvesting, etc. The members of this labour sharing arrangement are usually relatives or best friends. After making a *gessa* agreement it is unethical and prohibited for a person to be absent after using others' labour. Such a person will be socially ostracised with all his family and nobody will enter such labour exchange agreements in future.

*Gessa* and *debo* are usually practiced in the *kebele* during weeding and harvesting periods, when there is a need for extra labour. The members of *gessa* or *debo* work groups come to work with their oxen and farm equipment if they have them. Informants claimed that there are no other group labour activities in the *kebele*.

Recently, the *kebele* attempted to use the *gere* and *gott* arrangement to make people work in groups to harvest crops. But many farmers prefer to employ the *debo* arrangement. The *kebele* officials claim that *debo* is costly, as there is a need for the preparation of food for the participants of *debo*. But community members refused the *gere* arrangement because it would cause for delays in the harvest and their crop would be spoiled by the coming rain. The individuals assigned would also not collect the crop properly, because they are doing it under orders of the *kebele*. Some people do not accept working through *cell*, *gere* and *gott*. They expect it may have political influence.

Some households employ casual agricultural labourers and pay them cash. Now most labour on the farm is done by the household but there are still traditional work-sharing practices. Some farmers get temporary employment as carpenters, masons, etc, outside the *kebele*. Traditional labour-sharing practices (*debo* or *wenfel*) are still practiced in the area. But there are a few farmers who want to employ labourers for cash rather than calling *debo* or *wenfel*. They suspect that some *debo* or *wenfel* participants do not work effectively.

Employing workers both as daily labourers or on an annual basis is common. The daily labourers mostly come to the site in time of harvest. When the harvest of wheat, barley and maize approaches labourers came from Kofele. But in the time of the harvest of potatoes during the *kiremt* most of the labourers are from Wolayita, as they are popular in the area for their strength in hoeing.

The price for the labour also varies. In the harvest of maize, the labourers get 40 *birr* per *timad*. The other labourers are employed on annual basis. They are paid 400- 600 *birr* per annum. In addition they

are given shelter and food. They are involved in farm work and domestically fetching water (by donkey), chopping wood, herding cattle, going to mill to grind flour, going to market to buy some goods and to sell grains etc. There are labourers who work up to eight years in the same house. The *kebele* officials attempted to prohibit the labourers from Kofele in September 2004. They claimed that the local people's work ethic is declining because there are labourers to be employed. Thus they believed that they can make the people work hard by prohibiting potential labour to the area. Many community members agree that the rise in the wage of labourers from 25 *birr* in the year 2003 to 40 *birr* in the year 2004 is because of the decline of the number of labourers to Turufe.

Farmers have no farm work when the rain stops; for example in September and February and some times in March and April. They use this time to construct or renew houses and fences, keep cattle, and make new farm implements, stores, etc. January to March is a good time to build houses for a number of other reasons:

- they can prepare thatch from the *meher* crop wheat residue
- farms are empty and there are no crops so they can cut trees and carry the wood easily
- the next season is *belg* when it rains and mud can easily be obtained to finish the construction

In February there is planting of potatoes to be done whether there is rain or not. March and April are months when the farmers dig around the potatoes and during this time that wage labour is strongly needed. In September they are occupied with work such as fencing and cutting grass for cattle to feed on at night. There are also some farmers who are engaged in trade when they are not busy with agricultural work.

Wage labour is practiced on individual farms. Most households employ weeders and harvesters at rates. The wage labourers come from inside or outside the *kebele*. Those from inside the *kebele* are landless or peasants who only have small pieces of land. Migrant labourers usually come from Wolayita. There are also individuals from Wello, Gonder, Gojjam and other Oromo groups from Kofele and Shewa who are working as wage labourers, but they did not come specifically to be wage labourers as the Wolayita did. Previously the Kambatas used to come but now no longer do so.

For employees that come from outside the *kebele*, employers provide 180 or 200 *birr* annually if they are given shelter and food, but 5 *birr* per day if they do not demand shelter and food. For seasonal migrants harvesting one *timad* of farmland, the employers pay 35 *birr* if they do not demand shelter but 30 *birr* if they do. If it is weeding and digging during cultivation they are paid from 25 to 30 *birr* if there are few weeds and from 30 to 40 *birr* if the weeds are thick. One person can finish weeding one *timad* of farmland in two and half days and the maximum period it takes is three to four days for one person. The payment for weeding decreases if the labourer demands shelter from the employer. No one in the *kebele* wants to work ploughing at a daily rate since this will make them inferior to others. *kebele* residents will plough for piece rates. In this case they must bring their own oxen which few can afford. There are a few poorer households in the *kebele* who work weeding, collecting potatoes and harvesting at a daily rate.

### *Interlinkages*

In 1994 it was reported that there was an arrangement for temporary exchanges of land for labour for one harvest period; this is locally expressed as "giving land for contract" but there is no Oromiffa name for it. The owner of the land marks off a portion of his land and temporarily leases it to a person who needs land in exchange for annual labour service on his farmland. Both the giver of the land and the receiver cover their respective expenses for seed. It was usual to give 0.25 hectares (1 *timad*) of land and 200 *birr* per year to hire labour for farm work. The labourer was considered to be a servant and lived with the landowner. He did all the agricultural activities such as ploughing, weeding, harvesting etc, rearing

cattle, selling and buying goods, etc. The amount of produce he obtained from the land and the 200 *birr* made up his annual salary. If he wanted to leave before the end of the year the owner estimated the amount of produce and paid in cash. Nowadays, exchanging of land for labour is not practised, however, old individuals may give their land either for sharecropping or rented out.

A piece of land can also be exchanged for oxen and ploughing in an arrangement according to which a man who has no land but has oxen makes an arrangement with a person who has land but no oxen. The one who has oxen not only provides the service of his oxen but his own labour as well for the whole farming period. This is known as "*lafa duda gurguracha*", literally meaning offering land for compensation, and it is frequently practiced in the *kebele*. There is also an arrangement for exchanging labour for oxen (no Oromiffa name) in which a person who has oxen and a piece of land enters into an agreement with a person who has no oxen to give two days labour service with the oxen on his own land in exchange for one day service of the oxen for himself. The labourer has no obligation to do any other farm work apart from ploughing. Another arrangement is what is known as *qite* or *kota* in which a man who has oxen, seeds and the money necessary to buy fertiliser enters into an agreement with a person who has land but not seeds and money to provide the service of his oxen and human labour on the land in exchange for an equal share of the produce. The person who gives the service of his land in exchange for labour, oxen, seed, and money for fertiliser has no obligation to help with labour. There is also what is called *sello* in which two persons who have only one ox each bring together their oxen to plough one day for the one and another day for the other on their respective farmland.

Labour can be obtained by payment in cash: for one *timad* ploughed the landowner has to pay 20 *birr* (15 *birr* in 1994) a day for both labour and oxen. For harvesting the payment is 45-50 *birr* (30-40 *birr* in 1994) regardless of how long it takes.

Exchanging labour for crops started in the *kebele* in 1992/93. In 1994, the arrangement included paying five *birr* for one day's labour service on the farmland but the labourers prefer taking the payment in kind (particularly potatoes) rather than in cash. During the time when they were pastoralists, a poor individual would come to the house of wealthy person to work in his house in exchange for money or food, an arrangement which was known as *fansho*. If the poor person developed a good relationship with the wealthy one, he might receive a bull or heifer from the latter; but this practice does not exist today. Currently there is exchanging oxen for crops practiced on an annual basis. The individual who uses the ox has to feed the ox and pays up to three quintal crop (one quintal maize, one quintal wheat, and one quintal sorghum). The payment depends on the strength of the ox. In the harvest of potatoes, youngsters and boys work in collecting potatoes after the plough. They get up to 50 kg of potatoes for two to three days of work

### *Farming Technology*

Before 1928 people used sticks; then the hoe was introduced. The plough and the saw were well known after 1928. The tractor was introduced in the 1960s by the missionaries but it was taken away by *Derg*. All farmers know the advantage of using tractors but they are not able to use it because it is too expensive.

Food crops are stored in granaries. Where there is no granary, the crops are stored in sacks in the home. Informants argued that no food crops are lost during storage. The food crops are transported to the stores using a cart pulled by a donkey. About 30 farmers have such a cart which is estimated to cost about 700 *birr*. If the food crop is small, and when their home is near the harvest, the peasants put the crops in sacks and carry them to their granaries. Informants said that between 1/8 and 1/4 kilo of food crops are lost while transporting and threshing on the ground (*awdma*) respectively. A greater amount of loss or

spoiling of the crops happens when the rain falls suddenly while the peasants are harvesting, transporting and threshing. One farmer who produced 180 quintals of potatoes in August 1994 estimated his loss at about 1 quintal, while from 20 quintals of wheat in December 1994 he estimated he lost 2 quintals between the field and storage. Loss of food crops in storage was estimated as follows: from 50 quintals of potatoes produced during *belg* about 8 quintals can become useless when stored for a month. This is because the *belg* harvest is during a wet time (August). The loss of *meher* harvest in store is half that of the *belg* loss. Wheat loss during storage is less than 1%. Since 1994, an NGO has constructed a granary made from a wire sieve/strainer, to store maize for about 30 individuals. Later on the MoA planned to construct for farmers one for cash, around 2,000 *birr*, but the farmers refused to pay and so the MoA did not construct it.

There has been no water mill since the land reform in 1975 because the landlords used to maintain it and after the land reform, no one took responsibility for it. However, there are plans to construct a water mill in the village. Two men, a Tigrayan and a Gurage, have agreed to cover half of the 50,000 *birr* estimated cost of setting up the mill and bringing electricity to Turufe, both for the mill itself and to supply the village. The remaining 25,000 *birr* is to be contributed by the local people, and 6,000 *birr* has already been collected. The *kebele* has given the investors land in the threshing area, for the construction of the mill

### *Farming Innovations*

The increase in the price of fertiliser is the major problem of all farmers in the area. Now it reaches about 250 *birr* per 50 kg.

In 1994, a group from the community identified the following 6 innovations as being most useful (1) new crops (introduced in 1945); (2) ditch digging (1946); (3) planting to conserve soil (1983); (4) tractors (1962); (5) water mills (1956); and (6) villagisation (1985).

- (1) The new crops were finger miller (*dagusa*), *tef*, wheat and coffee. They were introduced by the Tigrayans. Before that only maize was common in the area. The Tigrayans brought these crops from the area in which they lived before. It was successful and almost everyone in the area copied its use especially Oromo and Amhara. The long-run effects have been good.
- (2) Ditch digging was first introduced by the missionaries in the area in 1946. It was not very successful because people lacked the finances to do it. About a quarter of people did it and it and the long-run effects have been good.
- (3) Before the *Derg* people did not know much about conserving soil. Conservation was introduced by professionals who taught local people. It was very successful and everyone in the area copied. The long run effects have been good.
- (4) The missionaries brought tractors to the area in 1962. The use of tractors saved time and improved the quantity and quality of production. They were taken over by the *Derg*. Ordinary people do not use tractors because they are so expensive.
- (5) The water mill is well known in this area; there is no electricity so there is no electrical mill. It was introduced in 1956 by Girazimach Ture. 99% of people could not copy since only those who were owners of *rist* could do so. The long run effects were good.
- (6) Villagisation was introduced in 1985 in response to the drought which happened in 1984. The *Derg* proposed it and farmers did it. Not everyone moved to a village if they were very far from their farms and could not control the thieves. It was good for schooling, marketing and milling but it was bad for farming since the village was far from home and the produce was taken by thieves.

Two different people asked for the names of ten people in the *kebele* who are always willing to

experiment with new things. Only two of them are common to both lists:

<b>Name</b>	<b>1st list sex</b>	<b>age</b>
Kedir Tuntamo	Male	35
Mammo Desta	Male	40
Kebele Shanko	Female	50
Dube Amiyu	Female	35
Mehari Getachew	Male	25
Demissie Sessega	Male	35
Ahdem Haji Gada (Sheik)	Male	43
Mohammed Kedir	Male	30
Behabtwu Getachew	Female	18
Medina Sheko	Female	28

<b>Name</b>	<b>2nd list sex</b>
Kedir Tuntamo	Male
Mammo Desta	Male
Kebede Kassa	Male
Zeritu Alebachew	Female
Fetene Belew	Male
Anegagrign Glyes	Female
Bizunesh Tedla	Female
Yeshitla Zemedkun	Male
Hamiyo Gelcha	Male
Hailu Zewde	Male

Hamiyo Gelcha is an old man of about 70 years old, he has a good memory in remembering what has happened in the past. He is one of the two main elders of the area. The other elder is Tubulu Gergera. Both of them play a great role in solving disputes. Mammo Desta is a knowledgeable person. He has a good knowledge about villagisation, and other events specific to that area plus others through out the country. When he was strong he was an intelligent farmer; he got a prize from the MoA to be a model for other farmers.

### *Common Property Resources*

The following communal properties are used by every member of the community: grazing land; forest (natural and afforested); water (river and pipe); service co-operative; seedlings (raised by the extension agent). The forest and grazing land is semi-regulated by the *Kebele*. In 1994, the rule regulating forest usage was that any member of the *kebele* had the right to request permission from the *kebele* to cut and use trees from the commonly owned forest. A member could appeal to the *kebele* in written form when he or she needed wood to build a house, when his wife or she is in childbirth, and when he or she had a feast for the dead (*teskar*) in the house. The laws were enforced by the leaders of the *kebele*. The *kebele* also hired a *zebegna* (guard) who looked after the communal forest. People usually requested permission from the *kebele* to use the communal forest but there were occasional thefts and people bribed the guard to cut trees from the forest. If thieves were caught they were liable to be punished by the *kebele*.

Three or four times a year, the *kebele* officials fixed a day when they sold the trees from the communal forest to the residents. The price varied according to the thickness of the tree. In 1994, a tree might have cost between 2.50 and 10 *birr*.

In earlier times, the area was full of forest, and the guard kept it seriously. But for the last few years these methods of access have not been practiced. The forest has been cut down. The *kebele* security personnel (*tataqi*) do not guard forests properly. In 2005 the *kebele* officials were not watching the forests since the government exclusively concentrated on election issues. It is because of deforestation that the amount of rain they get has been declining, which reduces the quantity and quality of their crop.

With regard to the people's right to use communal properties, there is a water pipe at the mosque. Any Muslim can use that water without any payment. But non-Muslims have to pay one *birr* per month to use that water regardless of the amount they take.

In 1994, grazing lands were found in the two villages formed during the villagisation programme. These grazing lands were meant only for common grazing. Any *kebele* member could graze his cattle on these areas. The land was mainly used when there was no feed on the farm, between February and October. The number of cattle in the *kebele* was beyond the carrying capacity of the grazing land. The owners of cattle were grouped according to their membership in blocks of villages and each member of the group had a fixed turn to send a herder. The cattle herders could be little boys or elders but not females. The family that sent a herder later than the exact time agreed upon is punished by having to provide a herder for two additional days. If a family in the group failed to send the herder for his turn without a reason such as a wedding or mourning, he would be dismissed from the group.

In 2005, the owners of cattle were grouped based on their ethnic group. Most of the lands which have been used for grazing in the past, have become farmland due to population growth. There is little pasture area left and herders take out the cattle mainly to water them and feed them with hay and crop and alcohol production residues.

### *Environment*

The soil was fertile until 1962 and dung was used to fertilise. Today, farmers put manure on the land after harvest and before sowing. Fertilisers were introduced in 1962. Without fertiliser yields are very low. Around 1974 crop rotation was adopted to increase fertility. At present about 1/20 of the land is out of cultivation due to loss of fertility.

Tree cover reduced alarmingly up to the time of the *Derg*. This is because people did not have much knowledge about the use of trees. Tree planting was started after 1963 by the foreigners in the area but the technique did not become well known until after 1974. The state taught the people. There is a programme of afforestation by the MoA and people are accustomed to planting trees around their dwellings. However, since 1994, tree cover has been decreasing rapidly. This is because the local *kebele*/security personnel do not keep the forests properly

There is no serious problem of soil erosion or flooding since terraces were constructed with the help of the MoA. In earlier times, the lands yielded a good crop. But through time its fertility has been declining, and it is difficult to get a good crop without using fertilisers. Most informants mentioned that the quantity of crop they get has been declining due to these problems.

## 4. Off-farm Activities

### *Communal Work*

For community projects in 1994, labour was recruited within the *kebele* in the form of *zemecha* (campaign) in which every member of the *kebele* was expected to participate in the form of food for work. In 2005, however, there is no food for work. Last year there was a work of widening roads organised by *kebele* officials and for construction of a water pipe the members of the *kebele* cooperate through the organisation of local institutions (*Iddir*) at a community level. In addition, the members of *kebele* contributed 20 *birr* per each head, for the construction of a school at Wetera. It was organised by *kebele* administrators, since Wetera is incorporated to Turufe at *Kebele* level.

### *Household Off-farm Activities*

Weaving was introduced in this area in 1928 when people with weaving skills settled in the area. Pottery was known after 1881; before that people used calabashes. However, craft workers are highly stigmatised, an Oromo is not allowed to marry someone involved in handicrafts and pottery.

The preparing of wood was introduced in 1936 but carpentry did not come to the area until 1943 when it was brought by other people who settled in the area. Building was adopted in the area after 1954 but it was well-known elsewhere before 1954.

For women beer-brewing was introduced to the area after 1955 by Amharas and Tigrayans. Food selling was adopted in 1936. Spinning was brought to the area by migrant women in 1943.

Apart from specific occupations such as weaving, carpentry, and house construction, male trading supplements the farm income. A few females make basket products from straw, either for income or for their own home, and traditional hairdressing (*shuruba*) is a source of income for a few young females. Informants said that there is no pottery or tanning practiced in the *kebele*. In 2005 preparing *Areke* is the major source of income for some women and those who work effectively can get up to 60 *birr* per week. Some women also earn money by preparing *tella*. In addition they use the sediment as a food for cattle.

Renting out a donkey and cart is a business activity. In 1995 on average the owner of a donkey and cart can rent them out for 3-4 *birr*/quintal/3km and gets between 100 and 200 *birr* a month during the harvest season (July and August for *belg* and December and January for *meher*).

Women who earn money themselves through off-farm activities in the household can spend it themselves rather than giving it to their husbands.

### *Occupational Structure*

Men and women used to practice pastoralism until it was replaced by agriculture. The people are still adept at keeping livestock and cattle but they are predominantly agriculturalists. Herding cattle, hunting and house construction were, and (with the exception of hunting) still are, the responsibility of men while women were and still are responsible for food preparation and keeping children at home. 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 child

birth, hair styling (*shuruba*), and making home utensils from straw in addition to preparation of food and looking after children.

Blacksmiths, weavers, thatchers, and carpenters are assumed to be experts. Women who the previous government trained to give First Aid during childbirth are major experts. A person who knows traditionally how to treat sick cattle is another expert.

Men or women who know traditionally how to treat a sick person is also another expert. In the area there is a disease what the people call locally '*mogn bagegn*', the symptoms of which are similar to malaria. They recover from this illness by traditional treatment; by bleeding their hands.

Some women take their infants (above a year and a half) to a traditional healer when they cry a lot and their body weight decreases. The women believe that their child will be healthy after the healer has rubbed (lightly) their body. The rubbing continues for one week with a gap of one day. For example if one child is rubbed on Monday the other rubbings will be on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

The traditional healer also gives a traditional medicine for *yelelit wef* (bat), *shararit* (spider) etc.

### *Migration*

Men or women in the *kebele* rarely migrate to other areas for seasonal wage labour or trade. A few leave the *kebele* for education, marriage or employment in government service and there is a slight increase between March and September to rear cattle, because some disease problems are exacerbated by the weather, and for schooling. Twenty men went to Bale, Jimma and Wollega to cut and prepare wood for construction and furniture in the Government forests. The rate is 15 *birr* for 1<sup>3</sup> metre of wood.

There is a great scarcity of grazing land and feed in the *kebele*. It is mainly crop residues (straw) that is used to feed cattle but many farmers have run out after two or three months and, in 1994, were forced to take their cattle to neighbouring *kebele* or *wereda*. One or two members of the family took the cattle to the areas where their relatives were living. The relatives helped by providing food and shelter. After September grass can grow and after November the cattle are required for threshing. The oxen (unless they are in excess) were not allowed to go to other places since they are always needed for ploughing. In 2005, taking the cattle to feed around the areas where relatives are living is not common, rather they try to feed sediments of *Areke* and *tella* plus *fagullo* (oil residue) in addition to straw (crop residue). But there are a few people in the village who take their cattle to Wetera to feed them.

During the summer disease is a serious problem. Mainly people who have asthma want to leave in July and August and go to better areas where their relatives are living.

Most of the rich farmers allow their children to live near schools many of which are in Addis Ababa. They live in the house of relatives but get food (not cooked) and all other expenses from their parents. Students come back to the *kebele* during vacations.

There is both long and short-term migration in the area. The migrants from Gondar, Gojjam and Tigray are long term. First they come to settle with a relative or work as a labourer. Through time they rent land and began to lead a good life. Migrants from Kofele area and Wolayita are short-term. Those who come from Kofele area are engaged in harvesting crops around November and they stay about a month. Those who come from Wolayita are engaged in hoeing (potato), unlike immigrants from other ethnic groups. People know that there are immigrants who come to that area for work and the members of the *kebele* accept them.

Some individuals keep their cattle at Wetera, on the basis of the arrangement that the individual who look after the cattle share the offspring.

### *Rural-Urban Linkages*

Major towns to which Turufe is linked are Kuyera, Shashemene and Negele. The people of Turufe attend markets in Kuyera and Shashemene for purchasing consumption goods, agricultural inputs and clothes. From the markets of Negele they get cattle and seeds for grains and potatoes. The community of Turufe take potatoes, maize, wheat, sheep, chicken etc to these markets. Females also take local drink (*areke*), in big containers to Negele market.

Since there is no church (Orthodox) at Turufe, the Christians attend the church at Kuyera. Some also go to Shashemene to attend church prayers on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. There is a church named after St. Michael in Shashemene (the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month is dedicated to St. Michael).

There are a few professionals (about three), who work as carpenters or plumbers in Kuyera and Negele, going to work on a daily basis. About 60 youngsters also work as supporters of mini-bus drivers and brokers. In the *kiremt* season the number of brokers working at Kuyera could exceed to 10-15, because of the potato market.

Most of the students from Turufe attend their primary education at Kuyera (Primary school), and all secondary school students from Turufe and Wetera village attend at Kuyera. A few children from rich households attend Lucy kindergarten at Kuyera. Most members of the *kebele* get medical treatment from Shashemene General Hospital, which is found at Kuyera.

In addition, administrative issues which go beyond the *kebele* are taken to Kuyera. If they also prove unsolvable there, they are taken to Shashemene. There is a big market in Shashemene called Alelu, which is held every Saturday. People from Turufe come to that market to buy and sell cattle, to sell grain in large quantities, and to buy some consumption goods, and seeds (of potato, wheat etc). Members of the *kebele* also get durable goods like radios and clothes from Shashemene. Some rich people go to Shashemene to attend private medical clinics since the hospital at Kuyera is poor in facilities.

Wetera is one of the most important neighbouring areas with which Turufe has contact. In the last three years at *Kebele* level Wetera was incorporated with Turufe. Turufe is the centre for Wetera for administrative issues. Sometimes the *kebele* court (*Fird Shengo*) is held at Wetera. There is a primary school at Wetera. Last year some classrooms were constructed, and the *kebele* officials forced people of Turufe to contribute for the construction and every household head paid 20 *birr*. From Wetera individuals take grain, firewood, egg, hens etc to sell at Kuyera. Individuals at Turufe buy these items from them when they pass through Turufe to reach Kuyera. For medical treatment and secondary education, the people from Wetera pass through Turufe to attend medical service and secondary school at Kuyera respectively. There is no marriage link between Turufe and Wetera because the people's clan is Weyrera in both cases.

A few rich households send their children to Addis to attend school. Some community member of Turufe sends a child to Awassa to attend college education, covering the expense for college education, house rent and consumptions.

Abyu Elemo is one of the three rural areas which was merged together and formed the *kebele* called 'Turufe – Wetera – Elemo', of which the central area is at Turufe. The people from Abyu Elemo come to Turufe for administrative issues. Within Abyu Elemo there is a specific area called 'Gigessa', where the

Catholic mission established their centre. There is a health centre which gives food and shelter for handicapped children who suffer from polio and other bone related problems. The centre delivers treatment for eye infections either annually or twice a year. At this time the *kebele* makes an announcement for the people to attend the service. The payment is small but people prefer to go Kuyera hospital except for bone-related problems and eye infections. Some merchants go to Elemo market centre and buy grains for resale. Relatives from Turufe and Elemo exchange oxen and help each other through labour.

The main church for Orthodox followers is St. Mary's church which is found at Hamus Gebeya. All Orthodox Christians attend religious activities there since there is no Orthodox church in the area. The area has got the name Hamus Gebeya after the market is held on *Hamus* (Thursday in Amharic).

There is a marriage link between Turufe and Kensha; the in-laws help each other by exchanging oxen as well as through labour. While some informants stated that Kensha is included under Kuyera town, others consider it as a separate place. There are also their areas like the rural part of Arssi-Negele, Gonde and Kofele to which members of the *kebele* have linkages through marriage and other aspects. Some Oromo farmers send their cattle to Gonde for grazing. The cattle stay with their relatives or in-laws.

Horses are mostly used for pulling carts that transport goods and human beings particularly in Shashemene and Kuyera towns; but sometimes they also provide services between Kuyera town and Turufe Kecheme, mainly on market days at Kuyera (every Sunday and Tuesday). Mules and some horses are used for long journeys. There are no carts pulled by humans; but trolleys are made with a big iron wheel and are pushed to transport crops and goods. Some young and adult men use bicycles to go from Turufe to Kuyera, and *vice versa*.

## 5. Reproductive Activity

### *Housing*

The largest houses in the community have three rooms: the main room, bedroom and store-room. The houses in the *kebele* are similar in size but there is a difference in type of roof. Most of the wealthy people have tin roof houses. The houses of some people from the medium wealth category are also made from tin, but their quality differs from wealthy households. Moreover the furniture differs. The destitute have only one small house (which is old), and this exposes them to cold weather. Moreover its roof is made from grass (straw) and if it is old it leaks rainwater inside. This in turn exposes the household members to suffer from cough. Young people (male) build their houses inside their parents compound.

The main source of lighting is *kuraz* (kerosene) while wood is the most important source of fuel for cooking. The wood comes from individually owned trees such as eucalyptus from the garden or other trees including *mekanissa* (*Croton macrostachys*), *birbirssa* (*Podocarpus gracilior*), and *sigeda* (*Oleo hochstelleri*) in the forest or bought from individuals or in the market. People use crop residue, particularly from maize, for fuel. A few households around the mosque have installed light to their home by connecting to neighbours households which are included under *kebele* 01/Kuyera. They have got permission from the EEPC to get light within a short period of time although this is only for few people whose house is near to those households who are under Kuyera 01 *kebele* administration. These households did not contribute to the planned electric mill and light unlike most others. The others began to pay contributions and they hope to get the service within three-four months.

In 1994, water was not a problem in the *kebele*. Streams and taps provided sufficient water for the people

in Turufe Kecheme. Water came from a river and streams located only five to ten minutes walk from the village *kebele* office. Kale Hiwot church dammed the stream and brought the water to the village by pipe in 1990. But the pipe was damaged five years ago, and in 2005, the people can get clear water only from the pipe around the mosque. They also can get piped water from the pipe which is found inside the mosque compound by paying 1.00 *birr* (for non-Muslims) per month irrespective of the amount they take. Muslims can benefit from the pipe without any fee. Most of the time the people use river water for home activities, and some households use it even for drinking.

When the community houses were reorganised under the Villagisation programme (1985) there were 285 latrines in Turufe and more than 330 in Wetera. These were introduced during the *Derg*; people were forced to dig latrines near their new houses. None of these latrines are being used at present. Some are already full and others were closed by the owners because they did not feel comfortable using them. Some people use a toilet by digging the ground behind to their house (garden area), some people use bushes and farm area as toilet.

### *Domestic Technology*

Women in the household use *ele sibilla* (iron pan) or a mud pan to prepare bread (*dabbo*) or *injera*. When it is to be eaten they put the bread or *injera* on a metal plate or *gebete* (wooden plate) or *lemat* (grass plate). They use *ele fara* (a big pan made by potters) and *gombissa* (a cover of *ele fara* made from bamboo plastered with mud) to make *injera*. They also use *foso* (pieces of torn cloth with linseed (*dankalle*)) to make the *ele fara* smooth so that the *injera* will not stick on it when it is prepared. To make *afella* (boiled maize, wheat, beans, or peas) they use *okote* (a big jar) made of clay. To cook *wot* they use a *kere* (a small clay dish). Some people (youngsters and small children) drink tea, and they use pitcher (*manqorqoria*) to make tea. They drink the tea by small glass; for coffee they use *jabana* (a small jar), *rekebot* (a wooden tray for coffee cups). When they want to cook any kind of food they put the cooking pot on *gaffissa* (3 stones) which are placed on the fire. The material they use for cooking is wood. The people in Turufe Kecheme do not use cow dung because it is eaten by termites in the soil. Some people use charcoal to boil coffee and tea, sometimes for cooking *wot*. A few rich households sometimes use kerosene cooking stoves (Buta-Gaz).

### *Household Management*

The main tasks involved in house management are organising, cleaning, washing, cooking, fetching water, preparing food, making clothes, and controlling the activities of children. In the average household, in a day, cleaning may take about 15 minutes, fetching water about 30 minutes, collecting and preparing wood 2 hours, preparing food 4 hours and eating food 25 minutes. Women play a great role in household management. It is her responsibility to use consumption goods economically, and to care for children.

### *Fertility*

In most cases a married woman gives birth two years after the previous delivery. The average fertility rate in the *kebele* seems to be between 6 and 7 children. Infertile women usually go to ritual specialists (*kaleecha*) to become fertile. There is no way to handle the infertility of men. Their wives cannot marry another husband just to have offspring. There are also no traditional or modern treatments for infertility of women. Husbands do not divorce them; but they usually marry another wife to have children. There are some Muslim men who have more than one wife. This is not necessarily due to the infertility of the

woman, but it is a part of their culture

During the *Derg*, there were continuous campaigns by the government to familiarise people with family planning. This has not continued under the present government.

In 2005 most women do not want to have many children. Informants mentioned that having many children leads to poverty and it also has a negative side effect on the health of mothers. And they limit themselves from having many children by using contraceptives. According to *Weyzero* Alemitu Safao, (female representative of Turufe) there are three individuals, including herself, who distribute condoms. These individuals get the condoms from NGOs (Catholic, Compassion and Adventist Development and Relief Assistance) and they also have been getting training on different issues. Also, Muslims who follow their religion seriously are prohibited from using contraceptives. The need for male labour on the farms also makes husbands disagree with the use of contraceptives by their wives.

The hospital reports that there are about 50 HIV positive people in Turufe and Wetera Sake.

### *Childbirth and Childcare*

Pregnant women and women in childbirth used to be given vaccinations during the *Derg* regime. The workers of the Ministry of Health (MoH) in the Shashemene General Hospital used to come to the *kebele* to provide the vaccinations to help the mother and their babies to become healthy. This service has been stopped since the coming to power of the new government. Now, the workers in the Ministry of Health (MoH) prefer going to Shashemene where they can obtain per diems.

Pregnancy out of marriage is discouraged in the community. Youngsters who get pregnant and give birth before marriage are excluded. Many drop out of school and migrate to other areas, leaving their child behind. No one will want to marry them; thus they remain dependent on their parents or migrate to other areas.

Pregnant women receive nothing although they may change their consumption habits, especially those who are wealthy enough. Women in childbirth receive milk, butter, grain flour and sometimes sheep and goats from their parents, relatives and friends, and *Amit* (gruel) and *Genfo* (porridge) are common foods. The mother of a pregnant woman is meant to look after her daughter during childbirth. If she lives in another area she comes to her daughter's house 15-30 days before the baby is due. In an Orthodox Christian family she stays until the baby is baptised (40 days for boys and 80 days for girls) so long as there are enough females at her home to take responsibility.

In Orthodox Christian families (mostly Amharas and Tigrayans in the *kebele*), women in childbirth are not expected to resume housework, wood and water fetching, and agricultural activities until their babies are baptised. In these families, if a baby is a male, he is baptised on the 40<sup>th</sup> day; but if she is female she is baptised on the 80<sup>th</sup> day. Although if there is no assistant in the house, the woman may carry out simple jobs like cooking and cleaning the home, boiling coffee and the like after the 15<sup>th</sup> day after delivery. In an Arssi Oromo (Muslim) family in the *kebele*, a woman in childbirth will resume work on the 16<sup>th</sup> day after the delivery if there is no other person in the house who can work in her place or after the 60<sup>th</sup> day if she has an assistant in the house. In between these days, however, she can perform simple jobs such as cooking food and cleaning the house, but she will not go to a river to fetch water or wash clothes.

There is a belief, particularly among the Orthodox Christians, that it is better to give birth to male than female children. They believe that males can defend themselves and their family from any danger while females are easy victims for enemies. A husband feels happiness when his wife gives birth to a son and

the wife also feels proud. The husband may kill a sheep or a goat for the wife who gave birth to a son. When a son is born, women who gather in the house of the woman giving birth make a thin loud clamour called *ililta* seven times, but only three times if the child is female. Male and female babies are circumcised seven days after the birth. A man is forbidden to circumcise a female baby but a woman can circumcise both male and female babies. Through time the community has understood the side effects of female circumcision. The role of NGOs has been important in teaching the people regarding issues like HIV/AIDS, circumcision, family planning etc. In addition the people hear about circumcision and other gender issues from the media, mainly the radio. Female circumcision is no longer practiced in the area.

### *Socialisation*

Parents are responsible for socialisation and non-school education. Children are expected to behave well and are taught all methods of farming. They are expected to help their parents in all the necessities of life such as housing, food, clothing etc.

The local conception of intelligence involves clever performance in regular schools, persistence and effectiveness at work, curiosity, inquisitiveness, creativity, language ability, the ability to resolve disputes, and social awareness. These measures of intelligence in the *kebele* refer to both males and females.

A male group of the community agreed that the following traits are very desirable in men: intelligence, leadership, hard work, a sense of humour, being good at arguing, bravery, independence, cleverness, and strength. A female group listed intelligence, being good with their hands and a hard worker, courtesy, obedience, humility, cleverness, dexterity, kindness and honesty. Men believed people could be born with these qualities or they could learn them, or both were involved.

Older people regard the behaviour of some young men as undesirable. These includes, chewing *chat*, drinking local drinks, and smoking, which waste their time and affect their economy. These in turn may have a major impact on their work. An undesirable trait for a young man is to have interest in sexual intercourse. It is because of such interest that they get married and begin to lead a new life before becoming self-sufficient economically.

Boys learn by observing the behaviour of parents and elders and by getting advice and practical training. Undesirable traits in men are cheating, stealing, drinking alcohol, laziness, lack of respect, and adultery. A successful farmer is one who has all the necessary farm implements and tools and who knows when and what should be done at particular times, who uses his land efficiently and improves his activities by learning from his mistakes and by getting knowledge of best practice from other farmers. The skills a good farmer has include being able to treat his animals when they get sick, and to invent a system of water utilisation for his farm, for example, by mulching tree crops, making ditches, and even water harvesting to produce fish of his own. Ability as a carpenter, blacksmith, painting etc are also useful skills. Technical skills that are most respected include the ability to prepare good farm tools, construct special living houses, the practice of traditional medicine, healing, blacksmithing, the ability to repair mills, and to divide the garden into different types of vegetables and permanent tree plots.

A good farmer has good products every season, can feed his family satisfactorily throughout, has milking cows, attractive garden crops and enough pack animals.

It is useful to be able to read, write and do sums as it helps one to exchange messages and gain information and knowledge. Also one can keep track of one's income and expenses and other useful information. The social skills most respected include kindness and politeness, being respectful, the

ability to produce convincing ideas in case of arguments, to reconcile people, and to give advice, tolerance, and the ability to cope with stress. Education is useful for being a better farmer, and for women to keep her children and home clean, to run off-farm businesses and to easily participate in various local as well as governmental institutions.

At primary school children learn about good manners, respecting elders, parents and teachers, and how to write, read and listen to ideas, physical exercises and gymnastics, music, pictures and art, their environment (plants and animals), the Lord Jesus, good deeds, church disciplines, how to pray and in general how to be good children. It is easier to earn off-farm income if one has been to school.

Women believe that people can be born with these qualities, that some are inherited, and some can be taught. They teach them according to the child's age. If they are not behaving as they should for their age there are penalties. They also give them good advice and comments and expect them to learn skills and manners from others in the neighbourhood and community. Undesirable characteristics in women and girls included for wives: adultery, not respecting their husbands, and not doing what he commands, not having good households, not finishing domestic work on time (e.g. food preparation) and for girls to have many friends, mainly boys, and joking with boys are undesirable traits. This is because through time she may develop sexual relations with him and be exposed to unnecessary pregnancy, which in turn forces her to drop out of school. Generally it will affect her future life/career. Recently it has become common for girls to run away with a young man with whom she has had an affair. Drinking *Areke* is also an undesirable trait for women. There are a few women who buy *Areke* by sending their children to the drinking house and they drink it at home. Sometimes they go to the drinking house and drink when nobody else is found there.

A successful farmer's wife respects what her husbands says, is morally brave enough to withstand any life problems with her lovable husband, is satisfied with what they have rather than living a dreaming life, and volunteers to help out and do farm activities when she has time. She should be able to manage and handle the household and furniture, be good at receiving and accommodating guests, be able to make home made furniture such as *sifet* and *fetil*, and be good at home decorating and able to spin. She should be good at home economics and at managing and economising on consumption goods.

It is useful if women can read, write and do sums since it helps them to send and receive messages which may be secret, to make notes of things to be remembered, and to calculate income and expenses. Being able to read widens and improves the perceptive powers of the readers about the world, life, nature and the like.

Social skills most respected include engaging in off-farm activities to support the household economically, preparing for the ceremonies of death (including *iddir*), weddings, and the different feasts. The housewives responsible are evaluated by the community.

At primary school children learn good manners (respecting elders, punctuality etc), the art of making simple handmade goods, and about their country in general and their environment in particular. At church school they learn about the greatness of the creator, to respect parents and elders, and not to do anything evil.

Learning is useful for farmer's wives since it helps them to manage their lives and produce good families. Weather and soil conditions make the life of farmers difficult which leads them to get older faster. The respondents suggest that any off-farm activities are better. It is easier to enter such activities if you have been to school because you learn about opportunities, you can record income and expenses, and you can get better by reading and learning about the particular activity.

## *Education*

In 1984, 20.4% of children attended school in the rural areas of the Shewa region in which Turufe Kecheme is grouped. 22.6% of males and 18.1% of females attended. The percentage of children who attend school has been increasing. One of the causes of the increment is the financial and material support of NGOs. Previously the nearest secondary school was found at Shashemene, which is about 10 km away and some students dropped out due to financial problems to pay for transport. But this problem is solved, and most students attend secondary school at Kuyera, which is two km away from the *kebele*, and all students walk on foot.

There is a primary school teaching grades 1 to 6 and a junior school within two km. Any farmer who can buy stationery, clothes and pay school fees sends all his children. There is a shift system so some can go in the morning and some in the afternoon. Some community members are worried about the proposed move to full day schooling but this may not be implemented until the construction of further classrooms is completed.

The school fee for Kuyera Junior School is 20 *birr*. This fee is irrespective of the number of students from one household (i.e. whether one or two or many children learn at Kuyera School the payment is only 20*birr*). The same rule also works for Kuyera Secondary School, its fee is 30 *birr*. In both schools there are additional payments of two *birr* per student for sport.

The community pays 20 *birr* per year per household for Wetera primary school whether they have a child who attends school or not. The money is used to pay the salary for the teachers employed by the community. If their children attend Wetera primary school there is no fee paid. But almost all of the community prefer to send their children to Kuyera School.

The community pays both this school payment and land tax together. This is the rule of the *kebele*. Someone cannot pay only tax without paying the school payment.

### *Wetera-Turufe Primary School Attendance 1994*

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	<i>grade 1</i>	<i>grade 2</i>	<i>grade 3</i>	<i>grade 4</i>	<i>grade 5</i>	<i>grade 6</i>	<i>total</i>
pupils	60	55	35	21	21	14	206
teachers	5	7	7	7	7	7	7
classes	1	1	1	1	1	1	7

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Source: visit to school

There is also a *kebele* school at the *kebele* office. Small children learn the *fidel* (alphabet). The payment is 0.50 *birr* per child. In addition the teacher gets his salary from a Catholic NGO. A few children from rich households learn at 'Lucy' kindergarten at Kuyera. The monthly fee is 100 *birr*.

Three teachers are paid by the community. There is a shortage of classrooms, tables and chairs, blackboards, books, and chalk, pens and paper. The fee is 10 *birr*: three *birr* are paid in September, December and January, and one *birr* in May. The average costs is 20 *birr* for pens, stationery, etc, and one *birr* for books.

Kuyera Junior High School is two km from Turufe, and 6 km from Wetera. In 1994, it had 1,111 pupils and worked on two shifts. Eighteen pupils did not have to pay because they were poor. Shashemene

Comprehensive School had 2,869 pupils. The fees were 10 *birr* for the children of teachers and former soldiers, 25 *birr* for former students and 30 *birr* for repeaters and new students. Pupils from the *kebele* had to pay two *birr* a day for transport or walk 12 km. Some female students were kidnapped when walking on foot.

In 2005 there is a shortage of teachers in Wetera school, and one to two teachers are paid by the community. This year some classes were constructed to avoid a shortage of classroom. All students attend secondary school at Kuyera and, as of the last few years, abduction is not practiced in the area when female students go to and from school, unless she runs away with a man with whom she has an affair.

In 1994, a group of men claimed that 87.5% of boys in the community go to primary school and 12.5% to high school. A group of women said about 75% of girls go to primary school and 25% to secondary school.

Parents discuss and decide which children should go to school and which should stay at home and work on the farm or in the house. Older boys and girls in the household are preferred by the parents to help their fathers on the farm and their mothers in the house, but this does not necessarily prevent them from learning. If they are good students they can help their parents on the half-day after school time. Junior sons and daughters in the household are relatively free to attend school.

In 1994, there were about 60 unemployed school leavers in the *kebele*. In 2005 most unemployed school leavers are dependent on families, some are married and have got land from their family but, according to the local people, they are not hard workers, they waste their money by chewing *chat* and drinking local drinks. Some do not plough their land, instead they give it for sharecropping and they like wandering around the village and recreation in Kuyera. At the time when most farmers sell potatoes (in August) they work as brokers and get commissions.

In 1994, there was one person who had attended university and about six who have been to colleges. The one who has been to university (Mulatu Gebre) completed his BA in history from Addis Ababa University in 1983 and now is a teacher in Shashemene High School in Shashemene town. Two have graduated with diplomas: Alemu Bichamo from Jimma Agricultural Institute in 1983 and Mulugeta Fitam from Alemaya Agricultural College (now University) in 1986. The former left a government job and is assisting his father who has a public pharmacy. The latter is working in the Agriculture Bureau of Arssi Zone in Oromia Region. Both are Kambatas by ethnic origin and their parents were expelled from the *kebele*. The remaining four graduates from colleges are graduates of Nazret Teachers' Training Institute in 1986 (Negeso Tubulo, Edris Usman, Marta Jibo, and Tseganesh Chamieso) and all of them are government employees working in different places in the country. In 2005, there are a few individuals who attend universities and colleges (both private and government). For example Mamo Anota has been attending 'Ciro' agricultural college (at Harar) since 2003 and at the end of 2006 he will graduate with a Diploma.

### *Training*

There are people in the *kebele* who have been on training programmes. In 1979/80 one Health Assistant (Guye Anguse) was trained under the MoH but he is not using the knowledge now. In 1980 five Agriculture and Community Assistants were trained by the MoA but they have stopped giving service to the *kebele*. In 1983 seven members of the *kebele* were trained in handicrafts by the Crafts Training Centre under the Ministry of Education (MoE). Equipment was bought and given to them. Earlier they produced chairs and tables from bamboo but they are not working at present. In 1980 five Traditional Birth Attendants were trained with the assistance of UNICEF; only two of them are assisting the

community using the knowledge they gained. In the first training at Agarfa (1976) for Agriculture and Community Development, one person was trained for six months but he has since died. In 1984 one person (Hirpo Bitimo) was trained for eight days at Ziway in forestry and animal health; he is using the knowledge for himself and the community. Finally, one person (Desta Wachalo) was trained in 1988 at Bako for a month in forestry and animal health and he is also assisting the people using the knowledge he gained.

In 1994, a respondent reported that there were farmers who were trained at the Adult Training Centre before 1989. Among other things they learned:

- how improved seeds are important and how to use them
- modern methods of cattle breeding and preparation of fodder
- about the side effects of deforestation and the importance of afforestation
- how to use modern ploughs and how terracing is useful
- how to give first aid to women during childbirth (for women)
- how to save fuel by preparing modern cooking places (for women)

However, since 1989 they have not used their training because there has been no one responsible for organising and inciting them to use their knowledge.

Two youngsters (one male and one female) attended a training of one month, organised by Pathfinder International in May 2005. They were trained on community-based family planning at Negele town. They began teaching the community on family planning and sexually transmitted diseases.

Three NGOs (African Human Action, Catholic and Compassion) have been giving training for different *kebele*, including Turufe. About six people attended the trainings, which focused on HIV/AIDS, childcare, side effects of harmful customs such as circumcision, and importance of using contraceptives, etc. They gave condoms for anyone who needed them. Previously they taught the community using the knowledge they gained, at meetings and even from door to door. But presently they do not teach, instead writing a monthly report to get their monthly salary (70 *birr*) because the NGOs do not supervise them.

### *Health*

There was a leprosy clinic in Wetera which was established by the Germans. The clinic was closed in 1992 when most of the patients left the *kebele*. Most of the patients were Kambatas, who were expelled from the *kebele*. Kuyera hospital, now called Shashemene General Hospital is about 2.5 km from the *kebele*. The hospital provides general health services and there is a Leprosy Centre and a clinic for eye patients connected to it. The initial consulting fee in 1994 was one *birr*. To be an inpatient cost 150 *birr* (surgical) and 80 *birr* (medical). There is an Adventist health clinic 6km from the site. In 1994 it cost one *birr* to travel to it and the initial consulting fee was 1 *birr*. A full course of antibiotic treatment cost 23 *birr*, while malaria treatment cost 1.50 *birr*. There is a doctor two km away whose initial consulting fee was one *birr* in 1994. There was a traditional healer 10km away; it cost one *birr* to travel there. He did not charge an initial consulting fee but did charge for medicine. The cost depended on the type of illness, and varied between 150 - 200 *birr* for adults and 60 - 120 *birr* for children.

In 2005, some rich or medium people prefer to go private clinics at Shashemene and Awassa (if the disease is serious) because the Kuyera hospital is poor in facilities and there is also a shortage of medicine. To get Shashemene costs two *birr* whereas to Awassa it costs six *birr* for a single trip. Some rich people go to Wondo Genet to get customary treatment holy/spring water to prevent cough. To get there it costs five *birr*.

The most common diseases in the area include yellow fever and diarrhoea among children. Traditional drugs exist for *mich*, *ebach*, *nekersa*, *gamtoke*, and *tenecha*.

*Mich* is a disease believed to be caused by a sudden change of the weather, and particularly by strong sun. Its symptoms are cold, headache, loss of appetite, wounds, and swellings on the skin. Traditional medicines are a herb known as *damakasse* and the leaves of the white eucalyptus tree. *Damakasse* is drunk squeezed in water, and can be rubbed over the affected skin. The white eucalyptus tree is boiled in water and the patient inhales the evaporation that comes out of the boiled leaf by bowing down and putting his face over it. Both these traditional treatments and modern medicine can cure *mich*. It is also believed that *mich* can be prevented by eating a special food called *fetto* with *injera*, or by drinking it by mixing with water.

*Ebach* and *nekersa* are wounds on the skin. *Ebach* appears on either side of the ribs, around the testicles, and on the buttocks, while *nekersa* appears all over the body. Both exist in hot areas and the cause might be the heat, but the people do not know.

*Gamtoke* is a disease that occurs on the soft parts of human body. It results in swellings which burst and create wounds on the joints of hands and legs as well as on the stomach. There is a leaf which cures *gamtoke* but informants could not remember its name. The community also burn the wound with the heated handle of an umbrella. Modern medical treatment can also cure *gamtoke*.

*Tanacha* is a swelling over the gland around a neck, stomach, and also other soft parts of human body. Traditional cures for this disease is to burn the innermost part of the swelling using heated iron material. There is also a herb that can cure *tanacha* but informants could not mention its name. Modern medicine can also cure it.

The traditional treatment for gynaecological problems is hand massage. The modern health assistants suggested that this does not have effective results except that it makes the placenta flow.

Persistent itching is scabies and is caused by poor hygiene.

*Kwashiorkor* swells the body (face and legs) and is caused by insufficient protein. It attacks poor children; and also sometimes their parents.

*Mogn bagegn* is a disease with symptoms similar to malaria, such as headaches, increase in body temperature etc. To cure this illness they bleed the joints of the arm by slightly pricking the blood vessel with a blade.

Asthma (respiratory problem) affects the individuals who have had it before, mainly in the summer because it is wet, and at a time when there is a fast change of weather condition (from hot to cold, and vice versa).

Typhoid is a water-born disease caused by dirty water and unclean food. It can be prevented by drinking clean water and by preparing food carefully, or by taking medical treatment.

Informants mentioned that diseases that increase in December and January when the peasants drink alcohol and increase sexual intercourse are probably gonorrhoea and syphilis. The wives get these diseases after sexual intercourse with their infected husbands.

People try to treat their illnesses themselves. They bleed the joints of their arm by slightly pricking the blood vessel with a blade. The bleeding temporarily cures the disease. But repeated practice of this

method can cause the loss of a great deal of blood from their body and can bring about more serious diseases. People also try to prevent illnesses by cleaning their bodies, compounds, clothes, food and the water they drink.

The people experienced epidemics in 1984 during the country-wide drought but informants said that people did not die as a result. The drought brought about diarrhoea first in Bute Malka Oda *kebele* from where it was transmitted to all the *kebele* in Shashemene *Wereda* in which Turufe Kecheme is found and to the neighbouring *wereda* of Arssi Negele and Ajje.

The major dry season (*bega*) diseases are TB, eye diseases, and kidney problems. The major rainy season diseases are malaria and colds. The chronic diseases which affect old people are TB, eye diseases and colds. The most common epidemic diseases are cholera, leprosy, and TB.

In 1994, a group of men ranked diseases in terms of the problems they cause as follows:

1. Liver disease (*infectious hepatitis*): They don't know what causes this or how to prevent it. If they get it they use traditional medicine or go to hospital (about 10% of the time)
2. TB: They think this is caused by dust, bad smells, smoking and drinking. They can prevent it by cleaning their surroundings and not smoking or drinking. If they get it they go to the hospital for modern medical treatment.
3. Kidney disease: This is caused by hard work and carrying heavy things. Prevention involves not working too hard and they seek treatment at the hospital.
4. Gastric illness: This is caused by drinking a lot of coffee, being angry, and drinking and not eating balanced food. It can be prevented by avoiding the causes. Home treatment (a bit less than a quarter of the time) involves eating enough food like milk, butter etc. Otherwise they go to the hospital.
5. Leprosy: They believe that leprosy cannot be transmitted as children do not inherit it from their parents; it should be treated in hospital with modern methods.
6. Eye problems
7. Malaria
8. Colds
9. Headaches
10. Gonorrhoea

In 1994, a group of women ranked diseases in order of the problem they cause as follows:

1. Gastric illness: The group believes this is caused by eating sour foods and drinking a lot of coffee. It can be prevented by eating soft food and reducing the amount of coffee drunk. Home treatment involves drinking milk and eating butter (about a quarter of the time) and they follow this up if necessary with modern medicine ordered by physicians at the hospital.
2. Kidney disease: This is caused by too much work. It can be prevented by drinking a lot of water. Treatment involves reducing the workload and then going to hospital.
3. Leprosy: They don't know the cause or prevention of leprosy and treatment requires modern medicine.
4. Asthma (bronchial): This is caused by bad smells, like dung, and dust at harvest time. It can be prevented by keeping the compound clean and it can be treated by drinking water obtained around or at the church (about a quarter of the time), or taking modern medicines.
5. Gynaecological problems: These are caused by birth and infection. Prevention involves not doing intensive work and eating a balanced diet. A quarter of the time they go to the home of people who traditionally know the treatment otherwise they use modern medicine ordered by physicians.
6. TB
7. Colds
8. Malaria
9. Headaches
10. Eye problems

In 1994, the women's group ranked children's diseases as follows:

1. Measles are caused by hot weather and wind. The illness can be prevented by vaccination and treated by traditional care - i.e. not allowing other people to see the patient (a quarter of the time), or modern medicine.
2. Throat infections are caused by sanitation problems and can be prevented by keeping children clean. Traditional treatment (50% of time) involves an operation to remove part of the dangly bit at the back of the mouth, otherwise modern medical treatment.
3. Coughing is caused by bad smells and sanitation problems. Prevention involves keeping the compound and house clean. Treatment involves eating hot foods (about a third of the time), traditional medicine (about a third) and going to the hospital.
4. Diarrhoea results from eating bad food and can be avoided by eating good food. Modern medical treatment is required.
5. Persistent itching is caused by a sanitation problem and eating unbalanced food. Prevention involves keeping clothes, body etc clean and eating enough quality food. It can be cured by traditional medicine (rather more than half the time), washing in the water at the church (*tsebel*) (about 12% of the time), or going to the hospital for modern treatment.
6. swells the body
7. fever
8. bronchitis/pneumonia
9. meningitis
10. dry cough
11. eye problems

Some other information we have:

Dry cough is caused by cold air and can be prevented by keeping children properly

Tonsillitis is caused by wind, the sun's heat and cold and this can be prevented through traditional treatment or by keeping children properly.

Stomach-ache is caused by unclean food and water and it can be prevented by providing clean water and food.

TB increases during the harvest because of the dust (November, December, January) and stays high up to June which is ploughing time. It decreases from July to September because it rains and there is mud instead of dust.

Kidney diseases increase especially at weeding time in *belg* and *meher*. They plant *tef* and potato at both seasons and this involves really hard work. It is also high in December and January because the farmers sell their harvest and drink a lot of *areke*.

Gastric illnesses are common between October to January because of intensive work and then up to June because they cannot get food like milk, butter etc. But in summer there is enough fodder (grass) so the cows can give milk which the farmers use to treat the disease.

From September to November it is cold and most of the patients are uncomfortable.

Eye problems increase at harvest time because of the dust and at ploughing time because the land is dry.

Malaria occurs between September and November because it is marshy and the flies increase in number.

Most people are affected by the disease. The time is also cold which makes people who have had malaria before, sick.

## 6. Consumption

### *Food*

There is a type of *tef* called *buniyu* with a red and white colour, that can be harvested within shorter periods than other crops. Red *tef* can be harvested two and a half months after planting and white *tef* three months. These varieties of *tef* and potatoes which can be harvested two and a half months after planting are emergency crops in the area.

In 1994, the people ate wild food such as *badessa* (*Syzygium guineense*), *gora* (*Rubus apetalus*), *agamssa* (*Carissa edulis*), *olati* (*Mimusops kummel*), and *k'ammon* (*Tracyspermun copiticum*). These were usually eaten by cattle herders and hunters as supplementary food to their usual diet but presently, these foods are not consumed.

The only famines which people remember are the big *Rukisa* and *Rukisa Qalo'o* (little *rukisa*) which took place about one hundred and fifty and forty years ago respectively. Particularly during the first *Rukisa* it was remembered by the group of informants that people ate horses and donkeys as a result of the famine. They say that the *Chawa* group of people (*Faqi* - tanners and *Fuga* - potters) within Arssi Oromo refused to eat horse and donkey meat during this famine. In 1985 there were a major drought in Ethiopia. During this time some people migrated to Gambella (refuge camp) from Tigray through the help of the government. And within a short time they came to Turufe to visit relatives and work as a daily labourers. They were able to get land to build a house in the villagisation program (1986) and they were also able to get farmland during land distribution in the late 1980s.

*Injera*, bread, potatoes and *shiro* (beans) are common foods among the community members. But the rich consume *tef* (in the form of *injera*) and others use a mixture of *tef*, wheat, maize and barley. Many middle status and poor households consume *enset* (false banana) in the months when they face food scarcity (mostly in May, June, July). It is on holidays that most community members consume meat. But the rich and some middle-income houses could consume milk, whenever there is a cow that delivers it. However, they can choose between maize, *tef*, wheat, barley, potatoes, and sorghum according to availability. During meals, if every member of the household is present at home, everyone eats at the same time. But usually the grown up children eat food from the same plate with the parents while small children are offered food separately on another plate. During school time, however, students in the household are given priority in eating food and go to school as soon as possible. There are not separate plates for each member of the household.

### *Saving, Investment and Credit*

There are peasants in the *kebele* who have saving accounts in government banks but the majority of them hoard their money in their home. Investment of money is practiced by a few rich peasants who lend their money for profit to those who need money to practice agriculture, particularly during the rainy seasons. There are a few peasants who also invest money in trade in cattle, potatoes and anything else they think will be profitable.

Most of the community members borrow money from their *Iddir* or from relatives. The *Iddir* expects the return of money after the following harvest, but the money from a relative or friend might not be returned if the two agree. The *Iddir* lend money with interest rates but this is lower than that of the money lenders. People want to borrow from the *Iddir* since the interest they pay supports its budget; however relatives and friends do not expect interest. In addition to money, the members of *Iddir* can borrow grain, and they will replace it at harvesting season. This also has an interest in terms of grain.

Farmers do not invest in livestock since there is a shortage of grazing land in the area. Some send their children to Shashemene, Awassa, Addis Ababa for education.

Some households became poorer because the household head died and the wife became head of household, or because they grew too old for farm work and have not enough labour, or developed health problems and spent all their wealth on medical treatment. The houses of wealthy people are not bigger, but some of them have more than two houses which is not usual in the *kebele*.

In 1994, to build a new house cost more than 5,000 *birr* with a tin roof but between 1,000-2,000 *birr* with a straw roof. This price is slightly higher in 2005, due to deforestation and resulting scarcity of wood. A house can last for about 15-20 years if the roof is made of thatch and 30-40 years if the roof is tin.

### *Household Assets*

Assets in a wealthy home might include wooden beds, a clock, a cupboard, table, chairs, bench, mattresses, sheets, carpets, glasses, plates, cups, a tray, all types of kitchen equipment, a tape recorder with radio cassette, bicycle and a lantern. The middle wealth households have a radio, wooden beds, cart (pulled by donkey), and different agricultural and kitchen equipment, and a bicycle. In a poor home the assets you can find are prepared skins used as a mattress, home-made stools, cooking materials like a coffee pot and cups, and *wot* and *injera* preparing materials and maybe a *kuraz* (kerosene lamp). The destitute have only few kitchen implements which are not enough for them.

Youngsters listen to a radio when they are working (threshing, harvesting etc) and most people listen radio in the evening, and at night time when they have rest time. They use the radio to find out about the general condition of the country, and in 2005 mainly to know what was going on in relation to the elections.

### *Local Services*

There are six shops in the *kebele*. These shops normally stock items such as coffee, sugar, oil, kerosene, soap, salt, matches, blades, pens, pencils, exercise books, soft drinks, biscuits, white bread, *sambusa* (samosas) and cigarettes. The nearest drug shop is found in Kuyera town, 4 km from Turufe and 8 km from Wetera and is privately owned. The government drug shop is at Shashemene town; there is also a shop at the hospital (2km).

During the *Derg* the agricultural extension agents used to visit the *kebele* frequently and one agent lived in the *kebele*, but they seldom visit at present. During the *Derg* the agent had an office in the *kebele* so he could have close contact with the *kebele* members. He appointed 20 peasants as models whom he always visited but he also visited other peasants frequently. Anyone with a problem could approach him.

There is no *Kaleecha* (ritual healer) or equivalent in the *kebele*; but informants mentioned that the closest *Kaleecha* around Turufe Kecheme is in Hamulo *kebele* which is about two hours walk away. There are three traditional doctors for bone-setting and herbs in the *kebele*: Awano Bateso, Legiso Tesiso, and Zeray Haile Selassie. There are two Traditional Birth Attendants in the *kebele*: Dehab Gebremariam and Asres Haile. There are three others who are not trained but assist using their traditional knowledge: Asres Wondemagegn, Rade Bech, and Anote Shanqute. There are also Traditional Birth Attendants for cattle and livestock: *Sheik* Mohammed Lugo (who was chairman of the *kebele*) and Hadha Kashamo (mother of Kashamo). Another person with similar training but who is not providing service to the *kebele* is

Bushura Lafam.

Habtamu Mamo, Alemitu Fatao (female representative of the village), Turye Bekele (health representative of the village), and other three people have been taking training given by NGOs (Catholic, Compassion, and Africa human action). Anyone can get condoms from them. Guye Hangusie is also a health representative of the *kebele*. He was trained by the MoH, and he vaccinates children when there is a polio vaccination.

## 7. Local Institutions and Organisations

### *Households*

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.

Arssi Oromo practice adoption (from distant relatives or war captives). Adoption of war captives was practiced in the past when the *gada* system was operational. People practice adoption now, but only of relatives.

The term for a house in the community for local people (Oromo) is *warra*. In general *warra* include the whole family (that means including a married son/daughter, and their wife/husband and their children). Specifically it refers to a group of people living under one roof. There is an obligation to help and respect each other in every aspect of life among members of a household.

### *Marriage*

Among the Arssi Oromo of Turufe Kecheme, as among the surrounding Oromo of Arssi, marriage is always exogamous - between lineages and not within. *Weyrera* is not an ethnic group by itself. It is a clan within the numerous clans of Arssi Oromo in the area. It has its own group of *belbela* (lineages) which are listed by informants as: *Togona, Algalo, Alfare, Sira, Bari, Molole, Wallashe, Umana, Meshera, Hasano, Dalle, Oditu, Boritu, Dandolle, Rulitu, Darimu, and Jatane*. Each *belbela* is named by its own founders who are the patrilineal heads of the clans.

Regarding marriage, there are different beliefs and practices between the native Oromo and the settler Amharas and Tigrayans. Bride wealth (*musteyas* or *metaya*) among the Amhara and Tigrayans in the *kebele* is less than 100-200 *birr* while the *gabera* (bride wealth) of the Oromo reaches up to 3,000 *birr*. The Oromo place a stronger emphasis on bride wealth (*gabera*) than the non-Oromo people in the *kebele*. The payment of the *gabera* is the guarantee for the couple to achieve a peaceful and successful

marriage. Previously, it was only after paying bride wealth that the husband claims *murti* (decision) from the parents of his wife after which there is less probability of divorce. If she divorces and marries another husband, her children by the second husband are believed to be children of the first husband because he obtained *murti* over her. The wife that a husband married according to *murti* has to be buried close to his house when she dies even if she divorced him and married another husband. A husband cannot be forced to pay blood compensation (*guma*) if he kills his wife for whom he has paid all the necessary forms of bride wealth to her family. On the other hand, he may be accused of murder and be forced to pay the blood compensation if he kills her without the payment of the bride wealth, whether the marriage was conducted with the permission and willingness of the wife or not. After her death due to any reason, her family can also forbid her burial until the *shanacha* meet and decide upon the matter. It is only if the husband completes the payment of the bride wealth that she can be buried. Recently the gift of *gabera* (bride wealth) can be paid after the wedding ceremony has been conducted. This is to provide additional time for the groom to save money for the payment. The amount of *gabera* has also been decreasing, though some people continue to pay more, considering it as a source of proud. If the groom is poor and cannot pay *gabera*, he sends elders to convince her parents. The problem can be solved by sending 100.00 *birr* and *tej* as a *sebeta busa* (in Oromiffa) or *Afe-mezgiya* (in Amharic), which means something used to open one's mouth to talk. This 100.00 *birr* is distributed to her relatives (from her clan) and he will have a good relation with the in-laws.

The Muslim Oromo may be polygamous depending on their economic capacity. They may have up to 4 wives at a time. The maximum, minimum and average marriage payments for Oromo girls is 3,000, 100, and 1,000 *birr* respectively. For the non-Oromo girls, the maximum amount of payment for the marriage is 300, and the minimum and the average payments are 50 and 100 *birr* respectively. The payments are made by the groom or his parents to the bride's family. If the marriage is *welgara* (exchange of girls between lineages) the bride wealth payment may be between lineages of the groom and the bride.

*Welgara* is a type of marriage when a man's sister marries his wife's brother. The objective of *welgera* is to avoid the payment of *gabera*. Parents who want a wife for their son, search out a girl who has a brother who can marry their daughter. This will not involve the payment of *gabera* (bridewealth). The exchange of girls is considered to be a *gabera*. Most of the time this type of marriage is practiced among people who have no capacity to pay *gabera*.

The Arssi can trace their genealogy going back up to 16 generations and reject marriage with relatives at a distance of less than 7 generations.

There are 6 types of marriage, all of which are still practiced in the *kebele*:

(1) *gebara* - the bridegroom used to pay from 50 to 120 cattle to the parents of the bride or provide labour service, honey, butter etc if he was poor; this kind of marriage still exists in Turufe Kecheme. Now the bridegroom has to buy clothes for the father, mother and paternal uncles of the bride in addition to bride wealth that can reach up to 3,000 *birr* and more than 10 cattle. The groom also has to buy cloth and gold rings for the bride. His relatives contribute cattle and send them to the parents of the wife (*gebera*). The bride's relatives also contribute cattle to send to the parents of the groom. The groom's relatives send the cattle when the couple tie the ring and the bride's relatives send them on the wedding day. After the groom's parents receive the cattle they take some for themselves and give the rest to their son (*kerta*). The groom's relatives receive nothing but the bride's relatives who contribute cattle receive clothes (*bulluko*) from the groom. The parents of the bride decides who is to receive *bulluko* and tell the son to send it. This is indirectly an indication to those who receive it that they have been chosen to help the bride. It is only these relatives who must contribute cattle. The parents should provide their son with a machine gun and, before the revolution, land, a horse, spear and clothes, in addition to cattle. Some informants mentioned that the parent of the bride may give the bridegroom a gun if they like him. However this is not an obligation. The groom uses it as a means of protection from enemies. The provision of a machine gun used to be practical but has not been in the last 3 - 4 years. Until the

reformation (1991) anyone could buy and sell machine guns but since then guns have come under the government's control and it is difficult to get hold of them. Most of the farmers have also become poor and could not afford one anyway. When a daughter gets married parents should provide her with clothes, furniture, one or 2 big pots, butter, flour and cows (*gegayo*). The *gabera* type of marriage is arranged by parents and elders. If there are disputes the *shanach* (elders among lineages) are expected to negotiate a compromise so that the marriage will continue.

After the groom has paid all these, the father of the bride can also demand for him to bring two big jars of honey to give him the bride with a ceremonial feast. During the feast, the father of the bride kills an ox or a cow which the companions of the groom eat. Her mother prepares *chuko* (grain mixed with much butter) which is sufficient to feed about 20 persons who will come accompanying the groom. *Injera* and *marqa* (porridge) will also be prepared by the bride's parent to be eaten during the feast. According to the older tradition, the groom, the bride, the father and the best man will be seated on a hide and one big jar of melted butter and half the jar of *dadhi* will be poured over their heads during the feast at the bride's parents house. However this is no longer practiced in the *kebele*. After the feast is finished, the groom and his bride may be given two big jars of butter, complete house furniture, and more than eight cattle (*gegayo*), as a dowry from the parents of the bride.

(2) *wolgera* - exchange of girls between different lineages. (3) *buta* (kidnapping). (4) *hewata* (marriage agreed on by the couple). (5) *dalla* - inheritance of a widow. (6) *benbeto* (marriage to dead wife's sister). For subsequent marriages there are no contributions from parents and relatives. The couple bring together the wealth they have acquired during earlier marriages. When a daughter is kidnapped for the first time and if her parents are not willing for such a marriage the man must return her to them with 5 cattle. Then she can marry again as the culture allows and these 5 cattle are used as a payment to the 2nd husband to consider her as a girl. When a woman becomes a widow her husband's brother becomes her second husband. She has no right to marry anyone else unless he allows it. If he marries her he keeps the brother's property and children in the family. He is then an uncle to some of her children and father to the rest. In 2005, abduction is not practiced, unless the girl wants to run away with the man with whom she has had an affair. Recently some young people want to marry through *hewata* (a marriage which takes place by the agreement of the two young people without the consent of their parents).

For one or 2 years after marriage the couple live in the compound of the groom's family. After that they build a new house anywhere they like but not far from the groom's family. Generally the bride does not live near her family because marriage is always between lineages and not within; however, there are a few cases in which the new couple build a house in the compound of the bride's parent, mainly if they are poor. In this case, the groom's family help them in all aspects. Most of the Oromo people belong to the Weyrara clan group and they marry people from outside the area where this group is living.

### *Divorce*

Divorce is rare and households are stable. In the event of divorce among the Arssi Oromo, children who still suckle the breast of the mother go with her while older ones stay with the father. If she is pregnant and/or breastfeeding the husband has an obligation to give something in cash or kind at a fixed time as decided by the elders. The babies go back to the father from the divorced wife once breastfeeding has stopped.

The divorce in which a wife gets half the assets including land applies only to marriages among the Tigrayans and the Amharas in the *kebele*. In cases where the husband and the wife are going to take a different number of children, the amount of land each gets depends on the size of the family they are going to have. Among the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele* a divorced wife do not obtain any assets. She has no right to divide and take any property which she and her husband get after marriage. She can only take her clothes and the things she received as gifts from her parents during the marriage, which may include

furniture and cows.

If a woman is married under *gabera*, some people believe that she has no right to share all the properties. This is because her husband paid more (as *gabera*) to her parent to marry her. But she can take her clothes, house equipment and other properties that she got from her relatives as a gift during the marriage. If there are children, especially sons, who live with the woman, he shares land for bringing up the children. Later on the land belongs to the children. Both the widows and the widowers have a right to remarry if they can.

### *Inheritance*

During the pre-Islamic period only elder children inherited their father's wealth among the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele*. After conversion to Islam the rule of inheritance was influenced by Islamic *sharia* law which allows every child to inherit a portion of their parents' wealth. However the traditional rule of inheritance is still predominant. The community believe that an unmarried male son is a legitimate heir. Daughters can inherit only when there is no son. The son who inherited can provide a portion of the property to his patrilineal sister even if she is married. The property is not shared with already-married sons because the society believes they have already taken their share from the father while he was alive. However, sometimes inheritance depends on the will/testament of the deceased, and there are some children who control all properties when their parents become old. Even though they control the property they do not make decision about the sale of it. But after their parents' death they will have a larger share of the inheritance, this can be supported by a will.

The eldest son can inherit everything if both father and mother have died. The other children's portion depends on the eldest's will. There was no inheritance of land after the revolution and the *kebele* officials could redistribute either to the family itself or to other households. There has been no land redistribution in the *kebele* since 1991 but now the family can use the land after the death of the head of household. If the father and mother die, the one who inherits their property is the oldest son (*Angefa* in Amharic). But if the older sons are married and there is a younger son who did not get married and is living with his parents, he will inherit the property.

Inheritance of land was legally prohibited during the *Derg* but people used to practice it according to local tradition. After the coming to power of the *Derg*, it was and still is, the youngest son who remains at home with his mother, without being married, that could/can inherit his father's land. Elder brothers who are already married and provided land by the *kebele* cannot inherit their fathers' land. But according to the customary Arssi Oromo practice in the area only the eldest son inherits his father's horse, spear, shield, and *korma* (bull).

A younger brother can inherit the wife and property of a deceased older brother and bring up the latter's children if the wife has not reached the menopause. This is to prevent the transfer of property to a non-kin group and bad treatment of the children by another husband. If the first younger brother of the dead husband is not willing to inherit the wife he goes to the *shanacha*, tells his problem, and the next younger brother can inherit the wife and property of the elder brother. If the dead husband has no brothers one of the sons of the dead husband's paternal uncle can inherit. However, the law supports a widow if she refuses to marry her brother-in-law. But the women in the community rarely defend their rights, partly because of the influence of the community and the culture.

## *Kinship*

Kinship ties involve economic and social obligations both to mother's and father's kin. Kin groups have to help each other and cooperate for example during marriage, quarrels with other ethnic or kin groups, mourning, and have to practice the same religious beliefs (Islam). Members of kinship groups are also responsible for contributing and paying blood compensation for murder (*guma*), which is usually a hundred or more cattle, for any member of the group. If a member of a kin group is not willing to contribute cattle for the payment of *guma* for a kin member, the other members of the group forcefully take his cattle to add to their contribution. This traditional law is applicable to every member of the kin group irrespective of differences in status, sex, or wealth. Kin members are also expected to make contributions of money when their members are punished by a court or are unable to pay the money borrowed from another person.

Among the Orthodox Christians, god parentage is common. The biological parents allow a close friend to be a godparent to their child. A godparent visits the family of his / her godchild on holy days. They also buy clothes on holy days, in particular Easter. For Easter the parents of the child bring *injera* with *doro wot* (chicken stew), traditionally this gift is known as *Akfay*. On *Buhe* holiday, which is celebrated on *Nehase* 13 the godparent provides bread to their godchild. Some godparents cover the expense for educational materials of their godchild. The relationship between households will also be strong if tied with god parentage. They also help each other in times of crisis.

Some households have children who migrate to urban areas for work, and get financial and material support from them. They also give them grain at harvest time. The children visit the parents at some annual holidays. It is common to help one's parent or children. Those members of the *kebele* who are better off in economic status, help their kin by lending money, and they can also help them materially (giving oxen for ploughing). The poor also help them in labour.

## *Ethnicity, Clans and Lineages*

As in all Oromo societies lineage is important among the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele*. The Oromo groups in Turufe Kecheme are members of the *Weyrera*, *Se'emana*, and *Gomora* clans which are patrilineal. The land belongs to the *Weyrera* group. Members of the *Se'emana* and *Gomora* groups live in the *kebele* mixed with the *Weyrera* without having territorial claims.

The members of the *Weyrera* clan are divided into the different *belbela* which are described below. Each *belbela* has its respective leaders. The senior *belbela* within the group is *Bariso* and it is the leader of this *belbela* who is also the respected head of the *Weyrera* clan. Marriage within a clan is forbidden. There are a few couples, who have married within a clan without the permission or consent of their parents/families. The members of the *kebele* neglect these couples and they do not accept them to be a member of *Iddir*. The couples have no relationship with their relatives.

There are Arssi Oromo groups in Arssi Negele *Wereda* and other *kebele* in Shashemene *Wereda* who have lineage relations with the three Arssi Oromo groups in Turufe Kecheme. These are: *Hebanu*, *Eka*, *Siye*, *Kanshe*, *Woyo*, *Seko*, *Qomma*, *Hambetu*, *Wajji*, *Ajamo*, *Farachu*, *Alujana*, *Fajji* and *Madarch*. Among these the first nine are known as the *Liba-Shan* and they have a common ancestor. Elders claimed that it is heads of these nine clans who could/can be chosen as *Aba Gada* for eight years in turn within the five *gada* periods (*Birmaji*, *Bultuma*, *Horatta*, *Bahara*, and *Robele*). However, the last five clans and the *Weyrera*, the *Se'emana*, and the *Gomora* in Turufe Kecheme *kebele* are not eligible to be elected as *Aba Gada* in the five years cycle of *gada* system. The senior of all these clans is the *Hebanu*, which exist around Arssi Negele and Siraro, and it is the head of this clan who is also the leader of all the

group of clans in the area.

Economic obligations associated with lineages include contributing money or cattle during blood compensation for murder, payment of bride wealth, and debt. The obligations are to the corporate group. Marriage among lineages is exogamous and they practice levirate. The *gada* system is not practiced today as it used to be before the conquest of Emperor Menelik; and ritual obligations attached to it are not prevalent at present in the *kebele*.

If a dispute/conflict arises between different groups, the cases are brought to the elders by one of the disputants or their relatives. The elders are known or the disputants can select elders. There is no discrimination in decision between the dominant group (Oromos) and other ethnic groups (minority). The elders treat both equally.

The non-Oromo groups believe that the *kebele* officials, the majority of whom are Oromo, give priority for their own group. If non-Oromos lose property they mentioned that it is not possible to get cooperation from the *kebele* since the *kebele* officials are from the Oromo group and they do want to expose the thief.

Lineages are linked together in clans which act as corporate groups. Each clan has its respective *belbela* (lineages). For example, the *belbela* of Woyo clan are *Gonshe, Dida, Jaro, Bocho, and Ukulashe*. The *belbela* of Madarccho are *Habibo, Lemantu, Bushasha, Bora, Tamama, Dagache, Daye, Abaftu, Hurbega, and Gamamo*. The *belbela* of Wajji are *Jarso, Kura, Hasano, Bushaminu, Fanjaju, Chaka, and Mekona*. The *belbela* of Kanshe are *Kabir, Digalu, Buko, Waqo, Belaka, Boreche, Bamado, Birbo'a, Arabo and Kibo'a*. The *belbela* of each clan have their respective elders who are recognised by the society as heads of the clans. For example, the elder within the *belbela* of Wajji is *Mekona* whose members are predominantly found in the Arssi Zone of Oromia in Chilalo *Wereda*.

### *Life Cycle Changes and Rites of Passage*

In 1994, Informants said that the *gada* leaders elected by the society in the area in 1983 were still in power. However, this traditional Oromo organisation is not officially legalised at the local level. The fact that the *gada* leaders remained in power (more than 10 years) is against the traditional rule which allows *Aba Gada* to be in office only for 8 years. The really important political organisation in the community today is the *kebele. Atete*, which was practiced by women who gather near a river, a tree, or on a plain area to pray to God when the community was affected by drought, famine, disease, and other calamities which are out of their control, was reported as important in 1994, but is no longer functioning today. Other traditional important rites for men and women are no longer functioning within the *kebele*. The relationship between old and younger generations has begun to decline. This is because the younger generation consider the advice of the older as backward, and they do not respect them like in earlier times.

### *Friends and Neighbours*

*Sarab* is a local name for friendship contracts among the Arssi Oromo in the area. *Sarab* is a group of individuals who come together as friends on the basis of their closeness in character and work tendencies. Members of a *sarab* create an unwritten contract according to which they help each other with money, goods, and cattle or livestock during difficult situations such as marriage and mourning.

## *Citizenship*

The Arssi Oromo in Turufe Kecheme, as in all other Arssi Oromo groups in the country, have the concept of citizenship known as *Arssuma* literally meaning "being Arssi Oromo." *Arssuma* means having a character of independence, purity, and identity. It carries citizenship rights which include the right to marry an Arssi girl, the right to have a piece of land and become prosperous, and a feeling of being a recognised member of the community sharing all the values, customs, and traditions existing within Arssi Oromo. He has a right and capacity, for example, to be chosen as a member of *shanacha* whose role is to arbitrate and resolve disputes. *Arssuma*, in its strict sense prohibits members from marrying slaves, craftsmen (potters, tanners and smiths), and anybody with leprosy even though these rules are not strictly followed today in the area. The Arssi Oromo try to make themselves superior to other ethnic groups and even to other branches of Oromo like the Shewa. They consider the Shewa Oromo as Amhara, and some uneducated people call them *Shewa Galla*, which is a discriminatory term. Today the term *Galla* is being condemned officially by Oromo educators and political leaders. They said that it is a discriminatory word given to the Oromo by others.

## *Markets*

There is no market in the village but there are markets in the surrounding areas. The nearest markets are in Shashemene and Kuyera. The market days at Shashemene are Saturday and Tuesday; at Kuyera, Sunday and Tuesday; at Arssi-Negele on Monday; and at Hamus Gebeya on Thursday.

People buy consumption goods such as sugar, salt, soap, coffee kerosene mainly from Kuyera, and sometimes from Arssi-Negele and Shashemene. They also buy and sell cattle from the big market called Alelu at Shashemene. They also buy seeds of different grain from Alelu. The price is fixed by taking into consideration the total supply and demand since the market is free market. If there is excess supply, for example at harvesting time the price of grain is cheaper as compared to other times. The reverse is true if there is excess demand. They buy from both producers as well as merchants and they also sell to final consumers as well as merchants. The market is competitive in a sense that price varies based on the quality of output/grain or product.

They sell potato through brokers. First the brokers fix the price with farmer/kg and the brokers agree with the buyer/merchant on an amount, which is greater than the price they fixed with farmers, and they take this additional money as a commission.

The *kebele* was a member of a Service Cooperative which closed because of budget constraints. At the end of 1994 the *wereda* MoA office distributed fertiliser to the farmers through the Service Co-operative. However, the probability that the service to the farmers will continue is low at present because the government organisation Ethiopian Domestic Distribution Corporation (EDDC), which supplies materials to the Service Cooperatives throughout the country, cannot cope with the free market system and the government does not provide any assistance as the *Derg* did. Before 1995 the people from Turufe used to buy some consumption goods such as sugar, salt, soap from the office of service cooperation, which is found at 'Hamus Gebeya' with cheaper price. After 1991 they used to buy only fertilisers, selected seeds and other agricultural tools from the office and the cooperative also bought crops from farmers

There is a problem of collusion among traders to lower the price of goods sold by the farmers and to raise the prices of those goods the traders sell. The farmers know that the traders cheat them by using a wrong weighting scale. There are weights and measures laws around towns. In the Shashemene and Kuyera markets, some traders buy crops and cereals from peasants using weights. There is no one who

polices the markets except that, in Shashemene, the government levies taxes on livestock sales. For example, if a person sells a sheep he has to pay 2 *birr* to the government. It is only 1 *birr* for selling a goat. The traders sell fertiliser and selected seeds at high prices. They also want to lower the price of goods sold by farmers, mainly at harvesting time.

### *Social Security*

There are various forms of local voluntary organisation which people use for insurance. There are 12 *iddir* in the *kebele*, 6 of which are for men and 6 for women. They have *iddir* which organise people to help each other during crucial periods such as death and weddings. Women's *iddir* collect butter for weddings. *Iddir* also make it is easy to cope if there are accidents or other misfortunes. If a house burns down, all *iddir* members have an obligation to build a new one; if cattle get sick or have accidents, the members slaughter and divide the meat and then they pay money to the owner at a fixed time. The usual amount for an ox is 200 *birr*, for a cow 180 *birr*, and for a young bull or heifer 80 *birr*. Most people belong to *iddir*; membership may range from 45 to 140 and the average contribution is 2 *birr* per month. *Iddir* money will be paid when someone dies. If a husband or a wife of a member dies, 300 *birr* will be paid to the widower. On the death of a son or a daughter, the member is paid 150 *birr*. If the member is told of the passing of a close relative (*merdo*) the rate varies between 30 to 50 *birr*. *Merdo* is the sudden information about the death of a close relative who lived far away. *Merdo* information is told by a third person to the responsible relative of the dead person, early in the morning before the sun rises, but not at any other time. At this time relatives and friends gather to comfort the bereaved. Food and drink are prepared. Utensils for the mourning feast are also provided by the *iddir*. In addition to money the female *iddir* give 50 kg *tef*, red pepper, *kikk* (split-peas) and *shiro* used for making *wot*. There is also a loan access to members when they are in need. Later they will pay the amount they took plus interest. The interest collected from members helps to subsidise the *iddir*. There are also cattle *iddir* (*ye kebtoch iddir*), whose purpose is to keep the cattle of the members of the *Iddir*. Any member keeps the cattle of other members when his turn is approaching.

The *iddir* in the *kebele* mentioned by informants are those which are organised under the names *Mikael*, *Gebriel*, *Setoch Baltina*, and *Mekiya*. Besides these four there are *iddir* for each *belbela* of the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele* both for men and women. The *iddir* of the Arssi Oromo women is traditionally known as *Wijjo*. Except for the *iddir* of the *belbela* of male Arssi Oromo and the *Wijjo*, every member in the *kebele* can join the other *iddir*. The four *iddir* to which every person in the *kebele* can belong are said to have written rules and regulations which require every member to pay a certain amount of money every month, including labour assistance in turn, for mourning in the house of a member. Every member is given a definite amount from the money contributed, and also materials such as tents and utensils bought with the collected money, during difficult conditions such as marriage and mourning. There are elected members who administer and control the performance of these and other objectives of the association.

The *iddir* of each *belbela* of the Arssi Oromo within the *kebele* give services and advantages to lineage members when the members have to pay *guma* (blood compensation), *gabera* (bridewealth) during marriage, and when imprisoned or penalised by a court. The *Wijjo* is organised by the Arssi Oromo women on the same lineage basis for similar objectives. There is also another *Iddir* called *bale-wold*, whose numbers are exclusively the followers orthodox Christianity, and a special kind of *Iddir*, in which all members contribute butter when one member prepares a wedding ceremony for her children. The members of this *iddir* are Oromos.

Beliefs and practices related to death and mourning are regulated and formalised by *iddir*. Besides the fixed amount of money paid by the *iddir* to the member whose close relative is dead, any interested person can bring *injera* and coffee with two or three *birr* for him or her. The member in mourning

records all such donations and reciprocates during similar happenings to the contributors. The formal burial association simplifies all the problems related to death and mourning and the community in the *kebele* highly appreciates it. *Setoch Baltina* is an *iddir* for women only. It means the activity of preparing food. Each member of this *iddir* has an obligation to prepare food in turn when someone in the family of a member dies. The number of women allocated to prepare food in the funeral house depends on the number of members of the *iddir* but in Turufe Kecheme it is customary to allocate 4 or 5 women. Any interested person also brings bread, and tea to the member whose close relative is dead. Three or four members are also allocated to spend the night at mourning house for the first three days. This works only for male *iddir*.

*Sadete* is *iddir* for Muslims which is used to organise coffee ceremonies and snacks (*kurse*).

There are credit associations (*equb*) which people use for economic security at times of economic and social crisis. Every member pays a fixed amount of money every week. There is a judge to supervise and administer rules and regulations. The sum of money collected each week goes by chance to one member and the opportunity rotates so that once a member has won he or she cannot be selected again until all the members have won once. For example, in an *equb* with a membership of 30 each member receives the money once in 30 weeks. The number of *equb* is not exactly known but respondents estimated about 10. *Equb* are differentiated among each other because most members have different levels of off-farm income (e.g. shops, grain trade, *tella* or *areke* trade, etc). One of the 4 shopkeepers told the fieldworker that he contributes 30 *birr* a week while the rest contribute 10 *birr* each. The women who sell *tella* contribute 1 *birr* a week. The money paid out is usually used to buy food or clothes, but sometimes it is spent on farm inputs like seeds and implements. Women who get money from *equb* have the right to use it for anything they need. The money is used either for the women's private purposes, such as buying clothes for themselves or as additional income for family necessities in the household. It may be invested in the farm or education if the women want. Their husbands cannot dictate how they use the money. It is their right to use it for anything they need. If the women want, they can discuss with their husbands how to use the *equb* money.

There are religious associations (*mahiber*) in which people prepare feasts in rotation. Members also help each other during serious problems such as crop failure and accidents such as fires burning houses and crops, etc. Members of *mahiber* are mostly Orthodox Christians. There are an average of about 12 members per *mahiber*. St Michael's *mahiber* is usually for men; St Mary's *mahiber* usually for women; and both men and women can belong to Trinity. Feasts are held on fixed days and eaten by all the members. The *mahiber* in the *kebele* mentioned by the informants are the ones which are organised under the names of Medhaniealem, Saint Mary, Saint Michael, and Kidanemihret. The St. Michael *mahiber* meets on the 12th of every month while meetings of the Kidanemihret, St. Mary and Mehaniealem *mahiber* are on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 21st and 27<sup>th</sup> days of each month respectively. The members of some *mahiber* contribute money each month, and the collected money is given to the member who prepares the feast. On the feast days the person whose turn it is, prepares *injera*, bread, roasted wheat or barley as well as *tella* (local beer) to be consumed together by all members. The responsibility of preparing the feast rotates to every member in turn. The feast starts at midday and can last until to 7pm. A jar filled with *tella* known as (*tsiwa*), which symbolises the Saint for which the *mahiber* is organised, and a piece of bread in a *mesob* (a coloured container made from straw), both covered with a colourful cloth, are presented to the member whose turn it is to prepare the feast for the next month. Besides eating and drinking together every month, the members of the *mahiber* also help each other during mourning. The *mahiber* associations are organised by Orthodox Christian members who are predominantly Amharas and Tigrayans who came and settled in the *kebele*, though a few from other ethnic groups of the same religion may participate.

People from outside the *kebele* can become members of *iddir* and *mahiber* but not *equb*. Generally

members of *equb* are local people. *Iddir* is a crucial association for wedding (marriage) and mourning. As in all other places in Ethiopia, in Turufe Kecheme, any person in the *kebele*, irrespective of age, sex, and ethnic or status difference can be a member of an *iddir*. Any member of a certain *equb* or *mahiber* can be a member of *iddir*. But not any member of *equb* or *iddir* can be a member of a *mahiber*. One can say that the respective member of *equb*, *iddir* and *mahiber* share their risks in three quite different groups. Each association is distinct from the other with its own discipline and objective.

Previously there was a *bale-wold Iddir* whose members were Orthodox as well as Muslim. At one time there was a mourning at a Muslim house. Utensils from the *Iddir* were used for the mourning feast. Later on the Orthodox said that the utensils are stained/contaminated and need to be blessed to be used at an Orthodox home. Because of this reason the Orthodox Christians discussed and agreed to organise the *Iddir* in a new way (to form a new Christian group), and they made that *Iddir* to serve the purpose of both *Iddir* and *mahiber*. Thus any person who wants to join this *iddir* / *mahiber* has to be an Orthodox Christian.

*Equb* and *mahiber* are associations through which the people in the *kebele* practice collective action and reciprocity. *Mahiber* particularly can be considered as a form of redistribution. For the Arssi Oromo who are the great majority in the *kebele*, forms of collective action, reciprocity and redistribution, (without formal disciplines and regularity), are practiced through feasts that can be prepared during *sadaqa* (a feast prepared by a wealthy person for the poor at any time), *Mewlid* (the birth day of Prophet Mohammed), and *Id Al Fatir* (the end of the Ramadan fast).

Muslims contribute maize on holy days and it is distributed among the destitute and orphans. In October 2004, each household contributed 10 kg of maize to the mosque, which the mosque distributed for the destitute.

In the *kebele* people borrow from any person who has money to lend. Usually they do not borrow large sums. The average maximum they borrow is about 500 *birr*. A person can borrow money from someone who is wealthy when he needs money for purposes like medical treatment at a hospital or clinic, or buying seeds and new clothes, particularly in August. The lender gives the money after checking that the borrower has cultivated the field to assure the guarantee that he is going to get his money back. Usually the contract to borrow money is signed on a piece of paper according to which the borrower agrees to return the money, either in cash or in kind, after the harvest in December. If he borrowed, for example, 80 *birr* he agrees to return 130 *birr* in cash or in kind.

### *Redistributive Mechanisms*

There are no frequent feasts involving sacrifices in the *kebele*. *Gada* religious ceremonies are not practiced today because the people have been converted to Islam. There are feasts today in the *kebele* in the form of *Sadaqa* (alms for the poor) and during the celebration of *Id Al Fatir* (end of Ramadan) and *Mewlid* (the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed) by some wealthy Muslim persons in the community, but these do not involve sacrifice. The informants claimed that even these Islamic religious feasts, particularly those involving beating drums, are being abandoned in the *kebele* owing to the influence of the *Wahabi* Movement which claims modernity in Islam as opposed to *Sufism* which was being practiced in the area. Some wealthy Christian members of the *kebele* also make feasts during their holy days such as Christmas (*Tahsas* 29th), Epiphany (*Tir* 11th), and the Ethiopian Easter, but without sacrifices.

According to informants in 1994, however, there was a condition which forced a person to sacrifice an animal. This was related to beliefs associated with a disease called *golfa* (*megagna* in Amharic). People believed this disease was caused when they touch a burnt barley stalk which has been hung in a maize field by a person from *Alujana* clan. They believe that a person who touched the barley stalk is attacked

by a devil and as a result catches *golfa*. The burnt barley was hung in the maize field by the owner to prevent people from stealing. If a person touched the burnt barley and caught *golfa*, the *Alujana* ordered him or her to sacrifice a sheep of a definite colour (red, black, or *bule* - white and black). The sheep was killed by the sick person in his home and the *Alujana* had to mix barley with the blood of the sacrificed sheep and throw the mixture through the back door. Then the *Alujana* massaged the whole body of the sick person with a thick porridge made from barley and he was cured immediately. The sacrificed sheep could be eaten by anyone but its lungs have to be taken by the *Alujana* to his home. In 2005, the beliefs associated with this disease had declined.

### *Local Organisations*

The community is tightly-knit and orderly. There is a lot of social interaction in the form of *iddir*, *equb*, *mahiber*, and also in *gessa* and *debo* as well as other forms of labour contracts. The presence of a lot of local organisations makes the people to have good interaction. However, the community is not wide; rather people mix in small circles.

A group in the community in 1995 ranked local organisations which they listed in order of usefulness as follows:

1. *Shengo*
2. *Kebele*
3. *Iddir* and *Setoch Baltina*
4. Service co-operative
5. *Senbete*
6. *Mahiber*
7. *Debo, jigi*
8. *Equb*
9. Women's association
10. Youth association

### *Disputes and Resolutions*

People bring disputes to the executive committee of the *kebele*. The *kebele* directs the disputes to the *shanacha*. If the *shanacha* cannot resolve the dispute it is directed to the *Shengo*. The *kebele shengo* is under a higher body which is the *Wereda Shengo* (now called the *Wereda Court*) under the present government. To make a judgement, the three people must agree, otherwise they have a right to take the case to the wereda court, where the decision is final. Simple kinds of disputes are solved by local organisations (*iddir* and *mahiber*), elders also play an important role in solving disputes.

### *Local Government Organisation*

The *kebele* has two divisions. The first is administrative: it has the responsibility for implementing government regulations, for example tax collection, implementation of political decisions, and organisation of farmers for group work like terracing, afforestation, etc. The second division is the *shengo* which implements laws. The members are elected by the farmers in the *kebele* and are not more than three in number. They are responsible for dealing with crimes and can arrest a criminal for up to three months and decide penalties up to 300 *birr*.

Since 1995 the *kebele* leader was changed once in 2004/5. He had been serving the *kebele* for about 12

years. For the last few years he has been working at the *Kella* (toll station) at Hamus Gebya. As a result, he was not available on time when *kebele* members had administrative issues, and the community wanted to replace him with another person. He also wanted to relinquish his leadership position, and the people selected the assistant as a main leader.

Government institutions include the *kebele* with its executive committee, court tribunals, and service co-operatives. Elected leaders of *kebele* are important for access to land and employment in the local institutions of the association listed above. They are also intermediaries between the state and the society through which government directives, policies and other information are disseminated and implemented. They are also responsible for tax collection. Taxes are decided on the basis of the agricultural wealth of individual peasant households by the local branch of the MoA in collaboration with the leaders of the *kebele*. The taxes are then collected by the *kebele* leaders. No government institution is involved. However, the Ministry of Finance provides the *kebele* with the technique and receipts.

The *gere*, *got* and *cell* are organisations of farmers for work. They also help to control the community at a meeting and under community works. For example, last year the work for widening of roads was based on these groups.

The objective of land measurement was to ensure ownership right. Though after the measurement, the people began to pay tax based on the size of their land. But some people suspect that the rope which they used to measure is shorter, which makes the measurement of the size of land larger, which in turn increases the amount of tax they paid.

During the *Derg*, it used to be the size of the land that a person had that determined the amount of the tax paid. As a result, people used to make futile efforts to convince *kebele* leaders to classify them as poor. After the coming to power of the EPRDF, taxation of *kebele* members was set at 20 *birr* except for those who were exempted because of disability and extreme poverty certified by the people. Not everybody in the *kebele* felt that it was fair that every able-bodied person paid 20 *birr* each, because they knew that there was differentiation in wealth. However, it appears that they prefer it to taxation during the *Derg*, because nobody wants to pay more than 20 *birr* annually.

Since the land measurement in 2004, the amount of tax an individual pays is determined by the size of the land s/he has.

At present, the local political institution is the *kebele* itself. The *shanacha* (elders) are elected by the people by lineage structure to resolve disputes before they reach legal courts, but they do not have political power. The leaders of the *kebele* or government institutions do not come into conflict with these traditional leaders of the community but they try to cooperate with them.

The elders play an important role in dispute resolution. But they enter into reconciliation only if both of the conflicting parties agree. There are cases that are returned to the elders after the conflicting parties have gone to the *kebele* court or even the *wereda* court.

In imperial times the cooperation/relation between the *kebele* court and the elders was very good. But during the *Derg* their relation declined. After EPRDF came to power the elders began to cooperate again.

In 2005, there were many meetings organised by *kebele* officials. The major issues that were discussed included the construction of school at Wetera, land measurement, community-based labour sharing, and the election.

The woman's association is under the women's *Iddir*. They contribute 1-25 *birr* per month for the association other than for the *Iddir*. The association was formed in late 2004 and some members gave a

photograph and got an identification card. There are around 57 members. The association has a plan to open a bank account and to use the account to get financial support from governmental/non-governmental organisations and to begin developmental activities. The leader of the association (Alemitu Safa'o) who is also the female representative of the village, has attended a meeting about their association at *wereda* level.

There were repeated meetings organised by *kebele* and *wereda* officials during the period of the election in 2005. The objective was to mobilise the people to develop awareness about the election and at the same time to convince them to elect the ruling party (EPRDF). The local security personnel (*Kadre*) went from door to door and asked the people which party they will elect and they registered: 'A' for those who will elect ruling party; 'B' for those who will elect the Oromo National Congress (ONC) under the Union of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF); and 'C' for those who refuse to tell them. They counted and, as a result expected that most members of the *kebele* will vote for the EPRDF. There was also a mass gathering, a political demonstration of EPRDF, at Shashemene. Transport service was arranged from Turufe Kecheme to Shashemene and some people attended the gathering.

The election process was done peacefully, and the result of the election shows that the majority of the people voted for the ONC which is part of the national collation party the UEDF.

## 8. Social Inequality, Conflict and Politics

### *Poverty and Wealth*

The basis of accumulating wealth in Turufe Kecheme *kebele* is predominantly agriculture, although there are a few individuals who have accumulated wealth through trade. In the past pastoralism was the main source of wealth but today it is not of great importance.

The community of Turufe is about of average wealth compared with other surrounding settlements. All people who overcome poverty believe that the major way to become rich is to work hard. Poor people mentioned that someone cannot be rich if he/she does not have necessary tools (e.g. oxen) or if he/she has no relative who supports him/her financially as well as materially. The poor also believe one can be richer through working hard.

The main constraints on the poor are lack of oxen and agricultural implements. If a farmer has an ox or oxen and implements he can cultivate another household's land. Poor people are those who cannot work on the farm because of health problems, old age and the like. Sometimes it is bad luck which causes poverty. For instance their cattle may die so they are not able to plough or to get milk or butter which are the main sources of income. It is very difficult for their children to become rich.

Some people are wealthy not because others are poor or vice versa. The community believe that the only way to wealth is land and work. Success in agriculture and trade are believed to be as the vital means to wealth. The Tigrayans are regarded as wealthy. They become wealthy through hard work. In addition to their own land, they get access to others' land as sharecropping and they also rent land from local people. It is said that some Oromos do not want to work; they give their land for sharecropping and rent it out, allegedly preferring to wander around the village.

The basis of wealth includes land, agricultural tools, livestock/cattle, home and household equipment. In the past, wealthy people had many cattle, but now this is not the case. The people have begun to limit themselves from having many cattle, this is due to a lack of grazing land in the area.

Poor people are not poorer than in the past. In the past poor people had no land and cattle, but now there are some poor households who have land, although not other properties like agricultural tools and oxen. This prevents them from getting a good yield. The destitute lead their life by working in domestic activities in rich households, either on a daily basis or based on the type of work they perform.

There are some wealthy people who claim to be poor. This is as a result of comparing their life now with earlier times, when life was better and everything was cheaper. Some people's economic status has been declining. This is highly associated with the health condition and shortage of labour and loss of cattle. Some give their land for sharecropping or they rent it out, which contributes to the deterioration of their wealth status. Decline in economic status can also be due to the sale of cattle to use money for medical treatment, or they become unable to work or if the head of household (male) dies and the widow cannot employ a labourer.

In contrast, some people have accumulated more property, this is either by saving money, or job access (governmental), or other off-farm activities which help them to get additional incomes.

### *Economic Mobility*

Before the 1974 revolution it was not easy for most Ethiopians to become wealthy, but if a person did it was easy to stay wealthy and to pass wealth on to his children. But the majority of the poor could not easily work their way out of poverty. This pattern of life did not change much after 1974 except that at the beginning of the revolution some wealthy people were deprived of their property. During the revolution private property was ideologically denounced and individuals were forbidden to own vast areas of land in rural areas or to have more than one residential house in towns. Nowadays there is almost no one in the *kebele* who can be considered "wealthy" like the previous landlords.

The poverty dynamics from poor to middle or richer status were high in the early and mid periods of the *Derg* regime. This was because many poor farmers got land after 1974. In the post-1991 period there was a gradual decline in the status of most community members. This is because of the rise in the price of agricultural inputs and decline in the fertility of the land. The increase in the population also contributed to the decline.

Parents do not have sufficient land, cattle or money to be shared among their children. Now wealthy farmers do not tend to be children of wealthy farmers and poverty also is not hereditary. There is a considerable change between generations. A child of a poor farmer can be upwardly mobile through success in farming, husbandry or trade if he is lucky. Parents also try to help children who are becoming poor. A person can become poor due to repeated crop failures, loss of cattle due to unexpected calamities, a crisis in trade, as a result of theft or due to health problems.

Unexpected rises in the price of agricultural produce can bring about changes in the distribution of wealth in the *kebele*. For example in January 1994 the price of 100 kg of wheat was 120 *birr*. In August 1994 the price rose to 280 *birr*. There were also increases in the prices of potatoes and maize. People who can wait and take advantage of changes in market prices can benefit a lot.

The price of potatoes on *Sene* 3-8, 2005 was 20-25 *birr* per quintal. There were some individuals who faced shortage of money and sold their potatoes for 20 *birr* per quintal. Others watched the gradual increase of prices and sold their potatoes in the following months. At the end of *Nehase* the price was 100 *birr* per quintal, and everybody expected that it would be 130 *birr* in mid-*Meskerem*. Those who saved money to buy seeds to plant at the end of *Sene*, were able to store their potatoes until the price rise up to 100 – 130 *birr* per quintal.

Two members of the community did a wealth-ranking of households in the survey and were asked for the reasons for upward and downward mobility. Both respondents agreed it could take less than 2 years for a wealthy farmer to become a medium or poor farmer. Typical reasons include increasing family size, the death of the male household head, death of oxen, ceremonial expenses especially weddings when most farmers are forced to sell or give away their oxen, and lack of knowledge about how to use income economically. It is harder for a poor farmer to move to higher categories and takes at least 3 years of hard work. Typical reasons for upward mobility include becoming a hard working farmer, especially by renting in farmland, using the output economically, and making a marriage with a wealthier family. There is a lot of movement between the middle categories: people who are good managers (e.g. do not drink too much) and keep the family size normal can move up while people move down due to natural calamities such as death of oxen or illness of a household member involving medical expenses, and shortage of farmland.

People become wealthier by good farm management which includes timely use of inputs such as seed and fertiliser and production of crops for food consumption. People also became rich by saving money and investing in land and cash crops. They sell when the price reaches a high level i.e. they store the crop until most of the farmers sell their crops and there exists a scarcity of the crop. People become poorer by using farm income on unnecessary things, renting out land for cash, by marrying more than 1 wife, selling or losing oxen, having no interest in being hardworking and lack of male labour in the household.

According to the information from one respondent the key things for a farmer are farmland, oxen and labour. For people to overcome poverty or to become wealthier these three things are very useful. If he has labour, he can plough others' land as a sharecropper. Even if he has one ox, he can plough his land by bring his oxen together with another person who has also one ox. This kind of arrangement is known as *mekenajo* in Amharic.

### *Status*

In the past when *gada* practices were observed, status was based on age-grade, gender, military prowess, political position and lineage on the one hand and disrespect to craftsmanship and trade on the other. Today there is officially no status based on these factors except for the leaders of the *kebele* because of their political position. However, the local people (Oromo) still do not want to have marriage relations with craftsmen as they consider the status of craftsmen as lower.

It was declared officially after the 1974 revolution that all men are equal but there is still marked inequality based on sex and wealth. A husband has more decision power than a wife, his rules are respected and he is responsible for the expenditures of most of the expense of the household. He also controls most of the income of the household

Around Turufe Kecheme females are expected to respect males and every junior is expected to respect his senior. Currently, males are also expected to respect females. There is a joking and respectful relationship between intermarried families which is common all over Ethiopia. Political positions in the *kebele* may be a good source of wealth and privilege as was the case in most *kebele* during 1974-91 when the leaders were involved in corruption. The main reliable route to wealth is good farming and husbandry.

Quranic education, formal modern education and knowledge concerning Arssi Oromo traditions, customs and history are the other factors that attract status in the *kebele*. People who have a good memory about past happenings, are able to raise important issues at different types of meetings (for *iddir*, *kebele*, etc), and can reconcile people who quarrel each other are most respected people.

Elders who can solve community problems and rich people who lend to those who want to borrow are the most respected people. Other bases of status are honesty, openness, hard work, religious piety, occupation, serving the society as arbitrators, and having enough consumer goods at home.

Apparently, there are no native caste groups in the community as members of the *kebele*; but the profession of tanning and making pottery and the people (*faqi*, or *fuga*) involved in these activities are particularly despised. The Arssi Oromo claim that these professions are introduced into Arssi society from outside. Caste groups (tanners and smiths) cannot marry other Arssi people.

There are urban status symbols which include having a house with a tin roof, tape recorders and radio cassettes, a bicycle, and photographs. However, since the lives of farmers are predominantly dependent on land and cattle, they place more emphasis on land and cattle.

On the whole, people do not behave in a deferential manner to others as they do not consider anyone their superior except *Rabi* (God). However, there are a few poor/destitute people that behave in a way that reflects their economic poverty.

### *Social Stratification*

There used to be a threefold division among the Arssi Oromo: the original Oromo (*borana*); assimilated people known as *mogasa* (adopted); and assimilated people known as *garba* (conquered). This division was of cultural and political significance up to the middle of this century but is no longer significant among the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele*. What is still significant is the fact that the Arssi Oromo feel *Arssuma* which signifies their peculiar identity within the larger Oromo society.

The relation between wealth, prestige and power was suppressed in Ethiopia during the initial period of the revolution even though it appeared to revive later. Now inequality appears to be decreasing as everyone seems to be poorer due to land shortages as a result of increased population. Landless people can lead their life in a similar manner to landowners, some even live a better life.

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.

In order to wield power in the *kebele* 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 *belbela* (lineage) within the *Weyrera* clan is an important factor in gaining power in the *kebele*. The Oromo community in the *kebele* is firmly knitted as a corporate group through the lineage structure. Within the lineage it is advantageous to gain the support or friendship of important individuals in order to win the support of others. With the support of a strong lineage one can accomplish any objective in the *kebele*.

The dominant *balbala* in the area is the Darimun within the Weyera clan. But the other ethnic groups have no such characteristics of forming corporate groups through their lineage structure. Lineages of larger structure do not exist among other ethnic groups. As compared to other non-Oromo ethnic groups, the Tigrayans are relatively better in forming corporate groups. But they support each other only in labour exchange and in times of crisis. They borrow money or grain from each other in times of scarcity. The cooperation also extends beyond kin to place of origin; Tigrayans from south Tigray and central

Tigray have separate groups based on friendship.

The community believes that education can affect status and wealth and that if someone is educated s/he has access to a leadership position, resulting in power. According to informants weapons cannot guarantee status, wealth or power. Religious position can lead to respect and religious leaders are expected to deal in matters of arbitration of disputes but not wealth or power.

Eliteness emanates from different characteristics in the area. The elites in the area are either economic or political. A man can be elite if he is rich, or is famous in conflict resolution activities. Religious leaders can also be elite, as can orators or those with political power in the *kebele*. All are famous among the community. Among the elite, Hemeyo Gelcha played a great role in stopping the chaos in 1991 and saved many non-Oromos from being overrun by the local people. His son also organised a group of youths to keep the nearby hospital safe against robbers. Realising this, the EPRDF allowed him and his son to take over power. Some other non-Oromos also confirm this relation. A totally opposing view is that the leaders are people trusted and known to the community elders and are hard working. They are neutral and give unbiased judgments. There is no conflict among them. A third view, of many non-Oromo, is that the local elected are dictators: they brainwash members, recruit, arm, and detain people who oppose them. In 1991 many Kambatas left the area because of ethnic conflicts. People accused of them of cooperating with the Mengistu regime and being involved in murders. The leaders kept some of their plots of land for themselves and sold some more. Another respondent said that the elites are those who are better educated and can speak in public. They are Oromos, relatively wealthier, and respected by the community. There are some conflicts caused by politics. Another view is that the local elites are people who understand the problems of the community, are far-sighted, capable, active and willing to serve. They are respected by the community and were elected because they could listen to both the poor and the rich. They are relatively wealthier than the majority.

There are conflicts of interest between the leaders in terms of some serving the people and others serving their own interests. In addition there are ethnic conflicts: for example when an Oromo is elected the other nationalities ask why an Amhara has not been elected. In 2005 the assistant leader was elected as a main leader. Some people (mainly non-Oromos) mentioned that “we didn’t elect him rather other *kebele* officials elected him in order to serve the local people”. There were even a few people who did not know of the election of the new leader up to one month after the elections. This shows that the election of the leader did not consider the interest/vote of all of the members of the *kebele*. The non- Oromos complain that the *kebele* leaders do not want to solve the problem of the migrant community (*anasa*). Since, the *kebele* leaders are Oromos, they are against the *anasa*.

Another respondent said that the local leaders are mostly wealthier than the community at large. They are Oromo. They are getting wealthier as they chase people from other ethnic groups (Kambata) away from the *kebele*, using different means such as burning their houses, burning their crops, etc. They divide the land left behind amongst the leaders. The community also believes that if the *kebele* gets financial/material support from government or NGOs, the leaders first help their families and relatives. They are self-centred.

Here are some different views on the relationship of local elites to broader economic and political structures. The local elites do not have any relation to broader economic and political structures. Another view is that they try to arrange for the farmers to get fertilisers, improved seeds, herbicide etc. In addition they also respond to some requests from above. Some leaders are self-centred. When there is a need they get backup from above. They relate to the broader structures through the regulations. They collect money for fertiliser and land tax and pass it up. They have meetings and exchange letters with higher up. Their concern is how they can stay longer in power by reporting people who object to the government and detaining people. They do not do anything for the community and are supported from above when they

need to oppress the people.

### *Social Conflict and Politics*

Apparently, there are no serious conflicts in the community even though ethnic and religious differences exist and have at times of crisis and unrest erupted in tensions, which even led to the evictions of the Kambata at the time of the change of government.

Under the *gada* system every able-bodied member of society participated in the election of *gada* representatives. The decisions of the council of representatives (*Abba Bokus*) were accepted. There were traditional rules and punishments covering offences such as murder, theft, etc. The Arssi Oromo created a sense of community and solidarity which has survived in ritual beliefs and practices, historical legends and genealogical connections. The extent to which the Ethiopian national political and legal system has replaced the traditional needs investigation; it seems there is the remnant of the local traditional legal system whereby the council of elders known as *Shanacha* are involved when someone from one lineage kills someone in another. If this council does not intervene all the members of the lineage of the killer have to leave the village to escape revenge killing by members of the offended lineage. After the conquest by Emperor Menelik due to superior machine guns, the Arssi Oromo, like almost all other Ethiopians in rural Ethiopia, tended to recognise that the state has the power to impose its will and so they are afraid to oppose government policy lest it be seen as seditious.

Gradually the Ethiopian national political and legal system has replaced the traditional customary institution. During the *Derg* regime the role of elders in solving conflicts was low. However, during the transition and after EPRDF come to power for a while the role of elders increased. Most of the decisions on community affairs are made by elders rather than the *kebele* officials or government institutions.

No-one can get married unless the elders are involved in the process. For example, a man cannot get a wife by directly contacting the parents himself. The amount of dowry is fixed by the elders. If a man takes a girl by force and the parents are not willing for marriage it is the elders who decide whether the parents should change their minds or the daughter should be given back with 5 cattle. Elders decide whether a couple can divorce and they negotiate between people and groups who have quarrelled with each other. Everything which involves the possibility of disputes involves the elders.

The *kebele* officials make decisions based on law when people do not want the elders involved in their affairs. It is only *kebele* officials and the government police who make decisions about lawbreaking since the elders do not want to interfere in these affairs.

The Tigrayans and Amharas are against the ethnic decentralisation policy of the government. In the *Derg* regime they had the chance to get power. But after 1991, it is only the local community (Oromos) that controls power. Thus they found that the interests of the migrant community are not considered. The Tigrayans believe that the government betrayed them because other ethnic groups say that they are benefiting because the government is Tigrayan, while they are suffering from the dominance of the Oromos.

There has been ethnic tension in the area since 1991. This is in connection to the evacuation of Kambatas from their land. Before the election, the Tigrayans feared that the local people might force them to leave the area if EPRDF lost power. There are a few Tigrayans who sold their cattle and stored their grain at relatives' houses round Kuyera due to their worries. But after election they were relieved since they learned that in most rural parts of Ethiopia the ruling party got a higher vote.

In the 2005 elections, the winner at the specific station at Turufe was the Oromo National Congress

(ONC), which joined the UEDF coalition at a national level.

## 9. Beliefs and Values

### *Land*

Land rights among the Arssi Oromo were communal and everybody, except caste groups, had full rights to use the land freely within his tribe. Each tribe and sub-tribe was organised independently and occupied a certain area which was recognised by neighbouring tribes. It was also possible to use land outside one's tribal area - a man could take his cattle from one area to another to find grazing and water, though he had to get special permission.

Informants said that when the Oromo practiced pastoralism an old man was buried in the kraal of his cattle. A *korma* (bull) was killed as a ritual sacrifice during his burial. This was not eaten by the dead man's relatives but by another person, who slaughtered the *korma* and took all the meat to his own house. After the death, every eighth day after a cow calves, his widow and oldest son took the cow's milk and poured it on the corners of his burial, taking grass (*serdo*) with it and offering a prayer to God in his name. The informants said this practice no longer exists in the area. Muslims used to bury people on their farmland. If they liked them they buried them near their residence. Those they do not like they buried further away. However this form of burial has not been practiced since the revolution (1974) because land distribution and population increase led to a shortage of farmland. Since then people have buried their dead in specific places allocated by the elders and officials of the *kebele*. In the past burial sites were specifically localised at family level but nowadays sites are allocated to each *belbela*. At present, for example, the burial sites of *Oditu* and *Darimu belbela* are at places known as *Edo Lencha* and *Chaffa* respectively. These are believed to be the burial sites of the ancestors of the *belbela*. Even though respect for ancestors' burial sites is weaker than it was informants said that it is still there. Both men and women go to the burial sites of their ancestors to pray to God, particularly during calamities such as drought and disease. During the rituals, people sacrifice an old cattle (*dulacha*) or a white and black sheep (*bule*) and eat together.

Orthodox Christians are buried around the Orthodox Christian church St. Mary (at Hamus Gebeya), or St. Gabriel (at Kuyera). The burial sites of Protestants are at Edo Lencha (for those who were highly devoted), and others at the back of the Kuyera main road.

People do not regard land as sacred. This is because before land distribution most farmers were tenants, who were serving *balerist* (landlords). At that time their workload to feed themselves was high. After they got land (during land distribution) they have been getting relief, and have not felt inferior.

They claim that it would result in the accumulation of large farming lands in the hands of a few wealthy people inside or outside the *kebele*. They believe that freedom to buy and sell lands would bring back the old servitude of large numbers of poor peasants under a few wealthy people, which would be a return to the "feudo-capitalist" system. Their worry is that peasants may sell their lands as a result of problems and become landless and deprived of any source of income, since they believe that land is the indispensable source of their livelihood.

## *Religion*

Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Kalehiwot, and other Protestant sects are the main religions followed by the residents of the *kebele*. Kalehiwot and Protestants have almost similar rules. They have no fixed fasting dates but Sunday is the main day on which followers pray more than they do on other days. The Kalehiwot and Protestant followers are, by and large, young and middle-aged people. Most of the youths are students, jobless, and ex-soldiers. The rest have health problems or are poor. Compared to other religious people most of the followers are hopeful that God will give them all they need. Such hope, however, makes them lazy and does not encourage them to be hardworking.

One Muslim Oromo widow had allowed her daughter to join the Protestant church, on advice from a neighbour that her daughter will improve her bad behaviour for the blessings of God. Many young believe that joining the Protestant church will end all their worries, including illness.

Muslims have 1 month fasting in a year (*Ramadan*). It is forbidden to work on Fridays. Muslims are very weak during *Ramadan* and cannot perform any work because they eat nothing all day. They change their consumption habits and eat special food like biscuits, soup, meat, tea, and milk, and they chew *chat*. In consequence they need more money and sometimes they are forced to sell their cattle or stored grain or to borrow money from others. Most other religious people and Muslims themselves believe that during *Ramadan* there is no rainfall and people always expect rain when the fasting is over.

Muslims in the *kebele* go on pilgrimages. They prefer going to Mecca if they have money. Some also make pilgrimages to *Sheik* Hussein in Bale Zone of Oromia. They say that it requires at least 500 *birr* to go to *Sheik* Hussein and more than 3000 *birr* to go to Mecca.

Orthodox Christians have the following fasting days: *Dehnit*, every Wednesday and Friday except the 50 days after Easter. 1. *Nenewe* (3 days) - on the 15th day before *Hudade*; 2. *Hudade* (55 days) - in February, March or April; 3. *Hawaria* (35 days) - starting in June; 4. *Filseta* (16 days) - in August; 5. *Tsize* (40 days) - from 26 September to 5 November in Ethiopian calendar; 6. *Ganna* (Christmas) (45 days) - from the end of November to December 29 EC. Almost all Orthodox Christians except very small children, about 15% of the community, fast for *Nenewe*, *Hudade* *Filseta*, and *Dehnit*

During the fasting days meat and dairy products are not eaten but only vegetables and pulses. This may allow the rich farmers who can afford to eat dairy products and meat to reduce their expenses.

In the *kebele* rather than Saturday and Sunday the 5th, 7th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 16th, 19th, 21st, 23rd, 27th, 28th and 29th days of a month are holy days (like St George, St Mary etc), though not everybody stops working on these days. A household may stop working for 3 or 4 days (in addition to Sundays), out of the above mentioned days. Different households give importance to different saints or angels and stop working on the dates commemorated to these saints or angels. Many households place importance on 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and others select some dates to stop working. I saw many Tigrayans stop working on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> days, which is not common to others.

## *Explanations of Misfortune and Illness*

All illness and accidents are assumed as God's punishment. When someone is sick or has an accident everybody says it is given by God and only God can make the patient better. Of course people believe physicians can treat patients but they will only succeed if God allows it.

Most of the members of the community believe that witches and sorcerers have the ability to cause fortune and misfortune to humans. Some of them explained that witches and sorcerers can give wealth to

people, cause disease to them, and have the ability to identify thieves. They distinguish between magicians who are benevolent and sorcerers who are malevolent. In particular, people who have a grudge or are jealous of others go to the sorcerers to cause harm to their enemies.

Some old people from both the Oromo and the Amhara people in the *kebele* still practice *atete* which is a belief in spirits accompanied by rituals. It is usually practiced during the *Meskel* holiday on *Meskerem* 17. They prepare *borde* (a thick local beer made without *gesho*), coffee, and roasted grains, and pray to their *wuqabi* (a spirit) to bring health, peace, happiness and fortune to themselves and their families. Still now some people go to witches and sorcerers when they have lost something. This is known to cause harm to the thieves.

The remembrance of the ghosts of ancestors was practiced by the Arssi Oromo people in the past and the practice is kept alive among some of them even at present. A few of them prepare coffee and *Kolo* (roasted grain) when they remember the dead person. This is because they believe that the spirit of a dead person is appearing to somebody who is still living.

Informants claimed that there is no spirit possession in the *kebele*. However, people believe in the evil eye, *falfaltu*, and *jinni* (spirit) who have the capacity to cause sickness and even death to humans. A person possessed with the evil eye causes diseases to persons and animals he or she is interested in harming. The symptoms of the chief disease believed to be caused by the evil eye, particularly affecting children, are physical weakness, bulging of eyes, and having a tendency to bite. The medicine to cure the disease is a secret type of wood, crushed and drunk by the sick person or animal. It was also mentioned that drinking ash mixed with water can cure individuals and animals who have the disease caused by the evil eye.

*Falfaltu* or *korit* is also believed to cause disease to humans and animals by looking at them like the evil eye. However, unlike the evil eye that can attack at any time, the *falfaltu* have a special time to attack. When the *falfaltu* feels this special power, he feels as if he is intoxicated and walks quickly like a madman. When these symptoms are observed, people hide their livestock, cattle, and their children and themselves from the *falfaltu*. If a man or animal is seen by the *falfaltu* during this time he or it can die immediately. People believe that during this special period the *falfaltu* may even kill his own horse or donkey if he looked at them. The *falfaltu* is also believed to make a tree dry simply by looking at it during this special time. He can also turn the milk of a cow to blood and cause the death of its calf after a while. Protective measures against *falfaltu* involve wrapping the hair of the *falfaltu* with a cloth and making a *kitab* to be hung round the neck. This method of protection from the *falfaltu* is usually observed for children. People believe that both *falfaltu* and evil eye characteristics are hereditary.

*Jinni* is also believed to cause sickness, especially to people. This is similar to spirit possession. When a *Sheik* reads Quranic verses while chewing *chat* in front of the sick person he or she shouts and gives the names of the individuals who are responsible for the disease. It is believed that the victim gives the names of individuals when treated by the *Sheik* because the *jinni* possesses him or her with the image of different people. The *jinni* also creates a "mistake" so that people assume the disease has been caused by the evil eye.

In any case, both Muslims and Christians in the *kebele* adhere to their beliefs. They attribute every fortune and misfortune they encounter in their lives to *Rabi* or *Egziabher* which are God respectively in Oromiffa and Amharic. They also understand that germs and bad hygiene can cause diseases and they clean themselves and their compounds regularly. They also understand that fortunes and misfortunes might happen out of probabilities.

The people of Turufe Kecheme believe that sorcerers are malevolent in their activities and have the

power to cause hardship, disease, and poverty to humans. On the other hand, they believe in benevolent spirits that can give wealth, health, etc, to people to whom they are kind. The people believe in spirits known as *atete* (*wuqabi* in Amharic), a belief which is common in other parts of Ethiopia. They believe that they will be sick if they do not follow the special practices which please the *atete*. So on the Ethiopian New Year's Day (*Meskerem* 1st), *Ginbot Lideta* (the 1st of *Ginbot*), and every other religious and ceremonial day they feel convenient, the people wear *dibiqo* (a special coloured cloth), put on necklaces and practice the ceremony to please the *atete*. This involves sprinkling in the house some *imbushbush* (*borde*), bread, roasted barley or wheat, and a crop mixed with butter (*buna qala*) or *qinche* (a crushed wheat mixed with butter). They and their families eat the remaining part. Some Orthodox Christians celebrate *Ginbot Lideta* of a neighbourhood by preparing *Nifro* (cooled grain), and coffee together. Some practice the ceremony to please the *atete* at household level.

In 1995, there were also some elements of ancestor worship in the community. Once in six months or a year or two years, some members of the community would prepare a small amount of food (bread or a roasted food crop) and go to the burial sites of their ancestors and pray for their wellbeing by addressing the "God of their father." However this is was no longer practiced in 2005.

### *Community Values*

People think it is important to "invest in tradition" because this will lead to reciprocity in times of social crisis. In such matters kin obligations are strong.

*Gada* political, legal, and social practices are almost extinct in the *kebele*. However, the community still practice some remnants of them such as cooperation through lineage structure and conflict resolution through the *shanacha*. The ritual which is still important in the *kebele* is the belief in *atete*. During the time when women are practising the *atete* ceremony near a river, a big tree, or on a plain and praying to God for mercy and salvation, it is unethical in the community for men to pass them without uttering the word "*altadina*" which has no meaning but represents a formal greeting specially for this situation. Any man who passes the women on *atete* days without uttering this formalised greeting must make compensation by sacrificing cattle or a sheep. The women go together to his house carrying a plant called *sinqe* to force him to make the sacrifice. If he does not the curse of the women will cause harm to himself or his family in the future.

There is competition in the community between modern and traditional beliefs. In particular the *sheiks* among the Oromo and the Orthodox Christian priests are not in favour of some modern beliefs. However, it appears that the community practices modern and traditional beliefs side by side.

People are willing to answer questions such as those in the economic survey. They are, on the whole, giving accurate responses. The fieldworker expects them to answer questions well in this survey except for questions related to the size of their land and their living standards. They think that the economic survey is for redistribution of land, relief aid, or some assistance from the government or somewhere else for development, therefore it is probable that informants want to lower their reported standard of living. But most of them answer the question well with relation to their land size. This is because after land measurement the size of their land is available at *kebele* and they start to pay tax according to the size of the land they have.

### *Political Beliefs and Attitudes*

In 1994, a group was asked what type of state institutions and government they would like to have. They said that the state should be democratic, supported by the people, and should be elected and removed by them. They were asked how they thought the problems raised by population growth (resource depletion and unemployment) should be resolved. They replied that the state and the masses should set up job opportunities in projects, factories, etc. They thought that the people should be taught contraceptive measures and their uses, since that time, people have been taught about contraceptive measures, harmful cultures, STDs and HIV/AIDS through the help of NGOs (Catholic, Adventist etc). The group believed that the literacy campaign should be stopped as it has contributed to the unstable and immature politics of yesterday and today.

Except Oromos, other groups have no role in the *kebele* administrative issues. Thus some informants complain that the rule of the present government makes such variation.

## 10. Relationships with Other Communities and the Wider Society

### *Ethnic Groups and Clans*

It has already been mentioned that *Weyrera*, *Se'emana*, and *Gomora* are the three Arssi Oromo clans within the *kebele*; the first is the dominant group with its seven *belbela*. The existence of various clans and their lineages has impacts on the life of the *kebele*, particularly 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 *kebele*.

There was tension between the local people and the migrants especially in the time of the election in May 2005. The migrants, especially Amharas and Tigrayans, were in a great fear that the Oromos might force them out of the site immediately after the election.

### *Relations with Other Communities*

The community has marriage relations with neighbouring villages such as *Kenshe*, the rural part of Arssi-Negele, *Kofele* etc. They have good interaction with in-laws and they help each other in labour and material as well.

There is no marriage relation between *Turufe* and *Wetera* or *Elemu* since they are from similar clan, the majority are from *Weyrera*, and marriage from similar clan is forbidden. But relatives from these village give/take oxen for ploughing from *Turufe* people (relative), and also help each other at times of crisis. Few people take their cattle to *Wetera* to feed them at relative house when they face a severe shortage of food for cattle.

There are modern state-owned agricultural plantations near *Shashemene* town which were established after the 1974 Revolution following the takeover of the large commercial farms which were established by wealthy individuals during the pre-revolutionary period. These farms mostly produced wheat, maize, beans, and oil seeds using modern mechanisation which entailed the eviction of tenants.

The relations between the Arssi Oromo in the *kebele* with other communities in the area is based on lineage ties. The Arssi Oromo communities in the area with whom those in the *kebele* have lineage ties

are the clans of *Hebanu, Eka, Liye, Kanshe, Woyo, Seko, Qoma, Hambitu, Wajji, Madarcho, Aymera, Fajji,* and *Alujana*. These clans of Arssi Oromo are widely spread in the *kebele* in Shashemene, Arssi Negele, Siraro, Bilate, and Kofele *Wereda* in the Oromia region.

### *Relationships with wider Ethiopia*

The community has a good relationship with their relatives living in different areas of the country and abroad. Their means of contact are telephone and letter. Even though the people in the *kebele* have many interactions with migrants through local institutions (*Iddir*) and labour-sharing mechanisms (*Debo/Wenfel*), the local people do not like the migrants. This is because they believe the shortage of land arises due to population growth, and they would like the migrants to leave the area in order to occupy their land.

### *Effects of Government Policies*

The 1997 policy of avoiding subsidies for fertiliser caused the rise in the price of fertilisers, which reached 150 *birr* for 50 kg in that year, a year before it was 80 *birr* for 50kg. As a result some peasants cannot afford to buy fertiliser. A Few farmers united to ask the government for the things they need like fertiliser and selected seeds. Sometimes these farmers are able to get agricultural inputs from the service cooperative, which is found at Hamus Gebeya for cash at a lesser price than from the traders.

In 1994, the recent government policies, particularly the devaluation and free market, had effects on the economy of the local community. For example, informants said that one meat dish in Muslim hotels for which they previously used to pay 2.50 *birr* later cost 5.50 *birr*; and the price of fried meat in the same hotels rose from 3.00 *birr* to 6.50 *birr*. The cost of farming inputs also increased by about 100 to 300 percent. The wage of agricultural wage labourers increased from 2.50 *birr* to 5.00 *birr*. The price of ox-labour for one day increased from 3.00 *birr* to 12.00 *birr*. The price of crops increased by more than 200 percent. A quintal of *tef* was sold for 120 *birr* previously but its average cost rose on the market to about 220 *birr*. Similarly, maize, barley, and wheat increased in price from 50, 55, and 85 *birr* for 100 kg each to 180, 185, and 250 *birr* respectively. The price of half a quintal of fertiliser increased from 43 *birr* in 1990 to 73 *birr* 1994. The price of one litre of herbicide increased from 25 *birr* in 1990 to 34.40 *birr* in 1994. One kg of sugar, which used to be bought for 1.60 *birr* in 1994 was being purchased for 3.50 *birr* in the cooperative shops but for 7.00 *birr* in the private shops.

By 2005, the wage of agricultural labourers had increased to 10 *birr* per day. If they provide lunch, the wage is 7 *birr*. Now one quintal of *tef* costs 300 *birr*. The price of half a quintal of fertiliser reached 190 *birr*.

In 1994, a number of respondents were asked if the community is better or worse off than in 1991. The answers were mixed. A number of reasons were given. One said that people used to live in harmony and brotherhood and now it is divided by ethnic origins and lack of trust. Misunderstanding and violence erupt here and there, preventing people from helping each other and working together. Another agreed that the community is worse off - mainly because of security. Many youths are turning into gangsters and robbers.

Certain nationalities are being harassed to go and live in other areas and the cost of living is rising. There is no law-abiding body to look into grievances and many households are forced to leave their land and migrate. In particular, during the Ethio-Eritrea war, some Eritreans left the area and migrated to Eritrea. One person gave the following reasons why people are worse off: the population has grown

and the yield per unit has gone down. The price of food has increased. Some (Kambata) have lost their land and properties because of ethnic clashes.

Respondents were asked about their views of current policies. One response said that they did not like the effect of the rights given to nationalities, which is leading to pressure on minorities to be forcedly migrate. This was reiterated in 2005 by most of the non-Oromo population who do not like the current policies which give rights to participate in administrative issues only to local people. They believe that the administrators give priority to their own group.

In 1994, it was reported that nobody cared if people kill each other and it was hard to believe there was a government. In 2005, there is still ethnic tension. Oromos believe that they will become rich if the other groups did not come to the area to occupy land. However, in spite of statements in 1994, if someone is killed, the *kebele*, militia, elders and *kebele* social court play a big role. Otherwise they take the case to police, and the police tried to prosecute. Another view put forward in 1994, and reiterated in 2005, was that since the community is composed of different ethnic groups, with differing political views, it is not easy to have similar stands and the confusion is often expressed with silence. Another said they agree with the new land policy which says that land cannot be bought and sold. And another said that people are not happy because of increased food prices, problems of security, and some undercover operations. They believe things are getting worse.

People believe democracy is a good thing since it has led to a solution where people promote their own culture, religion and language. However it needs to be practiced by leaders. People cannot now be members of the political organisation of their choice - if they join they will be hunted, lose their jobs and be detained.

### *Government Development Activities in the Community*

At the time of Menelik (1889 - 1906) there was extended slave trade; slaves from the southern part were taken to the centre. The *Melkegna* state bodies, under the *balabat* who had direct connections with the mass of people, were responsible for collecting taxes in kind (honey, butter, oxen or money) to imprison or penalise thieves, *shifita* or any non-loyal people. They did not receive a salary but the people supplied them with food, shelter and the like. They typically wore *nech boge* and *netela*. There were no crops in the area but there was cows' milk supplemented with *enset* which was imported from Sidama and sold. Then came the introduction of new food crops from Wolayita and Sidamo: red millet, corn, and barley. These were cultivated using 2 wooden sticks tapered towards their ends. Those unable to pay tax were obliged to leave the area. Men wore the expected *buluko* varnished with butter and the hide *shirt* which covered the fore parts only. Women also wore the *shirt*.

Lij Iyasu was welcomed because he allowed the open grazing system for cattle. Women sing about him while churning milk in the morning:

<i>Iyasu kiya gara j'ebesa kiya</i>	<i>My Iyasu, you do whatever my heart desires</i>
<i>Morke neman bassa biya</i>	<i>You are saving the area, you are my courage</i>
<i>Iyasu gele</i>	<i>Iyasu is here</i>
<i>Dedi nasu male</i>	<i>So refuse what you like without fear</i>

This shows he brought them some kind of rights.

Long distance transport was by pack animal. A number of ethnic groups including the Wolayita, Sidamo, Oromo clashed around the Bilate river. The number was reduced by the Amharas who came to stop the

unrest among these groups. Conflicts were ended by the Italian aggression.

During the time of Zewditu (1910s) the system of administration was almost the same as formerly but serious criminal cases were seen in the capital which was a long journey. Less serious cases were taken to Shashemene *Wereda* or Hosaena (formerly Wachamo).

During the time of Haile Selassie before the Italian aggression towns like Shashemene, Wendo, and Negele started to be taken over by the Amhara. During the Italian administration towns like Shashemene were reconstructed and the road to Addis Ababa was improved with bridges etc. The slave trade was stopped. Schools and health clinics were built. Money, clothes or prepared food items were given to people in exchange for chickens, eggs, honey, butter or labour services. Some farmers' houses and crops were burned and a number of people were killed. The Ethiopian state before the Italian occupation did not give any development service to the region. It exacted taxes and stationed soldiers and appointed and settled *malkagna*, *naftagna*, and ecclesiastics.

After Haile Selassie returned, State bodies were established (police, *nechlebash*) to make sure people were keeping the State law. *Nechlebash* were members of the so called *Biherawi T'ore* (National Army) that was recruited among peasants during the reign of Haile Selassie to defend the country when ever it was necessary. It was representatives of this army which became one group of the *Derg* that toppled the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I in February 1974. Landlords oppressed the tenants. "Our jewellery was taken from us by paying 1 *birr* irrespective of the size or quality of the item". The road from Wolayita to Bale was built. People left their homelands in search of a land share decided by State law as  $\frac{1}{2}$  *gasha* to a person. They went especially to far and inaccessible areas. Land could be bought if you had money. Taxation was heavy. Educational opportunity was only for the children of rich people. Poverty was considered as inherited. Under the afforestation programme if one felled a single tree one was expected to plant about 7 seedlings. We were obliged to wear *taka* in place of hide. *T'aka* (*abujedid*) is a kind of a piece of cloth for men introduced into Ethiopia during the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century from India. The cloth was imported in large quantities into the country by Menelik II and outstripped the demand for locally produced cotton clothes made by weavers. It is still found in big cloth-shops in the country even though the demand for it deteriorated due to the introduction of modern cloth and clothes from different countries in the world.

After the liberation government organisations began to encourage agricultural and commercial activities and provided services in the fields of electricity, water, health etc. Companies and NGOs such as Phillips Company, FAO, and USAID were established in Shashemene and gave important services to the region. There was a foreign private organisation known as the Industrial Commercial Organisation, owned by Guglielmo de Angeli which was intended to contribute to the agricultural and commercial development of the provinces of Shewa, Sidamo, Bale and Gamu Gofa trading through Moyale to Kenya. Before the 1974 revolution the Government encouraged commercialisation and mechanisation of agriculture around Shashemene by giving loans to private firms for buying tractors and fertilisers in collaboration with FFHC. This involved mass evictions of peasants and pastoralists from their farms and grazing lands.

Veterinary and mill services began. The power of money to buy goods was very great compared with today. In the 1950s the Addis Ababa - Shashemene - Sodo road was built to gain access to the rich province of Gamu Gofa to the south. This road branched later to Bale, Arssi, Shewa and Sidamo regions going as far as Moyale and making Shashemene a convergence point for the various people of southern Ethiopia and a commercial centre for all types of industrial and agricultural products.

Health services, family planning, education, literacy and veterinary services also existed before 1974 but they increased in magnitude after the revolution. During the time of the *Derg* land was redistributed. Schools and health centres were built. There was a literacy programme. The cultural revolution was meant to get rid of backward practices and beliefs. New farm tools, fertilisers, and farming systems were

introduced. There was training in the skills of health, farming systems, handicrafts etc. There were pure water, planting and afforestation programmes. Service and producer co-operatives were formed. The farmers did not want a producer co-operative. A mill house, food aid and food for work programmes were established. There was a supply of certified seeds (*enkoy*). *Enkoy* literally means beautiful in Amharic. It is now the name given to a certified seed for wheat. There was a villagisation programme and ethnic decisions in administration were not allowed. There was a *qota* system (*Qota* means share). During the *Derg*, and to some extent still, consumer goods from government storage were/are distributed in the *qota* system to the people through the *kebele* for those in the rural areas, and through the Town Dweller's Associations for those in towns. On the other hand, the *Derg* government obliged peasants to sell their produce to the government agencies according to amounts specified by the *qota* system. This is not being practiced under the present government.

Men were called up to fight. Principally the fierce fighting took place in the north and then stopped which has left so many young men (*zemecha*). In practice the effect of war can be seen on our environment. War weapons have been introduced and illegal action was taken to destroy or dismiss any government plants or projects like forests, mills, schools etc. Due to the politicisation of ethnicity minor ethnic groups (such as the Kambata) have been forced to leave here.

The MoA helped farmers to construct terraces to prevent erosion. Construction of terraces was terminated in 1992 due to the change of government. The people claimed that soil is increasingly being eroded after the terracing system was abandoned. The MoA is also involved in disbursing improved seeds, trees, and fertiliser.. The MoA uses model farmers who are trained to introduce new ways of farming such as the modern plough, selected seeds etc.

At the end of 2004 governmental organisations organised farmers to form into groups (*cell, gere* and *gott*) for developmental works and to help each other in labour and material. They widened the roads, made the fence free from foliage and made the area clean.

In 2005 the *kebele* officials organise the community through *Iddir* to work for the construction of a pipeline for hospital during the month of *Ginbot*. In *Meskerem* the hospital started to use this water and left the water for Turufe which previously served the hospital and came from Wetera through Turufe. Two rich people planted a private pipeline and the *kebele* is trying to organise other people to contribute money to building another pipeline.

The *kebele* is also trying to cooperate for building an electric mill and to provide electric light for the community. This attempt is ongoing.

### *NGO Activities in the Community*

Between 1928 and 1933 the Italians introduced a number of development projects (road building, house building, bridge building, schools etc) and at that time gave food, clothes, and even money to the labourers they employed. In 1944 African Leprosy Control built houses for people with leprosy that are gathered from different places in the country and this organisation supplies them with food, clothes and any necessary services.

In 1946 the Sudan Interior Mission built Kuyera Hospital, Karrara Ido Junior School, a road in the community and the Kalehiwot church. In the 1950s the Catholics set up a forestation programme and built a church in 1985. In 1985 Sasacoa distributed maize seed with loans and low interest. A group ranked the activities in order of usefulness as follows:

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Hospital         | 6. Food aid             |
| 2. School           | 7. Food for work        |
| 3. Leprosy House    | 8. Seed distribution    |
| 4. Road and bridges | 9. Religious activities |
| 5. Afforestation    |                         |

There are mission organisations, for example the Kuyera Adventist College, which gave formal and modern hospital services to the area including clinics, but often only to adherents of the faith.

Kalehiwot church distributes exercise books and clothes to children and gives 50kg of grain every six months to households with children.

The Catholic Relief Services started activities in the *kebele* since 1985. It used to give school service in Wetera but this was interrupted after the overthrow of the Derg. Catholic Relief Service helps the poor, constructs churches and pays the salaries of kindergarten instructors.

The Awassa Development Bank distributed oxen in 1990 and 1993.

Three NGO's (Ekalo, Compassion, and Catholic Relief Services) help poor parents by constructing a house, and by providing clothes, exercise books and shoes (annually), pens and soap monthly, and money and grain at some annual holidays for their children. They also give religious education at weekends.

Kale Hiwot church, in collaboration with the Wereda Bureau of agriculture, distributes coffee and tea seedlings (about 10,000).

Catholic Children's Fund (CCF) funded the expansion of the school at Wetera in 2005, and during the month of November Arssi Development Organisation gave 10,000 birr as a gift for the construction of Wetera primary school.

Pathfinder trained two youngsters in family planning in May 2005.

African Human Action (AHA) and Adventist Relief gave training for different *kebele* about female circumcision, HIV/AIDs, and contraceptive methods, and individuals who attend these training sessions teach their communities. AHA gives 70 birr to these individuals monthly to encourage them, whereas Adventist Relief gives 35,000 birr per month. However, the dedication of these teachers to teach the community has been declining because there is no supervisor to control them.

### *The Future*

Within the last 30 years individuals have started having a preference for individual advantage over communal feelings. They gave greater importance to education and wealth. They would like a peaceful and secure life both at collective and individual levels. However, some local Oromos feel that they are superior to other groups. They call other groups *anasa*, which expresses shows inferiority.

They have also started to think that nobody should oppress, despise, and exploit others. The proliferation of religious sects particularly within the Christian religion and the conversion of some young people to these new religions particularly from Orthodox Christian families can also be observed in the society within the last 30 years and the conversion rates amongst the young from Orthodox Christianity to Protestantism have been increasing over recent years. It seems that this has caused tension between Orthodox Christians and Protestants. Protestantism is considered a newcomer by Orthodox Christians,

and the fact that increasing numbers of youths are joining the Protestant Church is considered a threat to the Orthodox Church.

The Muslim societies in the area are also being influenced by the *Wehabi* Movement within the Islamic religion that appeared in the area probably within the last ten years.

Some elders claim that love and trust between patrons and clients in the community have been drastically altered to suspicion and mistrust.

The respect between elders and young people has also diminished. The relationship between men and women, and parent and child, however, has not changed to the degree that it has affected their social structure.

The land which was previously monopolised by the native and settled *balabat* (landlords) was equally shared by the landlords and their tenants and other peasants on the basis of the number of the members of their families. Within the last 30 years the practice of employed migrant labour coming from Amhara, Tigray, Kambata, Wolayita, and Hadiya developed, and most of these became landowners in the *kebele*. The settlement and ownership of land by migrant groups from the Amhara and Tigray areas of Northern Ethiopia caused institutional changes in the area which led to the acceleration of the move by the native Arssi Oromo from pastoralism to an agricultural way of life, which started in the area after the conquest of Menelik.

There has been no change in the mobilisation of labour among the Arssi Oromo except that alien forms of marriage began to be practiced in the area after the settlement of migrants from different parts of the country. Intermarriage and trade led to structural changes in the relation between the native Oromo community and the outside world. Changing labour opportunities which attracted migrants and the high fertility rate have also increased the size of the population in the area. The native Arssi Oromo have the feeling that this created the shortage of grazing and farm land which is a problem in the *kebele*.

The most serious thing which affected the relationship between the *kebele* and the state during the *Derg* regime was conscription for the protracted wars in eastern and northern Ethiopia during the revolution. People also mention that villagisation has placed their houses and their farmlands far apart and has created problems.

There is a road used for transportation which facilitates the communication of the community with Kuyera and Shashemene towns. Cars come to the *kebele* particularly to buy potatoes and maize to be transported to Addis Ababa. However, the condition of the road is deteriorating and in the rainy season the lorries face problems getting to the *kebele*. There are also carts (pulled by horse) to transport people and goods from Kuyera town to the *kebele* and vice versa. They also use carts to transport grain either to market or to the mill house at Kuyera.

The community regards lack of electricity as their major problem, although they hope to get electricity in the next 2-3 months. Over the past few years, the provision of fertilisers and insecticides has been declining, and farmers face a shortage. They have been forced to get supplies from retailers at an expensive price. The elementary school at Wetera which was established by the Sudan Interior Mission and which was nationalised during the *Derg*, is functioning now, but only up to second grade.

There is an acute shortage of land. Some people believe this could be helped by redistribution, others disagree, believing that redistribution of land will cause discontent among the local people and consequently lead to chaos and disorder. Even if it were evenly distributed, one said that no one would own more than 0.25 hectares. Another said the problem would be reduced if poor farmers had their own

draught power and seed. Some want land to be distributed on the basis of family size; the first distribution favoured those who were related to the distributors and those who had money. Some farmers travel to other *wereda* to look for share-cropping and contract farming.

Increasing crop yields through modern methods would help, but the poor cannot afford fertiliser and improved seeds. Taking people's land away who have failed to pay the land tax does not help the poor.

Other ideas include the introduction of modern livestock rearing and bee-keeping, and a women's organisation to teach them better ways of raising children, to relieve the burden at home and help them participate in production activities (e.g. poultry farming and vegetables). Irrigation is a possibility.

The groups said they would like the government to provide an electricity supply, to continue with mass education and different kinds of training, to provide improved seeds for food and cash crops, to introduce new technology with respect to farm activities, and to implement laws and disciplines that are acceptable to the people. In general they need the government to open up and support acceptable and feasible opportunities so they can improve their lives. They also would like NGOs to support the *kebele* in developmental activities to improve their lives. These interventions would include financial/material support for the process to get the electric mill working, light and for the construction of the pipeline.

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## *Glossary*

<i>Abba Boku:</i>	Traditional Oromo leader
<i>Anasa:</i>	Minority ethnic groups.
<i>Areke:</i>	A distilled spirit.
<i>Atella:</i>	By-product in the production of <i>tella</i> and <i>areke</i> .
<i>Atmit:</i>	Gruel.
<i>Awdma:</i>	Threshing on the ground.
<i>Awraja:</i>	An administrative boundary before 1991.
<i>Bale rist:</i>	Landowner or landlord.
<i>Belbela:</i>	Lineage.
<i>Belg:</i>	A short rainy season usually occurring during February/March/April. The harvest from this season takes place in July and August.
<i>Birr:</i>	The currency of Ethiopia (16 <i>birr</i> = approximately £1).
<i>Cell:</i>	A sub- <i>gere</i> administrative unit.
<i>Chat:</i>	A bushy plant with leaves which contain a mild narcotic.
<i>Dabbo:</i>	Bread.
<i>Dagusa:</i>	Finger millet.
<i>Debo:</i>	A working party. Labour is provided in exchange for food and drink.
<i>Derg:</i>	The name of the military government that ruled Ethiopia from 1974-1991.
<i>Enset:</i>	False banana. The roots and the inside of the trunk and branches are eaten often after being left to ferment in the ground.
<i>Equb:</i>	A rotating credit and savings association.
<i>Fagullo:</i>	Oil residue.
<i>Fansho:</i>	A past arrangement where a poor person would come to work on a rich person's land for money or food.
<i>Fird shengo:</i>	The <i>Kebele</i> court.
<i>Fetto:</i>	Medicinal plant.
<i>Fidel:</i>	The Amharic alphabet or 'syllabet' as each character in Amharic represents a syllable.
<i>Gada:</i>	The age-grade system of the Oromo people.
<i>Gasha:</i>	A land measurement equalling 40 hectares.

<i>Gebera:</i>	Bride wealth.
<i>Genfo:</i>	Porridge.
<i>Gere:</i>	A sub- <i>gott</i> administrative unit.
<i>Gessa:</i>	Rotating labour exchange arrangement
<i>Gosa:</i>	Clan.
<i>Gott:</i>	A sub- <i>kebele</i> administrative unit.
<i>Guluma:</i>	The lending of a piece of land, not more than ½ a hectare to a relative.
<i>Guma:</i>	Compensation paid to a wife's family if she is murdered by her husband.
<i>Iddir:</i>	A burial society.
<i>Injera:</i>	Ethiopian flat bread.
<i>Kebele:</i>	A local administrative division or an urban dweller's association.
<i>Kiremt:</i>	The rainy season between June and September.
<i>Kolo:</i>	Roasted grain.
<i>Kota:</i>	A system, under the <i>Derg</i> , by which farmers were forced to sell a certain proportion or quota of their harvest to the government at a low price.
<i>Mahiber:</i>	A religious society which meets on a Saint's day; each member takes a turn to host the group providing food and drink.
<i>Meher:</i>	The main rainy season - in most places from June to mid-September. Crops sown during this period are harvested from October to December.
<i>Melkeгна:</i>	A traditional word for an administrator of land.
<i>Meskel:</i>	the day for the commemoration of the founding of the True Cross.
<i>Mewlid:</i>	The celebration of the birth of the Prophet Mohammed.
<i>Nefteгна:</i>	Literally means one who carries a gun. Used to describe those who took over land in the Southern regions of Ethiopia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
<i>Nifro:</i>	Cooked grain.
<i>Qite:</i>	A system by which one person with land and another with oxen work together and share their produce.
<i>Qocho:</i>	Emergency food made from <i>enset</i> .
<i>Sarab:</i>	Friendship contract.
<i>Sello:</i>	An arrangement between two farmers, each with one ox each. They combine the oxen and plough each farmer's land.
<i>Shiro:</i>	A staple food made from beans.
<i>Shome:</i>	Refreshments served as part of <i>debo</i> .
<i>Shuruba:</i>	Hair-styling.
<i>Tataqi:</i>	<i>Kebele</i> security personnel.
<i>Tef:</i>	A millet-like cereal.
<i>Tella:</i>	Home-made beer.
<i>Teskar:</i>	Feast for the dead.
<i>Timad:</i>	Measurement of land size. 1 <i>Timad</i> = 0.25 hectares.
<i>Tsebel:</i>	Holy water.
<i>Wag:</i>	A potato pest.
<i>Warra:</i>	Household.
<i>Weyzero:</i>	Formal address for a woman, the equivalent of Mrs.
<i>Wereda:</i>	An administrative unit in the old administrative divisions until 1991.
<i>Wenfel:</i>	A labour sharing arrangement.
<i>Worke:</i>	A local name for <i>enset</i> or false-banana.
<i>Wot:</i>	Stew eaten with Ethiopian flat bread.
<i>Zebegna:</i>	A guard.
<i>Zemecha:</i>	Campaign.

## *Acronyms*

EDDC:	Ethiopian Domestic Distribution Corporation
EEPC :	Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation
EPRDF:	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation (United Nations)
MoH:	Ministry of Health
ONC:	Oromo National Congress
OPDO:	Oromo People’s Democratic Organisation
PDRE:	People’s Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
UEDF:	Union of Ethiopian Democratic Forces
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

## Appendix A: Ethiopian Calendar

<b>Ethiopian Month</b>	<b>Gregorian calendar starting date in 2005</b>
Meskerem	11 September
Tikimt	11 October
Hidar	10 November
Tahsas	10 December
Tir	9 January
Yekatit	8 February
Megabit	10 March
Miyazia	9 April
Ginbot	9 May
Sane	8 June
Hamle	8 July
Nehase	7 August
Pagume	6 September

There are 13 months in the Ethiopian calendar, 12 of 30 days and the last one, Pagume, of 5 or 6 days depending on whether it is a leap year. The above table provides the starting date for the Ethiopian month in the Gregorian calendar for 2005.

## Appendix B: Seasonal Calendars

<b>Women's activities</b>													
		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sene	Hamle	Nahasie
<b>Women's agriculture</b>													
<b>Men's fields</b>													
	maize		harvest									weeding	
	wheat	weeding		harvest					weeding				weeding
	tef	weeding											
	potato							weeding	hoeing		harvest		
	Dagussa			harvest					weeding			weeding	
	Enset	harvested anytime					Planting						
<b>Women's crops</b>													
	Cabbage	harvest											
	(Gommen)												
	Green pepper	harvest									Planting	weeding	
	(Karia)												

<b>Off-farm activities</b>													
		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sene	Hamle	Nahasie
<b>Men</b>													
	building houses												
	making furniture												
	migration												
<b>Women</b>													
	trading												
<b>Livestock sales</b>													
	ox												
	cows												
	sheep												
	goats												
	donkey												
<b>Livestock diseases</b>													
	anthrax (ox and cows)												
	black leg (ox)												
	? (donkeys)												
	nameless (sheep)												
	nameless (goats)												
	CBPP (ox and cows)												
	Anthropoldox (house)												
<b>Fuel Availability</b>													
	wood												
	kera (maize)												
	kera (sorghum)												
	guto (maize)												
	guto (sorghum)												
	dung cakes												
	gind (maize)												
	gind (sorghum)												
<b>Water availability</b>													

Children's Labour												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sene	Hamle	Nahasie
<b>Boys</b>												
A whole working day	Weeding			harvesting	Ploughing		Weeding		harvesting		weeding	
			herding livestock									
					fetching wood							
how many hours?				fetching water								
				school								
<b>Girls</b>												
a whole working day	craft			craft			craft				brew wood	
	brew		craft	brew	craft		brew				wood	
	wood		brew	wood	brew		wood				weeding	
		weeding	wood	mill	wood		weeding mill	harvesting			mill	
				livestock, mainly sheep							livestock	
how many hours?				water								
				housework								
<b>School terms</b>												
modern												
Quran												

<b>Consumption, harvesting and credit</b>													
		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sene	Hamle	Nahasie
<b>Consumption</b>													
	injera												
	bread												
	kita												
	potato												
	ripe of maize												
	enset												
	meat	There are eaten during annual holidays like Easter, Christmas etc											
	hen												
	milk												
	eggs												
	butter	butter is also eaten during annual holidays											
<b>Hungry season</b>													
<b>Credit needs (women)</b>													
<b>Credit needs (men)</b>													
					Fertiliser								
<b>Festivals</b>													
	New Year	Id Alfater				Arafa			Mawlid				
	Meskel	(Ramadan)				(Id Al Adaha)			Easter				
						Epiphany							
						(Timket)							

<b>Health Calendar</b>												
	<b>Meskerem</b>	<b>Tikimt</b>	<b>Hidar</b>	<b>Tahsas</b>	<b>Tir</b>	<b>Yekatit</b>	<b>Megabit</b>	<b>Miyazia</b>	<b>Ginbot</b>	<b>Sene</b>	<b>Hamle</b>	<b>Nahasie</b>
<b>Women</b>												
lung cancer												
diarrhoea												
malaria												
liver												
inability of giving birth												
<b>Men</b>												
malaria												
lung cancer												
gastritis												
amoeba												
coughing												
cold												
diarrhoea												
<b>Children</b>												
meningitis												
toktik												
measles												
diarrhoea												
TB												
polio												
anaemia												
amoeba												

Rain Calendar												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sene	Hamle	Nahasia
High												
Average rainfall												
	Low											
Pest Calendar												
army worm												
stockborer												
maize and sorghum												
weevil												
maize and sorghum												
chirinko												
maize and sorghum												
hudo												
potatoes and chat												

<b>Crops</b>												
	<b>Meskerem</b>	<b>Tikimt</b>	<b>Hidar</b>	<b>Tahsas</b>	<b>Tir</b>	<b>Yekatit</b>	<b>Megabit</b>	<b>Miyazia</b>	<b>Ginbot</b>	<b>Sene</b>	<b>Hamle</b>	<b>Nahasie</b>
<b>Maize</b>		harvest			soil prep.					planting	weeding	
<b>sorghum</b>			harvesting							soil prep.	planting	weeding
<b>Wheat</b>	weeding		harvesting							soil prep.		Planting weeding
<b>Barley</b>	weeding		harvesting						soil prep.			weeding
<b>Dagusa</b>			harvesting			soil prep.	planting			Planting		weeding
								weeding			weeding	
<b>field peas</b>												
<b>Millet</b>			harvesting		soil prep.		planting	weeding				
<b>fenugreek</b>												
<b>Lentils</b>												
				soil prep.	planting	weeding/hoeing			harvesting		soil prep.	
<b>potatoes</b>	Planting			harvesting								planting
	weeding/hoeing											
<b>sweet potatoes</b>												
<b>tef</b>	weeding		harvesting			soil prep.	planting	weeding		harvesting		
											soil prep.	planting
<b>Onion</b>	weeding	harvesting										
<b>Chat</b>										soil prep.	planting	weeding
	harvesting					Planting			harvesting			
<b>grass (from farmland)</b>			harvesting									
<b>Trees</b>										Planting		
<b>cow peas</b>												
<b>enset</b>					planting							

