

CONSULTATIONS WITH THE POOR

*A Study to Inform The World Development Report /2000/01
On Poverty and Development*

(National Report, Ethiopia)

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The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the World Bank, its Board of Executive Directors, or the governments they represent.

Preface

This study is part of a global research effort entitled *Consultations with the Poor*, designed to inform the *World Development Report 2000/1 on Poverty and Development*. The research involved poor people in twenty-three countries around the world. The effort also included two comprehensive reviews of Participatory Poverty Assessments completed in recent years by the World Bank and other agencies. Deepa Narayan, Principal Social Development Specialist in the World Bank's Poverty Group, initiated and led the research effort.

The global *Consultations with the Poor* is unique in two respects. It is the first large scale comparative research effort using participatory methods to focus on the voices of the poor. It is also the first time that the World Development Report is drawing on participatory research in a systematic fashion. Much has been learned in this process about how to conduct Participatory Poverty Assessments on a major scale across countries so that they have policy relevance. Findings from the country studies are already being used at the national level, and the methodology developed by the study team is already being adopted by many others.

We want to congratulate the network of 23 country research teams who mobilized at such short notice and completed the studies within six months. We also want to thank Deepa Narayan and her team: Patti Petesch, Consultant, provided overall coordination; Meera Kaul Shah, Consultant, provided methodological guidance; Ulrike Erhardt, provided administrative assistance; and the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex provided advisory support. More than a hundred colleagues within the World Bank also contributed greatly by identifying and supporting the local research teams.

The study would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), numerous departments within the World Bank, the Swedish International Development Agency, John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and several NGOs.

The completion of these studies in a way is just the beginning. We must now ensure that the findings lead to follow-up action to make a difference in the lives of the poor.

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'The child cried because he was hungry. The father, hoping to keep him from crying, whispered to the child, "Keep quite, the hyena is just around the corner." The child kept on crying any way, convinced that the hyena would not be any worse than hunger'

(An expression of poverty and hunger, Desei Zuria Wereda Rural Site)

'We Oromos are farmers. Our livelihood is based on water, and, hence, we believe in wet things. The farmers' crops and cattle depend on wetness. Once in a year, the first Sunday after Meskel, we go to this warka tree by Lake Hora. We pray to God as follows [literal translation]

***Dear God our creator
You made us pass the night peacefully
May you also make us pass the day peacefully
Save us from the kicks of horses
And the eyes of wicked people
Please listen to what we are begging from you
Oh God, the creator of land, mountain and the Warka tree
Make a good rain for us
Make our land wet for us
Like this straw we are carrying in our hands
Since these are your creations too
Make the rain come down in peace
Please don't give us bad things with the rain
Like the pests and the hail and lightning***

(An elderly man describing how much the community believes in a local informal institution known as *Eretcha*, Ada Liben Rural site)

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Dessalegn Rhamato

Aklilu Kidanu

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

The following local terms appear frequently in focus group discussions and in the Site Reports.

Adbar: Sacred tree.

Ato: The Amharic term for "Mr".

Areke: Home brewed liquor made and sold by women for subsistence.

Baltina: Neighborhood women organized to prepare food and drink during burial and other public occasions.

Belg: Short rainy season from February to April.

Coolie (or kuli): A porter.

Demobilization of Soldiers: When the *Derg* fell in 1991, its soldiers were demobilized, and many soldiers were left without any livelihood.

Derg: The Military Government which was in power from 1975 to 1991.

EPRDF: *Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front, the current party in power.*

Federal Government: Ethiopia adopted the federal system in 1992. Under this system, the country was divided into 9 ethnic-based regions with a good degree of self-rule.

Fertilizer Subsidy: During the *Derg* regime, fertilizer prices were subsidized. The subsidy was abolished a few years ago due to pressure from the World Bank and the IMF.

Gasha: A unit of land measurement which is no longer in use. One gasha equals 40 hectares.

Gulit: A small neighborhood open market, usually on the streets.

Idir: This is the most common informal institution in Ethiopia. It is a burial society, but provides other support to its members. Membership is very often by residence, and members pay a small monthly fee.

Ikub: Another popular institution. It is a savings club in which each member collects the pool of money contributed weekly or monthly.

Injera and Wet: Local bread made of the 'teff' plant; Wot is the sauce that is eaten with it.

Kadi: A Muslim religious leader.

Kebele: The lowest unit of administration in the rural and urban areas under the federal system.

Kert: A unit of land measurement used in eastern Ethiopia; four *kerts* equal one hectare.

Kire: This is another term for *idir* used in Wollo.

Local Language: In eastern Ethiopia, the local language is *Oromigna*.

Mahiber: Informal association. Members meet every month for food and drink. Member also support each other in times of difficulty.

Mehir: is a rain-fed production season between June and November.

Mesqal: The founding of the cross. An Orthodox Christian holiday celebrated on 27 September.

National Language: The national language is AMHARIC.

Peasant Association: The organization of peasants in a given kebele (see above).

Quota: In the 1980s, the Derg imposed a grain requisitioning program in which each farming household was expected to deliver a quota of grain to the government at prices below the market rate. It was highly unpopular.

Re-distribution of Land: Land was distributed to land-users on family size basis. However, there were frequent redistribution which had a leveling down effect and was resented by peasants.

Region: One of the 9 ethnic based political sub-divisions in the Ethiopian federal system.

Senbete: Church based association the aim of which is to support the priests, deacons, etc. of a given church.

Settlement: In the 1980s, the Derg embarked upon a massive program of involuntary resettlement. It involved moving hard pressed peasants from the northern highlands to the south and south west.

Shimagele: An elderly person. Also elders who are responsible for resolving conflicts in a community.

Summer: This season in Ethiopia falls between October to January.

Tabot: The Arc of the Covenant. This usually refers to the church.

Tsebel: Holy water. Some water sites are considered holy and believed to have healing properties.

Teff: Eragrostis teff. The staple crop in Ethiopia.

Tukul: A house built of mud and grass; in other words, a poor person's house.

Tej: Home brewed mead made from fermented honey and water.

Tella: Home brewed beer. Women subsist by selling this either at home or in the market.

Timad: A local unit of land measurement. 4 *timad* equals 1 hectare.

The 1974 Revolution: This imperial government of Haile Selassie, which was in power since 1941 was over thrown by the Derg in 1974. The Derg later adopted Soviet-style Communism.

The 1975 Land Reform: This was a radical measure involving the dispossession of the landed classes, the distribution of land to peasants, and the establishment of peasant associations.

Tsedey: SPRING

Tsiwa: The term means "holy cup" A religion-based association, similar in many respects to *Mehiber*. It is an institution for Orthodox Christians .

Wereda: This is equivalent to a district.

Winter: Form late June to early September.

Woizero: The Amharic term for "Mrs".

Wouqabi: A person's spirit.

Zawiya: It is a sort of a substitute for a Mosque, where there is none around.

Zone: This is the name given to what previously were provinces.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted in the context of major economic and political developments that took place in the country recently. In less than twenty years, the country transformed (or tried to) from a feudal regime to a Marxist-Leninist regime and finally to the present free market economy. Each one of these state systems had introduced new policy measures whose effects are reflected through out this report.

One of the main findings of this study is that the majority of the population is drifting from the middle category ten years ago to the lowest category of well-being today. Parallel to this, the proportion of the households in the highest category of well-being have shown a drastic decline. This finding is strikingly consistent not only among the focus groups but also between urban and rural communities.

The criteria used to classify households in the different well-being categories vary in rural and urban communities. In rural communities, well-being has a lot to do with having farm land, cattle, farm input and implements. In urban communities, well-being has to do with owning large businesses and permanent employment with pension. The poor, on the other hand are described in terms of their struggle for subsistence which includes daily labor or selling fire-wood and cow-dung. Over the last ten years, the category of the poorest has been added. This group includes not only the landless but also the physically disabled and the elderly

Rural communities face different types of problems than urban communities. Leading problems in rural communities include drought and the problem of access to farm land. The latter is aggravated by two main sub- problems: (i) the rapidly increasing number of landless peasants, and (ii) the shrinking farm plots either due to deforestation and erosion or to the fragmentation of farm lands. Other priority problems include the *quota* system of the previous government, the *Derg*, pests and the high price of fertilizers.

The main problem in urban communities is chronic unemployment. A related set of sub-problems are (i) layoffs of government employees, (ii) the removal of subsidies, and (iii) demobilization of the *Derg* soldiers. These are blamed on the current government's free-market economy. Rapid population growth and the absence of vital services such as health, water, electricity, housing and sanitation are also mentioned as priority problems.

The impact of poverty in these communities is seen in the form of hunger, the increasing number of beggars on the streets, the high rates of morbidity and mortality, and the overall unhealthy and dangerous sanitation conditions in the neighborhoods. This is not to speak of the less obvious signs of hopelessness and desperation among the urban population, particularly the youth.

Communities both in rural and urban areas, at a time of distress, rely more on informal local institutions than on formal governmental and/or non-governmental institutions. *Idir* stands out as one the most important local and informal institutions. *Idir* is a burial society where the number one concern is that a deceased member (or members of a family) receive 'proper' burial. Other important institutions are the Church, for Christians, and the Mosque, for Muslims. They provide spiritual comfort and are the place of burial, the last place of rest. Such institutions have secured strong cultural or religious backing

for many years and have survived (in fact, thrived) through harsh economic conditions.

Among the formal governmental institutions, the *kebele* is mentioned as the most important one. *Kebele*, which is the lowest unit of administration in both rural and urban areas, is considered important because it links the community residents with the government, and that is where community residents go to receive ID cards or any other kind of official document that is considered essential for residents. Not that they do much about them, but *kebeles* also provide the forum for discussions of public concerns and problems.

Gender relations are very much influenced by the dominating culture in the area. The typical responsibilities of women in the household include preparing food, taking care of the children, and fetching water and fire-wood. Men believe that these tasks are delegated to women because they are 'physically weak'. Women, on the other hand believe that they do these because they do not want to be labeled 'lazy' or 'unfit' to be a wife. They argue that unlike what men think, some of their routine tasks such as carrying water on their back for hours require a lot of physical strength.

At the community level, women are limited to preparing food and drink at social gatherings. There are signs, however, that females are claiming more and more of their legitimate rights. They are now elected as *idir* or association chairs. It is not certain whether this is mostly a reflection of the change in the culture which, in itself, could have many reasons. Or, whether it is a poverty-induced deterioration of males' control over females.

Males, on the other hand, assume all the major responsibilities of decision making on matters that affect the well-being of the community. They are almost always the chair of the peasant associations or *kebele* and/or *idir*. They are also the judges, members of the police, the security and all other prestigious positions. These are positions of power, not shared with women, that give men a lot of influence on decision making at the community level.

Violence against women, both in rural and urban areas, has been going on for a long time without inhibition. The most common household violence against women include beatings and forced acceptance of marriage. Women are beaten in the house for any reason that may include failure to prepare lunch or dinner for the husband. Women are also forced to stay in a marriage that they do not like for many good reasons. This particular type of violence is enforced by putting economic and/or cultural pressure on women. At the community level, the most common violence against women is the *telefa*. This refers to abducting women against their will or consent. *Telefa* is a serious crime which involves rape.

In the last few decades, and probably mostly as a result of poverty, gender relations are showing clear signs of change in favor of females.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

A majority of the respondents interviewed for this report have experiences of three radically different state systems, the last of which is the present federal government. Many of them may well remember the distinct policies that defined the structure of the political and economic systems of the last two governments and the major officials and personalities who were in the limelight at each particular occasion. Memories of the conditions of life and the opportunities that were or were not open to the average person in the period between the late 1960s through the 1980s will probably be fresh in the minds of those in their forties and older.

The two earlier governments, each of which in its own way has left a significant legacy still visible today, were the imperial regime (1941-1974), and the *Derg* regime (1974-1991). Following is a brief description of some of the distinct characteristics of these regimes.

(i) The Imperial Regime

The imperial state has frequently been described as a feudal state, although there has been considerable controversy over the issue. Certainly there were elements in the political and class structure of the state that may very well be described as *feudal*. At the top of the state structure was a powerful monarch, Emperor Haile Selassie, who legitimized his authority on grounds of divine rights. The Emperor never considered delegating authority, and all officials owed their positions to him. Haile Selassie power was greatly inflated as a consequence of the centralization of the state and the modernization of the apparatus of government.

Below the monarchy was a class of landed nobility, which had extensive property holdings, especially agricultural land, throughout the country. The nobility was an absentee landlord: it did not reside in the countryside but exercised ownership rights over its property through a system of surrogate agents. In the countryside itself, the local gentry, which owned considerable land in its own right, served as the chief government agent, serving as administrator and judge at the level of the sub-province and district. Most farming peasants did not own the land they tilled but were tenants of the landed classes or the state.

Under a variety of classifications, the state held vast tracts of agricultural land in the country. Some of this land was given to persons who had rendered or were expected to render loyal service to the state. The offer was conditional and could be withdrawn at any time. Other holdings of the state were farmed by tenant farmers who handed over a portion of their produce to the state agent in the form of rent. In theory, all the land in the country belonged to the state, and under the ancient principle of eminent domain the state had the right to claim land held under private ownership and to dispossess any person or institution.

Tenant farming was most widespread on land owned by the landed classes. It was the main form of tenure for farming peasants in the southern part of the country. The landed nobility were not only absentee owners but were for the most part northerners whose rights to land in the southern regions was based ultimately on conquest and political domination. For the peasant, tenancy was onerous and exploitative. The farmer not only paid rent, usually in kind, for the use of the land, but had to render a variety of services

including labor to his landlord. While frequent evictions of tenants was not a regular practice, most tenants had no sense of secure holdings. In the latter part of the 1960s and the early 1970s, a good deal of tenant evictions did take place due to the expansion of large-scale mechanized agriculture.

The imperial regime refused to seriously consider reforming the land system, which was a target of criticism by radicals and liberals in the country and by a number of international donors.

The period from the 1950s to the early 1970s was a period of relative peace. There were no major regional or class conflicts, though short-lived uprisings flared up here and there. The Eritrean struggle, which broke out in the 1960s, was successfully contained and was hardly noticed by most people in Eritrea itself. This is in sharp contrast to the post-imperial and post-Derg periods when civil war and regional insurgencies brought death and destruction to a large portion of the rural population. In both periods, there was large-scale military conscription; in the *Derg* period, young people were actually pressed into military service. At the time of its collapse in 1991, the *Derg* may have had a military force of well over a quarter of a million men. In contrast, the imperial state maintained a military force of about 45,000 men.

(ii) The Derg Regime

The imperial regime was overthrown by the *Derg*, a committee of non-commissioned and middle level military officers, in 1974. While initially the *Derg* did command widespread support, it soon alienated itself from the public by its dictatorial and unpopular policies. In the late 1970s, the *Derg* unleashed a reign of terror, and thousands of people were rounded up and executed for alleged counter-revolutionary activities. A few years after its seizure of power, the *Derg* called itself a Marxist-Leninist state and adopted hard-line, Soviet style communist programs. In typical Soviet fashion, the state became a highly centralized one-party state and power was concentrated in the hands of Mengistu Haile Mariam and a small number of his close cohorts. All major economic resources and industrial and commercial enterprises were placed under state ownership, and the private sector, which was not a major force even under the imperial regime, was highly marginalized.

One of the most important policy initiatives of the *Derg* was the radical land reform of 1975. The reform nationalized all agricultural land and the peasant cultivator had only usufruct rights to the land he or she was allocated through redistribution. Farm plots could not be sold, mortgaged or transferred in any way except to one's children in special circumstances. The countryside was divided into what were known as *kebeles*, localities with a given area and population of resident farmers. Peasant Associations (PAs) were formed in each *kebele*, and the responsibility of the PAs was to redistribute land, to settle disputes and, later, to collect taxes and act as the last tier of local administration. The land reform dispossessed, without compensation, all landlords, and abolished tenancy. Initially, the reform was received with a good deal of support; it appeared as an emancipatory reform designed to enable the peasantry to become an independent class. But subsequent policies aimed at the socialization of agriculture alienated the peasantry and soured the relations between it and the *Derg*. Moreover, the reform gave rise to frequent redistribution of land and as a result created a high degree of tenure insecurity.

The major rural policies that followed the land reform placed heavy emphasis on agricultural cooperatives and state farms. Collectivization was seen as an important vehicle for rapid agricultural transformation. Through a variety of largely coercive measures, the state promoted cooperatives in the countryside; these cooperatives were entitled the best land, tax incentives and generous subsidies. There were also urban cooperatives, involving mostly craftsmen and women, which also enjoyed similar benefits. While the *Derg's* priorities were mainly on collectivization and state agriculture, it did try to provide some support to private peasant farms. It was during the 1980s that large-scale dissemination of fertilizers was undertaken. Attempts were made to keep the price of fertilizer low through a program of state subsidies.

In 1984-85, a devastating famine spread throughout the rural areas. The response to the famine was massive food aid to the country by Western donors. The food was distributed to the affected population in part through free distribution and in part through food-for-work programs. At the same time, all through the 1980s, the government undertook an extensive program of environmental rehabilitation through food-for-work, thanks to the food aid supplied by the World Food Programme, the E.U., Canada and other Western countries.

Following the famine of the 1980s, the *Derg* embarked on forced resettlement and villagization. Resettlement relocated over half a million peasant farmers, the victims of drought and famine, in areas which were considered to have better agricultural potential. These were areas in the south and southwest of the country. An earlier program to resettle drought victims on irrigated land in the Ogaden area in the eastern lowlands was not very successful. Most of the resettlement schemes were maintained by heavy government support. Villagization also involved moving several million peasant households from their traditional localities to new areas. This was also undertaken through coercion and intimidation.

Another unpopular rural policy was food requisitioning. Every peasant had to deliver a *quota* of grain to the government at prices set well below the market. Grain *quotas* were set arbitrarily by a government agency and *quota* deliveries were enforced by the PAs. Initially, the rationale behind the measure was to keep the price of food low for the urban population, in particular the urban poor. While the supply of food and other consumer products became increasingly short in the 1980s, the *Derg's* system of public distribution of consumer goods at controlled prices did benefit the urban poor to some extent.

In 1990, following a series of military defeats, the *Derg* initiated a radical economic reform. The policy of Mixed Economy, which was hastily announced, liberalized the grain trade, terminated grain requisitioning, encouraged the participation of the private sector and allowed peasants and others to opt out of the cooperative schemes if they so wished. In the space of less than six months, the great majority of cooperatives were dismantled, and millions of peasants abandoned the villages and returned to their previous homes. In addition, many thousand settler peasants left resettlement and headed to their original birth place.

(iii) The Present Government

Immediately after the overthrow of the *Derg* in May 1991, the transitional government undertook a policy of administrative decentralization along ethnic lines. However, the

setting up ethnic based regional governments has been followed by greater bureaucratization. The new government also demobilized the *Derg* army, and attempts were made through some donor initiatives to integrate the soldiers into civilian life.

Initially, the new government refrained from announcing a comprehensive new land policy, stating that this will be undertaken following a new constitution and popular elections. However, in 1993 it proclaimed that land would remain, as previously, under state ownership and the peasant farmer would continue to hold usufruct rights. A slight improvement from before is that now land-holders can transfer their land to others through short-term rent or contract, though holders are still prohibited from selling or mortgaging their holdings. The resettlement program has been suspended but there are still tens of thousands resettlers in the south and southwest of the country. There has been one major land redistribution in the north of the country in 1996, and peasants in other parts of the country suspect that there will be more to come later. The sense of tenure insecurity created by the policies of the *Derg* has not been allayed.

Further market liberalization, currency devaluation, and the termination of all state subsidies were carried in the mid-1990s. Fertilizer subsidies were phased out over a period of three years, however this coincided with sharp increases in world fertilizers prices. The new economic policy initiated by the government was to effect a shift from a command economy to a market-based economy. Barriers to private investment were to be removed and incentives were to be provided to encourage both domestic and foreign capital. As part of its acceptance of the IMF/World Bank's structural adjustment program (SAP), the government undertook a retrenchment program involving the laying-off of a large number of civil servants from all branches of administration. While the termination of the long civil war was welcomed by society at large, it does not appear to the average Ethiopian, least of all to the poor, that they have benefited by the peace dividend. Moreover, the period of peace proved to be short-lived, and the country is at present at war with its neighbor Eritrea. The conflict has led to large-scale military conscription and the allocation of considerable resources to the war effort.

While sufficient investigation has not yet been carried out, there is evidence to indicate that SAP has hurt the poor, both rural and urban. According to some of the reports of the joint study undertaken by the Economics Department of Addis Ababa University and Oxford University, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened since the mid-1990s, and that the size of the population of the poor has increased, especially in the urban areas. The new private-oriented, market-led economy has created few job opportunities. At present, government figures suggest that more than 55 percent of the population is below the poverty line.

(iv) The Human Condition

Drought and famine have been persistent problems over the last four decades. There have been severe food shortages in 1964-66, 1973-74, 1984-85, and 1999; a food crisis is looming in the north and east of the country as these lines are being written. These two factors have been major causes of poverty in the rural areas in this period. Other causes that have exacerbated poverty have been civil war and social conflict, especially in the post-imperial period, exploitative and insecure land tenure regimes, damaging economic policies, and population pressure. As a result of the long civil war of the 1980s, and the communal conflicts following the ethnic decentralization of the country, large numbers of people fled to the cities, in particular to Addis Ababa, the capital. The number of indigents and the homeless has increased significantly in most urban areas in the 1990s.

The first population census in the country was carried out in 1984. This provided, for the first time, an accurate population count, though, at the time, only 80 percent of the country was covered by the census on account of the civil war. The second population census was undertaken in 1994 and involved a full coverage. The latter census shows that Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa, behind only Nigeria. The country's rate of population growth is put at 3 percent per year. In 1995, Ethiopia had a population of 55 million, of which 14 percent was urban and the rest rural. Ethiopia is one of the least urbanized countries in Africa. By the year 2000, the population is expected to grow to 63.5 million. The age composition of the population shows a high percentage of young men and women. About 44 percent of the population is below 15 years of age while another 44 percent is between the ages of 15 and 49 years.

Ethiopia is predominantly an agricultural country whose economy is based on land and other renewable natural resources. More than 75 percent of the population is engaged in subsistence farming, but food insecurity has been a dominant problem for the peasantry for at least over a century. The country's per capita income is estimated to be US \$167 per annum, making it one of the poorest countries in the world. The per capita income of urban residents is put at U.S. \$217 while that of rural residents is U.S. \$159. The country has considerable potential for hydropower and mineral resources, and has one of the largest livestock populations in Africa. On the other hand, much of the country's forest and woodland has been removed with serious environmental consequences.

The pressure on agricultural land is high, and per capita land holdings are small and getting smaller. The possibility for expanding the cultivable land for rain-fed agriculture is very limited. While the irrigable potential of the country is optimistically put at about 3 million hectares, less than 5 percent of this land is under irrigation at present. Agriculture's contribution to GDP is quite high and has averaged 51 percent in the last seven years. The performance of the agricultural sector, which is highly dependent on rainfall conditions, has been quite poor, and productivity has not kept pace with population growth. The main reasons for the poor performance of agriculture are insecurity of land tenure, diminishing size of farm plots, and lack of sufficient investment in the rural economy by government and the private sector.

2.2 The Purpose and Methodology of the Study

(i) Purpose

'The purpose of the study is to enable a wide range of poor people in diverse countries and conditions to share their views in such a way that they can inform and contribute to the concepts and contents of the WDR 2000/01.' (Process Guide for the 20 Century Study for World Development Report 2000/02)

More specifically, this study documented the views of poor people in different regions of Ethiopia on four major themes; (i) how they defined and perceived well-being (good or bad quality of life), (ii) how they prioritized problems and whether they changed over the years, (iii) what institutions (formal or informal) were important in their lives and how they related to them, and (iv) their perceptions of differences between the two genders in terms of tasks and responsibilities.

(ii) Methodology and Process

The study followed most of the approach suggested in the Process Guide prepared by the Poverty Group, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, The World Bank. There were, however, some changes and modifications made to this process depending on local conditions at the study sites.

Site Selection:

The selection of the ten sites was purposeful. The main criteria included (i) the agro-ecology of the area; that is, whether it was relatively high land (*Dega*) or low land (*Kolla*), (ii) the proximity of the site to a main road, and (iii) whether the area was urban or rural. It was assumed that the experience as well as the understanding of poverty differed according to these characteristics. Accordingly, ten sites (6 rural and 4 urban) in three different regions of the country were selected (See Table 2.1).

Team Composition

The study team was composed of 15 people including the team leaders; 5 of them female. Most of the team members have had some experience in qualitative data collection and analysis. The team members took a 3-day orientation on the objectives and methodology of the study prior to field work

Fieldwork Process

Once the study sites were selected, the World Bank Ethiopia, following established tradition, wrote a request of cooperation to the Zonal Administrative Councils. The Councils, in turn, wrote the same to their respective *Wereda* Councils which wrote the same to their respective *Kebele* or Peasant Association Chairs. The contact persons throughout the study remained the *wereda* representatives who played a crucial role in facilitating the consultations. The *kebele*/peasant association chairpersons were key actors in organizing the focus groups and providing information on community characteristics.

Table 2.1: Study Sites and their Characteristics and Locations.

Site Number/Name	Characteristics	Wereda (or Town)/ Zone/Region	Criteria for Selection
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Site 1: Kajima	Peasant Association	Ada Liben/East Shewa/Oromia	Rural, traditionally agricultural area, high land, 8kms from main road
Site 2: Kurkura Dembi	Peasant Association	Ada Liben/East Shewa/Oromia	"
Site 3: Dibdibe Wajtu	Peasant Association	Ada Liben/East Shewa/Oromia	"
Site 4: Kebele 11 (Debre Zeit Town)	Kebele (or Urban Dwellers' Association)	Wereda 2/East Shewa/Oromia	Urban site in a small town, densely populated
Site 5: Kebele 30 (Addis Ababa)	Kebele, (or Urban Dwellers' Association)	Wereda 3, Zone 1 Region 14	Urban site in a major city, densely populated
Site 6: Kebele 23 (Addis Ababa)	Kebele (or Urban Dwellers' Association)	Wereda 11, Zone 4, Region 14	"
Site 7: Kebele 11 (Dessie Town)	Kebele (or Urban Dwellers' Association)	Dessie Zuria, Debub Wello, Amhara	Urban site in a medium town, drought prone area
Site 8: Gerado	Peasant Association	Dessie Zuria, Debub Wello, Amhara	Rural site, close to a main road, drought prone area
Site 9: Kalina	Peasant Association	Dessie Zuria, Debub Wello, Amhara	"
Site 10: Miti Kolo	Peasant Association	Dessie Zuria, Debub Wello, Amhara	Rural site close to a medium town, drought prone area

All the team members traveled to all sites together. Once at a given site, the study team talked to the participants in an informal manner to introduce the study and each other. When possible, members of the team walked around the community with some of the participants. After a while, the team, with the help of the kebele or peasant association chairs, divided the participants into various groups to get a mix of male and female participants by different age groups and occupations (See Table 2.2).

At separate locations within the community, the team members consulted with individual focus groups for as long as three to four hours. Women focus groups consulted with female team members when possible. Some members of the team talked to individuals. Some others talked to the elderly or community leaders to learn about the community as a whole.

Coffee and bread (arranged in advance) was served in the middle of the consultations, at

the team's expense (worked very well as an energizer). At the end of the focus group discussions, the team members thanked the participants and headed to their hotels. Each evening, after a break, the team met to discuss the day's experience and to prepare for the next site. Usually, one day was enough to do one site: 8 focus groups, 5 individual case studies; 1 institutional profile and 1 community profile. When necessary, the team went back to the sites to gather additional information.

Table 2.2: Number of Focus Groups, Individual and Institutional Profiles by Study Sites

Site	Male Focus Groups	Female Focus Groups	The Youth	Mixed	Individual Profiles	Institutional Profiles
Site 1	3	3	-	-	5	1
Site 2	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 3	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 4	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 5	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 6	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 7	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 8	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 9	3	3	1	1	5	1
Site 10	3	3	1	1	5	1
Total	30	30	9	9	30	10

Site Reports

This began every evening at the hotel. The team members talked about cross-cutting issues to be included in the reports; these were documented. A team member was assigned to compile the information gathered from all focus groups in one site. Another was assigned to compile individual case studies. The team wrote the first draft of site reports on the basis of the compiled information.

Some Notes on the Limitations of the Study

The following is a list of limitations of the study process that the team members identified.

First, some of the questions were not appropriate in the Ethiopian context. For example: in the rural areas questions having to do with husband-wife relations, violence against women, and conflict in the family are very sensitive and most women are not willing to provide information to strangers.

Second, the questions in the Process Guide were drafted with the South Asian experience in mind. The rural experience in Ethiopia and much of Africa is much different from that of Asia.

Third, the time allocated for the study was very short. The interview was a quick one-shot affair but many of the questions required knowing the community more closely.

Fourth, interviewees came to the consultations with certain expectations. They would have been happy to get some kind of assistance and support which the study could not provide.

Fifth, the literacy level of peasant farmers in the rural areas is quite low. There were too many complex questions for them to handle.

Sixth, certain questions in the methodology were included without careful consideration. For example, for the poor in this country there is very little distinction between risk and vulnerability. The issue of social exclusion has not been integrated with poverty. There are in most societies people who are socially excluded, or who do not socially mix with others. The reasons may be religious, cultural, historical, class, geographical, economic. The issue would have been interesting if the attempt was to see whether or not greater poverty induces or promotes social exclusion.

Seventh, too many visuals were required. There were a minimum of 240 visuals for the 10 sites, that is, 24 per site. This was time consuming and unnecessary. Two or three visuals per site would have been sufficient.

Eighth, for a study which is supposed to be based on participatory and qualitative research there are too many tables and too much emphasis on quantitative information.

Finally, the guidelines for the Site Reports are not well prepared. Many of the sections require the same information that was provided earlier. As a result the Reports are repetitive and read poorly.

2.3 Brief Profiles of Study Sites

As indicated earlier, the consultations with the poor were conducted in three different regions of the country: Ada Liben Wereda in Eastern Ethiopia, Dessie Zuria Wereda in Northern Ethiopia, and in Addis Ababa which is centrally located (Please see Country Map, Annex 1) On the basis of the discussion with the various focus groups as well as the data collected using the 'Site Community Characteristics' format and field observations, brief profiles of each site are given below (The detailed community characteristics of each site are provided in Annex 2)

(i) Ada Liben Wereda Sites

Site 1: Kajima Peasant Association (PA), one of the 138 peasant associations in Ada Liben Wereda is located about 55 km east of Addis Ababa, in Oromia Region and mostly inhabited by Oromos. The nearest major town (about 8 kms) to this site is Debre Zeit, with a population of 73,372 in 1994 - the last national census. Kajima had a total of 282 peasant households, and a total of 1,640 people, according to the 1994 census. The

majority of the male population are engaged in subsistent farming; about a third have no land and, hence, no livelihood; the remaining live as daily laborers. The women, for the most part are housewives. There are some who sell local drinks like *tella* and *areke* for a living; there are also those who work as daily laborers. The population of the peasant association has changed quite a bit in the last ten years or so, according to the residents. There are no telephone, postal or health and school services in this community. The economy, the way the residents put it, has 'fallen to its lowest level ever.' In the Winter, heavy rain (including hail), followed by heavy flooding, destroys their crops and sweeps the top soil away. In the Summer, there is a tremendous shortage of water. Everything dries up. That is when there is food shortage and the men look for work in nearby towns; the females fetch and sell fire-wood and/or cow-dung for a living. The price of consumption items such as oil and coffee has also gone up sharply in the last ten years.

Site 2: Kurkura Dembi Peasant Association is about 55 km east of Addis Ababa and about 10 km from the nearest main town of Debre Zeit. Kurkura Dembi had a total of 2,912 people living in 528 households, according to the 1994 census. The peasant association was formed 13 years ago when the socialist settlement program was undertaken throughout the country. Most of the people are Oromos and Orthodox Christian. Mixed agriculture (crop and livestock production) is the mainstay of the people. The majority of the residents of the community are farmers and produce crops once a year based on the *meher* rain. The main crops produced are *teff*, beans, peas, wheat and barely. Some members of the community work as daily laborers and fewer people are involved in selling local drinks, mostly *tella* and *areke*. Despite the location of the PA which is only 8 km from the main road, there are no telephone, postal, electric or water services in the community. There are no schools or any health services available to the farmers, unless they walk to Debre Zeit.

Site 3: Dibdibe Wajtu Peasant Association There about 800 peasant households (and a total of 5000 people) living in this farm community. The nearest main road from the community is about 8 Kms away near a small town called Dukem. Community residents walk to this town (about 2 hours) to get access to telephones, post offices or clinics. Although there is a power line that passes nearby, only about 5% of the community residents have electricity service. There is no agricultural extension office at the site, but there is at Dukem. The main source of livelihood for the males in this community are agriculture and petty trade. Females, for the most part, are housewives although some are engaged in selling local drinks such as *tella* to supplement the family's income. Virtually all community residents are Orthodox Christians. Hence, the main social groups are religious in nature. These include *mahiber* and *tsiwa*. There are no social groups based on ethnicity, race or caste. Over the last ten years the local economy has gotten worse, and will continue to decline for the foreseeable future. Occasional natural disasters such as drought and flood have contributed to this decline. There has also been occasional food crisis which has driven the price of food above the purchasing power of community residents.

Site 4: Kebele 11, founded in 1978, is one of the 15 kebeles located in Debre Zeit, a town with a population of 72,000 about 45 km east of Addis Ababa. The town is surrounded by seven crater lakes, and fertile farm land suitable for *teff*. Lakes *Hora* and *Bishoftu* are literally within the city limits, attracting a lot of tourists mostly from the Addis Ababa area. The *kebele* itself had a 1994 population of 4,623 living in 1,073 households. The youth age group (below 16) amounts to almost half of the population. There is a

large group of unemployed in the *kebele*. A majority of those males who work are engaged in semi-professional jobs like weaving, carpentry, and brick laying. Most do not have permanent jobs, and a few are civil servants. Most women are housewives, but many are engaged in petty trade at *gulits*, or in selling local drinks like *tella* and *areke*. Despite the hazardous sanitary conditions, there are no health services within the community. People either walk or take the carts to go to the nearest clinic on the other side of the town. A lot of people are concerned about the health of their children. Many are victims of typhoid and diarrhea.

It is widely believed in this area that the local economy has greatly deteriorated in the last ten years, particularly since the advent of the new government in 1991. The reasons given by the residents of the community, are numerous. Some of them include: demobilization of soldiers which suddenly created a class of large unemployed youth; in-migration from the surrounding rural and semi-urban areas as a result of the ethnic politics initiated by the current government; and the dissolution of the cooperatives which destroyed the livelihoods of many crafts people, especially weavers.

(ii) Addis Ababa Sites

Site 5: Kebele 30 (also known as Pensioners' Area), is one of the 300 or so *kebeles* in Addis Ababa located in the middle of the most commercialized portion of the city. The 1994 national census shows that there were 1,913 households and 9,428 people living in this *kebele*. Almost half of them are aged 15 and below. There are telephone, electric and water services in the community. However, most households share these services in common. There is no hospital or clinic in the *kebele*. The residents of four *kebeles*, including this one, share one clinic. There are severe problems of latrines, kitchens and waste disposal. Housing and crowded living are also major problems in the *kebele*. The main NGO in the area, that attempts to address some of these issues, is Inter-wholistic Approach for Urban Development Project (IWAUDP). It is also known as Sister Jember's NGO. This NGO has been involved in constructing roads, latrines, housing units and recreational centers for the youth. It is said that the NGO is not as active as it used to be. Some of the men in the *kebele* work as plumbers, brick layers, masons, carpenters, etc. The majority of the adult men in the *kebele* are daily laborers or petty traders. There are large groups of unemployed and beggars. Women also work as daily laborers and petty traders (*gulit*) although a majority call themselves housewives and totally dependent on their husbands. There is a consensus that the community is not only hard hit with poverty but also that it has shown a major decline in well-being in the last ten years. One main reason, according to the residents, is the demobilization of the *Derg* soldiers. A majority of the residents of this *kebele* are Coptic Christians, although there is a large Muslim population too. The ethnic background of the residents is so mixed that it could be called the ethnic melting pot of the entire country.

Site 6: Kebele 23 (Wereda 11, Zone 4) commonly known as Sheromeda is one of the *kebeles* in Addis Ababa situated in the northern part of the capital bounded by Entoto Mountains to the north. With a total population of about 20,000, it is one of the most densely populated *Kebeles* in Addis Ababa. There are telephone services in the neighborhood, although most are not privately owned. There are no postal or health services in the community, and people have to go to other parts of the city to get services. The area is mostly settled by the Dorze ethnic group whose main occupation is weaving traditional dresses. It is estimated that about half of the males are engaged in

weaving while about a third are engaged as carpenters. The remaining are engaged in all types of odd jobs including begging. More than half of the female residents of the neighborhood are engaged in selling *tella* and *areke*, while about a third sell tree leaves to support their livelihoods. There are no social groups based on religion, tribal or caste systems. Like most neighborhoods in the city, *Kebele 23* has seen a major increase in the population, mostly due to in-migration. The residents believe that economy is deteriorating as a result of the lack of employment and increasing prices of consumer goods. Although there is elected government in place, there is little confidence in local governments as opposed to judges and community leaders.

(iii) Dessie Zuria Wereda Sites

Site 7: Kebele 11 (also known as Membere Tsehaye Neighborhood) is one of the 20 Urban Dwellers' Associations (UDA) in Dessie Town surrounded by mountains and Borkena and Gerado rivers. According to the Chair of the UDA, about 2,500 households or about 10,000 people live in this urban community. The residents of this urban community have access to public telephones and a post office located at the UDA's office. A vast majority of the households also have electric service, either in private or in common. There is also a clinic run by the Red Cross in the community. Residents also utilize the main clinic of the town which is located in another UDA. There are no NGOs operating in this community. The main source of livelihood of most males in this community include daily labor, retailing, and selling of wood and handicrafts. Most females, on the other hand, are engaged in retailing (at *gulits*), selling of fire wood, *tella* and *areke*. Some of the women are house wives and depend on their husband's income. The most common social groups in this community are religious in nature. They include *mahiber* and *senbete*. There are no groups based on ethnicity, race or caste system. Although, in general, the people in the community get along with each other quite well, there is no time for them to get together socially. Each person is busy trying to make a living.

Site 8: Gerado (or 01) Peasant Association is one of the peasant associations, located in Dessie Zuria Wereda, formed during the settlement programme of the *Derg*. People who now live in this area came from different corners of the country. It is located about 7 Kms from Dessie Town, surrounded by mountains, and there is the Gerado river that goes across the community's farm land when it is not dry. Gerado is a farm community of about 4000 people who are predominantly Amhara and Muslims. About 80 percent of the males and half of the females are literate. There are no telephone or postal services in the community; there are agricultural extension programs and primary health care services. The main source of livelihood for men is farming, although a lot are having second thoughts because of the decline in production due to recurrent drought. Most women in the community are engaged in selling fire wood, cow-dung and cotton threads. The population of the community has been rapidly increasing over the years while the economy has been declining sharply. The main causes for the latter is frequent droughts and political crises at the national level. The frequent changes of governments have had its toll in this area. In spite of the hard times, residents get on with each other very well and no tension is seen because of ethnic or religious differences.

Site 9: Kalina (02) Peasant Association (PA) formed in the 1977 settlement program, is located in the northern highlands of Ethiopia. The peasant association itself is about 7 Kms from the main nearby town of Dessie. There are about 2000 households and up to

15,000 people living in this PA. Almost of the community members are farmers. But currently dealing with land seems fruitless for them. Many farmers are inclining to go some where else to get their livelihood frustrated by the frequent drought. The women for the most part are housewives. Three devastating cycles of drought have taken place in the area in the last 30 years. Every cycle seems to be stronger than the previous one in area coverage and number of people affected. The factors believed to be responsible for these disasters are over-farming of land, deforestation, loss of the nutrient value of the land and unwise management of cultivation. There is no infrastructure worth to be mentioned in the PA. It is far and inaccessible. The people go to Dessie for every service they seek. This is true with the exception of an elementary school that holds about 1,000 students. If there is any significant change recently in this particular peasant association, it is only the sadly intensified drought that squeezed the last hope of every household. And, of course, there is the new comers, the settlers, who were moved a decade ago thorough the resettlement programme.

Site 10: *Mitti Kolo Peasant Association* is located about 25 Km from Dessie Town and about 3 Kms from Kombolcha Town on the main road to Assab, the former Red Sea port city of Ethiopia. This predominantly Muslim community has a total of 2000 households and 10,000 people. This general area has been hit hard by famine and successive drought for a long time. More and more are leaving farming for daily labor in towns near by. A lot of people have resorted to selling fire wood and cow-dung as an alternative way of life. These practices have further exacerbated the situation since they affect the environment negatively. This year has been particularly difficult. The farmer (even those with land) can no more support the family because of declining productivity caused mainly by drought, pests and lack of fertilizers. The community is located nearby a main road and the residents have no access to public telephones or post offices no household has its own telephone time, although there is telephone at the school. There is an agricultural extension office where seedling and fertilizer services are provided to the community for pay. There is no health care clinic in the community Residents bitterly complain about malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS epidemic. The main source of livelihood for men is farming although more and more men are now engaged in daily laborer and cutting trees. Most women are housewives. There are also some who sell firewood for a living. In the last ten years the population of the community has increased dramatically. This is because of high birth rates as well as the dislocated people from the nearby part of Assab. During the same time, the local economy has become much worse. Some of the main contributing factors include drought, pests and the increased price of fertilizers. Inflation is a major problem in the area. This is also an area hit hard by successive droughts and occasional flooding during the winter season. The heavy rains have also been the main reason for productivity decline because of eroded soil and washed crops. There are no NGOs operating in the area.

3. PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY: WELL-BEING DEFINITIONS AND TRENDS

This section highlights (i) the local terminologies (and their definitions) used by the participants of the consultations to express well-being, or ill-being (ii) the categories, criteria and proportion of households (in the categories), (iii) changes in well-being categories (iv) the main causes and impacts of poverty, (v) security, social/economic mobility, and social exclusion/cohesion as well as the coping strategies. The section also provides individual case studies from different sites. Wherever appropriate, differences by residence (urban and rural) as well as gender (male and female) are also highlighted in this section.

(The Notes and Glossary describe the different local words and terms used in this paper.)

3.1 Well-being Terminologies and Definitions

The issue here is the ways in which the participants of this study express their current state of affairs in their own way. All focus groups in this study, regardless of place of residence or gender, used similar terminologies. (In all cases, the language used was Amharic, the national language of the country.) As one can see below, all the terminologies describe the state of ill-being rather than well-being. All members of the focus groups responded in terminologies that express difficult times, hopelessness and desperation. There was not a single case where good times were indicated or implied in the terminologies.

Basically, the terminologies may be classified into three related categories: (a) those that indicate no future, (b) those that betray desperation and hopelessness, and (c) those that indicate hunger and food insecurity. The following is a literal translation and brief description/definition of the most common terminologies used by the participants according to these categories. It should be noted that the 'power' of the terms to express the user's state of affairs may be 'lost' in the process of translation into English.

(The list of terminologies, including the local terms used by the participants of each of the ten study sites, are given in Table 3.1, Annex 3)

(a) Terminologies that indicate no future:

'Life is from hand to mouth.' This is a common expression used by all focus groups. It refers to the state where a person eats all what he/she produces without having anything to spare. This could be in the context of a farm household where the farmer produces just enough to keep his/her family alive, or in the context of a daily laborer or petty trader where whatever is gained does not go beyond consumption.

'We live only for today' portrays a life style based only on the present. There is no planning ahead or thinking about the future. It is a clear indication that people have given up on life, and just don't know or don't want to think about what will happen tomorrow. It describes the state that people are reduced to living a day to day life with no future .

'It is a life of no thought for tomorrow' is a common expression, particularly in urban

areas, to indicate that whatever is 'found' today is for today and whatever will be 'found' tomorrow will be for tomorrow.

'We envy the dead' is an expression that has two meanings : (i) it refers to the thinking that the good days are over and that those who lived before were lucky, and (ii) it indicates that some are so desperate that they prefer death to living under the current conditions.

(b) Terminologies that indicate hopelessness and desperation

'We are between life and death' is an expression that describes the participants' view of life as being above the dead and below the living. There is a lot of hopelessness in this expression since it doesn't show any vitality or aspiration left in the lives of many people. For many life is as good as dead.

'Waiting to die while seated' expresses the state of being that hinges on giving up on life altogether. In the absence of alternatives, impending death is seen as solution to the problems people are facing.

'We are full of debt' is an expression, mostly in rural areas, where people find themselves in debt that they did not choose to be in. This situation dominates their thinking and has become a major impediment for their improvement.

'We have neither a dream nor an imagination' is another common term used to state desperation and hopelessness. This expression reveals that people are reduced to watching others eat.

(c) Terminologies that indicate hunger and food insecurity

'We eat when we have the means, and we go to bed hungry when we don't' states a way of life that is used to, albeit by necessity, sleeping with an empty stomach. Eating is no more a right but an opportunity.

'We live on coffee' Coffee is the traditional drink of Ethiopians, in both rural and urban areas, which is consumed in a social setting involving immediate neighbors. Particularly in rural areas, it is believed that the last stage of poverty is when you cannot treat your neighbors with coffee. The significance of this terminology is that coffee is the only food available for them.

'We live as dependents on others' expresses the life style of mostly the elderly and the disabled who have no means of livelihood. They depend on the charity of others to provide them with food and shelter.

'We are pitiful' describes the life of those empty-handed and empty-stomached people who sell cow-dung or fire wood for a living. They are not in any position to eat, cloth and wash adequately.

'Life of hunger is as bad as the hyena' is a powerful way of relating hunger to hyena. The story goes that when the hungry child cried, the father tried to keep him quiet by

mentioning the hyena; but the child continued crying because it figured that hunger was as bad as the hyena.

3.2 Well-being Categories, Criteria and Proportion of Households

The discussion about well-being (categories, criteria, and proportion) is entirely based on the perceptions of the participants of the study in the different sites. The study takes the words and views of the participants without attempting to verify them. Hence, the information, particularly the percentages describing the proportion of households in the different well-being categories, should be read with caution.

The categories of well being do not show major differences by place of residence or by gender. The categories themselves have not changed much over the last ten years. Usually, there are 3 or 4 different categories that reflect the dominant occupations in a given area. There are, however, some rural-urban differences in the criteria used to put households in the different categories of well-being. There have also been major changes in the proportion of households in each category over the last ten years. These changes strongly signal that more and more households are regressing from the higher to lower categories of well-being.

(Tables 3.2 through 3.12, Annex 3, show the categories, criteria, and proportion of households for each site by focus groups)

3.2.1 Rural Sites

Six rural farming communities in Ada Liben and Dessie Zuria Weredas were the focus of this study. The participants in the two weredas identify similar categories and criteria of well-being despite the distance between them. This may not be surprising given that they all belong to the large farming community in the country that experiences similar views about the haves and the have nots. There doesn't seem to be major differences among the various focus groups on how they grouped households into the various well-being categories. The criteria used are also basically the same. The difference, perhaps, is in the proportion of households in the categories and in the changes of these proportions over the last ten years. Hence, for the sake of discussion, and also given the fact there is very little difference among them, the views of the different groups in the sites are combined in the following discussion.

Basically, the participants in all the six sites identified three major categories of well-being: (i) the rich/wealthy/graceful farmers, (ii) those in the middle who are getting by, and, (iii) the poor (lower class) farmers or/and the daily laborers. Some focus groups identified 'the disabled' as the last well-being category.

The rich households are defined by the participants in terms of their (i) land size which ranges from two to 12 *kerts*, (ii) the number of livestock which include plough oxen, cows, sheep and donkeys, (iii) their ability to feed the family throughout the year, and (iv) their ability to buy fertilizers and lend money to the poor.

Those in the middle well-being category, also known as 'those who have just enough', may or may not have land or oxen. But at least they can rent land from others (because they have the farm tools) and share the produce. That way, they can feed their families

although they may not get enough food to save or sell.

The third category, for most of the focus groups, comprises the poor or low class farmers, and the laborers. They symbolize ill-being. These groups definitely have no land, oxen or farm tools. They work for food on farms (when they can) or they are engaged in daily labor mostly in nearby towns. These groups live 'hand to mouth' and barely manage to stay alive.

The last category of well-being (mentioned only by some focus groups) is that of the physically disabled. This group includes the elderly, the sick and those who lost a limb or two during the civil war which lasted over a decade. The members of this category live by begging or on whatever support they get from their relatives.

Although there doesn't seem to be major differences in identifying the well-being categories, there are differences in allocating the proportion of households in the different categories. Farmers tend to believe that, the bulk of the households are in the middle category of well-being. On the other hand, widows and the youth tend to believe that the bulk of the households belong to the lowest category of well-being, the poor and the disabled.

3.2.2 Urban Sites

There were a total of four urban sites included in this study: one site in Debre Zeit Town of Ada Liben Wereda, two sites in Addis Ababa, and 1 site in Dessie Town of Dessie Zuria Wereda. For all the focus groups in these urban sites, there are similar well-being categories: (i) the better-off, (ii) those in the middle, and (iii) the poor. There are some variations (as could be seen in the tables) but may not be major ones. There are, however, distinct differences among the focus groups, in relation to the proportion of households identified in each well-being category.

For the urban participants of the study in **Ada Liben and Dessie Zuria Wereda**, those who represent well-being (i.e., the better-off) (i) own businesses, stores and hotels, (ii) live in good houses with quality furniture, and (iii) can afford to send their children to good schools and to eat as much as they want.

Ill-being, on the other hand, is defined in terms of (i) sleeping on the streets or church yards, (ii) eating scantily or spending days without food, and (iii) engaging in dangerous profession such as prostitution and begging. Most of these are the elderly men and women, the physically disabled and the street children who are seen as permanent dependents on the charity of friends and relatives.

In between these two categories are a group of households who can barely manage to feed and cloth their family as (i) low level government employees, (ii) retailers, (iii) *gulit* traders of local drinks, and (iv) pensioners. Households in this group can feed their family at least once a day and can send their children to school. They buy used clothing and cannot afford medical expenses if they get sick.

Although the categories and criteria are basically the same, there are some differences in the proportion of households among the various focus groups. The unemployed and youth focus groups tend to think that most of the households in these urban sites are

included in the lowest category of well-being. The housewives, on the other hand, tend to believe that the bulk of the households belong in the middle category.

In Addis Ababa, participants of the consultations in both sites identify four well-being categories: (i) the well to do, (ii) those with middle income, (iii) the poor, and (iv) the very poor. The well to do, who also are the indicator of well-being own, (i) commercial trucks, (ii) stores, hotels or bars, (iii) they run grain mills, and (iv) they live in nicely furnished houses that they own. Ill-being is the state of affairs as seen among the lowest category of well-being. This group includes the elderly, the disabled, and the homeless. They (i) can't afford to pay the lowest rent, (ii) they sell fire wood and/or engage in odd jobs to make ends meet, (iii) they depend on others, and (iv) they beg.

Although most of the focus groups in the Addis Ababa sites identified similar categories and criteria of well-being, they have different opinions when it comes to estimating the proportion of households in the categories. The unemployed and the youth place the bulk of the households among the poor. For them, the proportions of the households in the highest category are insignificant. There are some households in the middle class and some in the poorest categories. The housewives definitely believe that virtually all households in the sites belong in the poorest category of well-being. The rich and middle categories are virtually non-existent for this group of women.

3.3 Changes/Trends in Well-being Categories

In looking at the changes in well-being categories and the proportion of households in each category over the last ten years, we focus on two types of changes: (i) changes in the actual number of categories, and (ii) changes in the proportion of households in the categories. We have also attempted to see whether the different focus groups have different perception of the changes in the categories as well as in the proportion of households. In general, it could be said that the change has not been in categories but in the proportions. The direction of the changes, without exceptions, has been from a higher category to a lower category of well-being, indicating that there is general decline in the quality of life in these sites. This trend may be linked to Land Reform of 1975 - as indicated later when problems and priorities are discussed. The Reform nationalized land and re-distributed it to the peasants. The land size to be given depended on the size of the peasant household. Over the years there has been 3 or 4 redistribution of land as new peasant households emerged. By 1989, there was no more land to re-distribute - not even marginal land, common grazing or forest land was spared. The average land size per peasant household fell below a hectare. Official redistribution of land stopped in 1989. That seems to be the dividing line between well-being and ill-being to farmers.

(Tables 3.13 through 3.15, Annex 3, show the changes in categories and proportion of households for each site by focus groups)

3.3.1 Rural Sites

Looking at the three **rural sites in Ada Liben Wereda**, there hasn't been major changes in the categories themselves. But, the proportion of households in the categories seem to have changed markedly in the last ten years. The most noticeable changes are (i) the sharp decline in the proportion of households in the highest category of well-being, and (ii) the sharp increase in the proportion of households in the lowest category. Essentially, what used to be a large middle class category ten years ago has disappeared. In its place is created a large group of disabled and weak farmers who can hardly support themselves. Interestingly enough, compared to the farmers, the widows and the youth seem to believe that much more households have declined from middle to low category of well being.

In **Dessie Zuria Wereda rural sites**, in the last ten years, there has been some changes in the categories as well as in the proportion of households in the categories. What used to be a healthy and large middle class category ten years ago either doesn't exist now or has virtually disappeared. Some farmers argued that there is no rich well-being category any more; they have either moved to the middle class or to the poor. Parallel to this change, the ranks of the poor have expanded to make the largest group of households in the sites.

In reference to the changes in categories one can see, while the actual categories remain the same, the proportion has been affected tremendously. The highest well being category has decreased as much as by half in comparison to 10 years ago. The immense change of number has been caused by the drought and land unproductiveness. What is believed by the groups is that this chronic natural imbalance would result in wiping out this category in the near future.

When we look at the lowest well being category the picture is different. Its size has tripled compared to that of 10 years ago. The dry face of nature in addition to the lack of access for farming i.e. ploughing, seeding, fertilizers debt have jointly pushed them out of the land. It is getting impossible to wait even one cycle of harvest these days. Hunger is eminent. Men are compelled to wonder to the nearest towns in search of work. The rest are cutting fire woods to sell. Women are trying vainly to support their family by selling cow-dung. Dry leaves, tree branches, grass even stones for house construction are carried long distances (7-10 km) to sell for cash. Some of the poor are considering migrating once and for all to unknown destinations.

3.3.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, for most focus groups, the well-being categories did not change that much. But the criteria for the categories did to some extent. One clear trend seen in the discussion with different focus groups is the decrease of the proportion of the highest category of well being in the last 10 years.

In general, the change in well-being classification in the community is from bad to worse. There is a very clear trend of households declining in their well being measured by what they own, eat, wear or how much they can do for their children's education. The most significant decline is for government employees who were laid off by this government, and *Derg* soldiers who were demobilized and weavers who lost their cooperatives.

The unemployed in this site indicated that there are much more people in the poorest category today than ever. Ten years ago there was a category of well-being dominated by the daily laborers. This category of people, it seems, has now declined to the lowest category dominated by the homeless. Ten years ago the well-being category with the largest proportion of the households in the *kebele* was that of government employees. These people were supposed to be in the middle class and enjoyed regular income in a more or less guaranteed jobs. Today this category has shrunk due to of the massive layoff policy of the current government. The lowest category dominated by the laborers ten years ago was almost doubled today and includes those government employees that were laid off in the last 5 years or so.

For **housewives**, the change in well-being category identified by this focus group is substantial. First, over the past ten years, the highest well-being category decreased by half. Second, the middle class shrunk by half and many households in this category moved to a lower category dominated by those who have very little resources. Third, a new category of homeless and beggars has appeared now. These changes, according to the housewives, show a rapid decline in the well-being of the community as a whole.

For the **female** focus groups, there were only two categories of well-being ten years ago. The rich and the middle class. Today a third category, the poor has been added. The proportion of households in the rich category decreased by half; the middle class ten years ago lost of the households to the poor category young females depict a very clean picture of the declining standard of living in the community. Some of this charge may be explained be what happened to the middle class in the last ten years, as discussed earlier.

For the **youth**, the categories of well-being did not change over the last ten years. However, the proportion of the households in the categories changed a great deal. The highest category, the rich, declined over the last ten years. During the same time, the middle category shrunk while the lowest category increased. These changes show that more and more people who used to belong in the middle and high categories are experiencing a decline in their standard of living. Again, these developments could be related to government policies which are considered unpopular by the community residents.

In the **Addis Ababa sites**, the focus groups noted some major changes in the last ten years: (i) there is now a new government with new policies, (ii) unemployment has increased, (iii) there is a population explosion , (iv) more and more children are not going to school now, and (v) the number of beggars is increasing.

Factors that contributed to the general decline in well-being and, hence, affected their lives for the worse, according to the participants, include:

- Ten years ago, the [*Derg*] soldiers were not demobilized. There were no mass layoffs from government offices. These two developments have tremendously increased the number of unemployed people in the *kebele*.
- Ten years ago, *kebele* stores [cooperatives] sold food and other goods at affordable prices to community residents. These cooperatives also created jobs in the community. Today there are no such stores, and the residents also lost employment opportunities.
- Ten years ago, there was a lot of construction activities going on. These created employment opportunities to plumbers, brick layers and other crafts people. Today there is no construction activity, a lot of people are out of work.
- Ten years ago stores and small retail shops had enough business to pay their taxes. Today, there are few people who can afford to pay the high prices of commodities. Shops do not generate enough income to pay taxes and, hence, many have closed - further exacerbating the unemployment problem.

It is the consensus in the sites of Addis Ababa that, in the last ten years, a combination of the demobilization of the former soldiers, layoffs and the absence of construction activities resulted in a general decline in the well-being among the community residents. To make things worse, the price of commodities went up. As a result people cannot pay their monthly *idir* payments or buy uniforms for their school children, or pay taxes.

In the urban site of Dessie Zuria Wereda the overall indication of the changes in well-being categories is that more households are facing hard times and experiencing a decline in the standard of life. The most obvious changes include: a sharp decrease in the proportion of households in the upper category of well-being accompanied by a steep increase in the proportion of households in the lowest categories of well-being.

According to the **unemployed** this group, there is no change in well-being categories today compared to 10 years ago. However, the proportion of households in the categories has changed significantly. According to **housewives and elderly women**, the biggest change is the decline of the middle class category that used to be a significant proportion of the households ten years ago. The middle class moved into two lower categories of well-being: the lower and extremely low well-being categories. As a result, about three-fourth of the households are categorized as living low or extremely low standard of life.

The **female widows'** group indicate a huge drop in the higher category of well-being in the last ten years. Almost all households now belong in the previously non-existent lower category of well-being. On the contrary, poor **housewives** seem to believe that most households belong in the middle category both today and ten years ago.

In general, the first and second categories of well-being declined in proportion of households over the last ten years. During the time the proportion of households in the lowest categories showed big increases. This trend was true for all focus groups, although the magnitude of change identified varies from groups is different. There is also one new well-being category today which did not exist ten years ago. This is that of the extremely low group identified by poor old women.

3.4 Main Causes and Impacts of Poverty

The following discussion is based on the visual analyses of the causes and impacts of poverty provided by the participants of the consultations.

(Figures 1 and 2, Annex 4, show the visual way the participants identified the causes and impact of poverty in the rural and urban study sites, respectively.)

Generally speaking, in the rural communities, the three major factors that cause poverty are (i) drought, (ii) declining productivity, and (iii) landlessness. Drought is caused by erratic and/or poor rains. Declining productivity is induced, among other things, by the *quota* system, lack of fertilizers and pest infestation. Landlessness, is created by land tenure policy, population increase and environmental degradation.

In urban communities, the three major causes of poverty are (i) unemployment (ii) lack of health and sanitation services, and (iii) inflation. Unemployment is blamed on a number of factors ranging from excessive in-migration to government's lay-off policies. Lack of health and sanitation service, according to the participants, is the result of total incompetence of municipal administrations. Inflation is one of the outcomes of government policies such as the free market policy.

These descriptions of the causes of poverty are consistent with the listing and ranking of problems and priorities discussed in the next chapter. The main impacts of poverty, according to the participants in both rural and urban communities, is deprived livelihood. When a person has no livelihood she/he is exposed to malnutrition and disease, and resorts to crime (in urban areas) or leaves the area to an unknown future (in rural areas), usually in urban areas. These, in turn, lead to the break-up of families, and the increased instances of street children and prostitution.

While the general picture looks like this, individual focus groups at the different sites put their own twist to describe how poverty and its impact relate to their experience.

3.4.1 Rural Sites

In Ada Liben Wereda rural sites, for farmers, poverty is related to all types of on-farm activities: The farmer that cannot feed himself and family, and spare some crops for emergency purposes feels impoverished. The farmer who has no seedlings to plant feels impoverished. The farmer who cannot protect his animals from diseases feels that he is heading down the way of poverty. The farmers also feel that having a piece of land to plough is no more a guarantee against poverty. The farmers ask: 'What about pesticides, fertilizers, oxen and seedlings? Where and how do you buy them?'

Four of the five most important reasons that lead to poverty in this farming community are related to current and/or past government policies. They, are (1) price increase for agricultural inputs, (2) settlement, (3) *quota* and (4) landlessness. The other main reason of poverty is declining production caused by drought and pests.

According to the peasant farmers, price increases for agricultural inputs (particularly of

fertilizers) is the direct result of the current government's decision to stop subsidies. In an area where the land is used to fertilizers, farmers cannot produce enough to feed their families unless they use fertilizer. Farmers bitterly complain that fertilizers are now beyond their means. Farmers are forced to buy fertilizers on debt and they have to pay their debt whether there is harvest or not. Some farmers explain: 'To pay the debt of fertilizers we have sold our cattle. Now we have nothing to sell and we don't know what happen to us if we don't pay our debts.'

The settlement and *quota* policies that farmers mention is that of the *Derg* regime's. In the 1980s the *Derg* forced a lot of farmers from the northern part of the country to settle in the south and west. The *quota* refers to the requirement imposed on farmers to deliver a *quota* of grain to the government at below market prices. The results of these two policies are still felt among the peasants in these communities.

Landlessness, according to these farmers, is the result of a number of factors. The main one is the land tenure policy which began during the *Derg* and continued by the current government makes the government the sole owner of land. The farmers believe that this policy has the effect of discouraging farmers to invest all their energy and resources on the land. It also disallows re-distribution of land. The result is that (1) those who have land don't have the sense of ownership and (2) the newly formed peasant households are destined to be landless.

There is also the pest problem. There is a type of pest locally known as '*kishikish*' which greatly damages crops. The pesticide for this dangerous pest is very costly and is beyond the reach of the poor farmers. 'One little cup of pesticide costs Birr 80 [about 10 USD] and we cannot afford to buy it.', they said.

All these lead to poverty. The results are devastating on the helpless peasants. Many resort to selling their assets (like livestock or household furniture) and leave for small towns to work as daily laborers or sex workers. Those who opt to remain on their farms live in malnutrition and are exposed to numerous diseases. Many borrow money to buy fertilizers but end up indebted.

For **widowed/elderly women**, whose occupation included 'collecting and selling cow dung and fire wood' the causes of poverty have a different twist. Some came from other parts of the country 11 years ago during the forced settlement program of the previous government. Some of them were given land initially but lost the land because they were not able to pay the *quota* imposed on them by the government. Now they have lost all, save the *tukuls* they built 11 years ago. They are not members of the peasant association since they don't have land. They now live a life of 'dependency'. In their eyes, poverty is the state of 'dying while seated' or 'when water becomes a big thing'. The main reasons for this state of affairs in their community, according to these women, is 'sometimes it doesn't rain when it should and there is no harvest' or 'the pests eat up the crops and there isn't much we can do'. All people here suffer equally since 'this is God's will and there is no poor or rich, all is equally exposed.

Similar to the widows, a group of **illiterate women** described their state of affairs in rich oral expressions: 'we sell cow-dung for a living', 'fertilizer is becoming very expensive', 'the flood took the peas and the ground peas', 'we don't even have chicken to chase', 'we are left empty-handed', 'it was better last year, today is worse', 'we still have to see

happiness'. For them, the main cause of their predicament is the fact that farmers were unable to pay the *quota* imposed on them when they were given land through the 1975 land reform. Initially, these women explain, farmers used to pay their *quota* and even had extra to feed their families. But nowadays they cannot even pay for fertilizers. Failure to pay *quota* resulted in forfeiting the land. Now, farmers cop with their predicament by selling their cattle, and abandoning farming for good. As a result, say these elderly women, life has become very difficult to withstand. 'We are just hopeless people who are waiting for God to bring miracle unto us.'

The **youth** describe their state of affairs as 'a life of from hand to-mouth'. They describe their habitat as a 'piece of land that has lost all its vitality' through continuous ploughing and over-ploughing. The causes of the ill-being in the eyes of the youth include four major factors which they believe are related. They are (1) the rapid population increase that left a lot of newly formed peasants landless, (2) a reduction in the size of and access to fertile land, (3) the problem of land distribution, and (4) continuous changes in weather conditions.

These factors have severely affected the community at large, according to the youth. For them, it has meant lack of land and, hence, their traditional livelihood. It has meant that they are forced to look for alternatives in situations which they are not prepared for. In addition, the lack of rain, deforestation and the inability to organize the population in cooperatives has exacerbated their problems. Young men argue that bad weather, pests and not getting fertilizers in time are the problems which repeatedly haunt the community. They explain 'when all or any one of them occur, we report to the authorities so that the payment of debts shall be postponed or get some sort of aid assistance if there is any.'

The youth go on to explain, 'At times of disaster, farmers sell their cattle if they have any, people live on very cheap food items, children are taken out of school and are sent to towns to be employed as servants and required to send money to their parents in the farmlands'. The youth believe that the problems have been intensifying year after year and there is no way of alleviating them.

A **mixed** group of people who, in spite of their age and sex differences seem to speak in one voice. In their own terms life is 'like a hopeless soul', 'our livelihood is going down hill day after day', 'as if land shortage is not bad enough we live a life of tension worrying about the rain: will it rain or not?'; 'there is nothing that we say "this is for tomorrow", we live hour to hour.'

What caused this life style?. 'The rainfall is erratic and unreliable. Sometimes it is too much and sometimes it is just not there. There is also these pests. To make things worse our farm land is continuously decreasing as a result of concessions given to poultry farms by private investors. The Air Force (which is nearby) has also taken a chunk of our land. In the mean time, production decreases year to year.'

Initially not all people were equally affected by these calamities. Those with some animals sell their animals to cope with the problems.

'Those who have cattle, start selling their cattle. If it is a woman and she happens to have 50 Birr, then she starts making and selling tella and areke. Many gather and sell cow-dung and leaves and twigs to make money. Even those who have

donkeys use them to transport water and wood for some money. Those who suffer the most are the elderly and the children. They don't have anything to sell or exchange; they don't have the labor to rent.'

In the **rural sites of Dessei Zuria Wereda**, the **farmers** list a host of problems that are causing poverty. They include: (i) forced purchase of fertilizers, (ii) crop damage due to frost, (iii) flood, (iv) the topography is not suitable for crop production, (v) drought, (vi) deforestation, (vii) seed problem, (ix) unemployment, (x) malaria, (xi) selling livestock, (xii) increment in price of commodities, (xiii) absence or small land holding size, (xiv) population increase, (xv) taxation problem. A consistent complaint is that fertilizers sold by government bodies is not suitable for the land they have.

The main impacts of poverty are listed as follows: (i) further decline in production, (ii) migration to towns for uncertain future, (iii) more farmers are becoming daily laborers, (iv) more and more farmers are exposed to debts, (v) landlessness and unemployment, (vi) famine, (vii) further problems of farm in-puts like seeds and oxen, (viii) more and more people are engaged in selling livestock and other assets, and (ix) theft and robbery. Here is what one farmer said:

The land is not fit without the fertilizer. We don't know how to protect the land from frost and flooding. Government is not responding to our problems. We have to cut trees. We don't just die. We have to survive. We can't die while the trees are standing.

Some farmers are also bitter about the distribution of fertilizers. Here is what one farmer said:

We are forced to buy fertilizers on credit and pay the money whether there is harvest or not. Usually we sell our cattle to pay the debt to escape arrest. Our land is measured in our absence by the authorities in order to determine the amount of fertilizer we need to use and we are summoned to take the predetermined amount of fertilizer. If one refuses to take the fertilizer, he is forced to sign an agreement forfeiting his land. We accept the fertilizer so as not to lose the land. Even if the weather is good, the yield of grain with fertilizers is less than what we used to produce by the use of manure or own traditional methods. Fertilizer burns the soil and the land is no longer productive as it used to be. More over the price of fertilizer has increased ten fold.'

Another group of farmers added their view about the most tormenting problem of the debt of fertilizer: The farmer sells his cattle including his oxen, if he has any, to pay the debt of fertilizers and his land is not ploughed. He has nothing to feed himself and the family and so he migrates to the city to work as a daily laborer or to look for any kind of job or to seek the assistance of relatives living in the city.

For **widows and elderly women**, the main causes of poverty are absence of irrigation and the shortage of rain.

'Our life is based on land and rain. Now both betrayed us. Due to this all of us are

forced to face problems. These factors chased the rich from the community and the poor lost the means to get something from them in loan or in charity.'

A similar view is raised by the **mixed** group of participants. This group is a mixture of men, women and youth. The group blames both drought and rain for the problem of hunger and poverty. As the area is rugged and mountainous the rain washes away the top soil and what remains behind is rock, though the cause for the present hunger is drought. 'The other problem we face', they say, 'is the increase of population and the continual decrease of farm land. These problems have brought on hunger and the hunger, in turn, has caused disease, migration and death'.

Many people are weak and sick. They have no money to pay for treatment and so people are dying. The poverty certificate they get from the peasant association office is not effective because they have to buy the prescribed medicine even if they get the examination free of charge. As the group relates,

'Life in the area is so precarious that the youth and every able person has to migrate to the towns or join the army at the war front in order to escape the hazards of hunger escalating over here.'

3.4.2 Urban Sites

Poverty, among the residents of the **urban site in Ada Liben Werda**, is spreading beyond control. The main causes are numerous. First, there is recurrent drought in the overall area. The site, being close to a highly cultivated agricultural area, is vulnerable to decrease in food production which, in turn, results in price increase in consumer goods. This situation has forced a lot of residents to eat less and/or divert resources allocated to education of their children, for instance. The result is that less and less school children are enrolled at schools.

Second, government policies since 1991, the year the current government took over, have drastically changed peoples lives for the worse. The three main policies that come up again and again are (1) demobilization of *Derg* soldiers (2) massive lay off of government employees, and (3) the consequences of the free-market economic policy which, in this case, is symbolized by the dissolving the weavers cooperatives in particular. The immediate effect of these policies is that a lot of people who used to be in the middle class category moved to poverty. Households could not afford to go to clinics or hospitals anymore; children fell victims of easily treatable diseases like typhoid and pneumonia.

Third and related to the second cause of poverty stated above, is the migration of rural residents to urban areas due to either drought or landlessness. These people move to the already crowded urban neighborhoods (like this kebele) and stretch the already tight social services to the breaking point. They come with no or little skills or capital and in large numbers. The result is exacerbating the already expanding state of poverty. This in turn increases the number of people unemployed and frustrated which might lead to increased incidences of crime and conflicts.

The **unemployed**, which includes a lot of elderly people, relate poverty to agricultural activities, indicating perhaps that they were once farmers themselves. They are well

aware that the rural farmers are suffering from successive droughts and pest problems. They know what this could mean for urban residents like themselves. They talk about price of goods increasing sharply, more and more people being thrown out of their livelihoods and young people resorting to unacceptable behaviors like theft and prostitution. This group of people see no relief in the near future. In fact, they believe things could get worse before they improve. They blame the government for not coming to their rescue so far.

A similar group of participants who are almost always unemployed are the **high school completers**. These are young males and females who have completed high school (hence, **complete**) but cannot make it to college or find employment. They have no skills in any particular field, and they increase their number by over a hundred thousand every year at the national level. This group focuses more on the impacts of poverty than on the causes of it. They complain about diseases like malaria, pneumonia, tuberculosis, typhoid, etc. that are killing a lot of young people. There aren't free health services to go to and, therefore, they go to *tsebel* and other kinds of traditional medicine. To make things worse, the youth explain, there is a drastic change in weather conditions: it is getting a lot worse than the last few years.

They do not see any remedy in the near future, although they acknowledge most diseases are easily preventable. They argue that most people are poor, having lost their livelihoods in the past ten years. The government should focus on health problems of the community or else, say the youth, a lot of people, particularly those in the lower category of well-being (the elderly and disabled), will suffer seriously.

For **housewives** in this site, the main cause of poverty is the loss of their spouses. As a matter of fact, many consider their husbands' loss of hope is the same as the loss of their husbands altogether. They argue that they suffer directly when their spouses lose their jobs. This is because they have no skills and/or means to make a living and support the family. There is also a tremendous amount of concern about their fate. Many say that they have tried to sell local drinks (like tella and areke) to earn some money. But not too many people in the community have money to buy drinks any more. So these women see a very bleak future. They believe hunger and disease have consumed a majority of the community residents.

In Dessie Zuria Wereda urban site, for **unemployed** people, unemployment and the control of housing and land by government bureaucracy are the main causes of poverty while famine, disease and death are the impacts. According to those who-used to be 'prosperous' craftsmen just a few years back, (i) removal of subsidies, (ii) rapid population growth, (iii) reduction in production, (iv) absence of capital or money, and market problems are the main causes of poverty. Unfairness of the market, transportation problems, problems of light, water, toilet and inflation are the impacts. According to them, while unemployment, famine, and population growth are the causes of poverty, hunger, disease, housing problem, migration, morbidity and death are the impacts of poverty.

The **housewives** indicated that whatever happens to their husbands affects them directly. Some, however, are engaged in petty trades such as selling fire wood, eggs or chicken to supplement their husband's income. For them, the on-going war is the immediate main cause of poverty. Due to the war, a significant number of people come

to Dessie town and start selling things like *injera and tella* on the streets. They compete with those who have been doing the same for years. The result is poverty for all. Small traders are particular hit by poverty. At a wider scale, these women identify shortage of rain and the declining productivity of the soil as additional reasons for poverty. The result is that prices of necessary commodities goes way beyond the capacity of the average person. Farmers rather than selling grain become buyers.

For a similar group of participants, **widowed females**, the absence of rain for a long time is the main cause of poverty. Food shortage/famine forced farmers to come to towns looking daily labor. In the town due to this, there is no job/work for many people. This condition paves the way for crime and increased number of beggars. Absence of food also made children not to go school. 'If they can't eat how can they learn?' said the lady among the focus group members.

In the Addis Ababa Sites, the factor that was frequently cited as the main cause of poverty is unemployment, which is said to have been increasing over the last ten years. The causes of unemployment are given as growing population pressure and increased competition for jobs, the disbanding of the Derg army, migration, and economic slowdown. Not enough jobs are being created to satisfy demand. Other causes mentioned were lack of medical services, illiteracy or poor education. The consequences of poverty were identified as hunger and starvation, greater health hazard, prostitution, theft and street crime, and lack of access to education.

In the run-down neighborhood in Northern Addis Ababa, where the majority of people are either weavers or related to the weaving cottage industry this way or another. For the most part, according to the residents of this neighborhood, the main causes of poverty include (i) the Introduction of free market policy which paved the way for the dissolution of the cooperative shops, (ii) constant increase in the cost of living.

Following the change of government in May 1991 cooperative societies were dismantled and the government announced that free market economy. The subsidies of the previous government to cooperatives which, in the eyes of the participants, had an equalizing effect between the rich and the poor, were withdrawn. The immediate effects include that (i) the price of raw material needed for their livelihoods sky-rocketed, (ii) income from the sales of production material fell below the sustenance level, (iii) a lot of people failed to pay monthly *idir* fees, which for many is a sure sign of poverty. The high rate of unemployment (over 40 percent) in the city did not help this situation. As a result of change in government many people lost their livelihood, and were left to live in poverty. The morbidity and mortality rates increased, medication has already gone beyond the capacity of these poor people

It is worth noting that the main factors that were cited as causing poverty were by in large similar in all focus groups. However there are some differences among men, women and youth. In general, while unemployment was cited as the major cause of poverty by most male groups, lack of health services, illiteracy were the two factors that were identified as important causes of poverty female focus groups. For **housewives**, government regulations enforcing the school uniforms has contributed to illiteracy and, hence, to poverty. For these women, poverty meant the lack of the means to cover basic needs

such as paying their monthly contributions to their *idir*.

Among the **youth** focus group, unemployment is the main cause of poverty. Unemployment is caused by population pressure which is a result of migration and population displacement. There are, the group thought, no new job opportunities for the young generation. The group believed that the impact of poverty was hunger, exposure to disease, theft, drug addiction, and lack of educational opportunities. The issue of drug addiction was raised by the young focus group only.

The community wide consequences of poverty were identified as high cost of living, the lack of adequate sanitary facilities, inadequate housing, the closing down of small businesses (small shops, etc.) that would have provided some employment opportunities. The failure of such businesses was attributed to government policy and to the inability of the business to pay their taxes.

3.5 Security, Risk, Vulnerability, Opportunities, Social Cohesion/Exclusion, and Crime and Conflict

3.5.1 People's Perception of Security, Risk and Vulnerability

The participants of the study did not as such distinguish between risk, security and vulnerability. They used the three terms interchangeably, indicating no difference in perception and understanding. For the participants, insecurity (which also includes the concepts of, risk and vulnerability) is linked to the main resource of production and the factors that impede production. In general, people are insecure because they see no bright future. They are insecure because, from experience, they have seen nothing improving. On the contrary, a unanimous view among all the focus groups covered in this study is that life is moving from bad to worse.

Rural Sites

According to **Ada Liben Wereda farmers**, the factors that lead people to insecurity and vulnerability are drought, excessive or too little rain, and pests. These affect crop production negatively and threaten their lives and livelihoods. For this group security equals food production so that they can pay taxes, feed their families throughout the year, pay for health, school and other services. Most farmers, however, have three or four years' debt of fertilizers. They fear they may be arrested any time. They feel that they are vulnerable to hunger for they have 'no grain in their granaries and no money in their pockets.' Most of the people are exposed to danger and those who could go along unaffected are very few.

For **women** groups, risks that lead to insecurity and vulnerability are shortage of water, disease and drought. Inadequate yield of cereals for their annual consumption and the shortage of funds to pay for taxes, medication and other miscellaneous expenses (like kerosene for light) amounts to insecurity and vulnerability. According to the **youth** males and females, risks include the absence of land, drought (shortage of rain), pests and malaria epidemics. For this group security equals land or other sources of income, favorable rain for their parents' crops, good food production and treatment from malaria epidemics.

In **Dessie Zuria Werda rural sites**, participants very clearly state that life has been declining since the great famine of 1985. As the elders recall,

'The famine killed innumerable people; but as it was heard by the world community, there were so many helping hands around us. To-day the situation is similar to the eve of that great famine, but it seems that the government authorities are not yet aware of it or even if they know about it, they have chosen to remain silent and passive.'

The recurring problems in these communities that cause risk, security and vulnerability are pests, drought, malaria, hailstorm, land slide and animal diseases. Community residents understand security as being healthy, having something to eat, to have clothes to put on, to own oxen for farming and harvest enough to live on, to milk cows and to have children who could help their parents. Those who have some money could go to the clinic or hospital and get treated while the poor who have no money are destined to die; the poor are more vulnerable to ill health and death.

Those who were once subject to forced settlement by the past regime did not get their land when they returned nor could they get any jobs other than being porters and hence forced to be migrants. The only open chance for the impoverished is to collect and sell cow-dung, fire wood, and grass. Now that the forest in the area has already been cleared, the cattle dead and the grass dried, this slim chance of survival has been closed.

Urban Sites

In the **urban sites of Ada Liben**, for the residents of the community, particularly the **unemployed**, insecurity is perceived as being exposed to hunger and eventually to death. Security, on the other hand, is the state where one continues to earn sufficient income, and pension when old. Insecurity and vulnerability comes in the form of the sanitation conditions of the area as well as the potential conflict within the community as a result of economic stress. These views are commonly stated by all focus groups. However, **housewives** seem to be more affected indirectly by what happens to their men (husbands) than by what happens to them directly. They strongly point out events like their husbands' loss of jobs as government employees or demobilized as *Derg* soldiers the main causes of insecurity.

The **youth**, on the other hand, feel the direct effect of government policies (particularly the policy that disbanded their cooperatives) as the main cause of their insecurity. They also feel the pending risk of instability within the community that may be caused by adverse developments. These include increasing number of unemployed youth, in-migrants and the sense of hopelessness.

In the **Addis Ababa sites**, most participants of the study generally refer the term security to peaceful life. According to their opinion, food, clothes, shelter, affordable price of commodities and employment opportunities are the basic needs for peaceful life. Generally, transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Typhoid etc. make the community insecure. This is a real possibility considering the dense settlement pattern in the community. According to the participants, all families irrespective of their well being category, are equally exposed to the above mentioned risks. Participants' opinion is that employment opportunity is becoming limited day by day but the population is increasing

at an alarming rate. Insecurity in the female headed households is severe compared to that of the other families in the community. Only those families, who have some assets and who are engaged in business activities can cope with sudden shock.

In the **Dessie Zuria Wereda urban site**, people of different focus groups expressed insecurity in the following way: Risks and insecurity include war situations where people are either asked to fight or asked to contribute money that they cannot afford. Participants lament that 'our children go to the warfront and die rather than help us adding to the sense of insecurity.' They explained that continuous war adds to the feeling of insecurity.

Other factors that increase insecurity are (i) the increased number of demobilized soldiers with no jobs or skills, (ii) shortage of rain/drought, and (iii) diseases. Add to these the current price increase in consumer goods due to the devaluation of the local currency, a lot of people indicate that the last 8 years have been very difficult. According to the participants, disease, particularly HIV/AIDS and other contagious diseases like typhoid and tuberculosis, malaria which are rampant are contributing to insecure life.

One additional reason for insecure life, according to the participants in this urban community, is government policies. The total control of housing and land by the government has resulted in housing shortages and the deterioration of sanitary and decent life.

3.5.2 Opportunities and Social and Economic Mobility

In general, in rural areas, people think that economic and social mobility may increase for those who have land, ploughing oxen, and other farm-tools. For those in urban areas, mobility may come in the form of opening job opportunities, giving credits in the form of start-up capital, without down payments.

Rural Sites

In **Ada Liben Wereda rural sites**, farmers explained that opportunity could come in three different forms: agricultural extension programs, rain and government intervention. The following is a typical description:

'We could have produced 25 quintals of grain with extension programs, but the price of fertilizer has gone up. When we fail to produce enough we sell our cattle. The rain also plays a major role our livelihood. If we had enough rain, our cattle would not have died; the ploughing season would not have passed; when we should have ploughed the land by now, we haven't.'

As for the government, the farmers have this to say: 'If we had received government assistance in the areas of water and electricity, it would have created a great deal of opportunity for us to improve our life.' Given all the above obstacles, there is no social or economic mobility in the community. Nobody has benefited, say the farmers. As for the future they say 'God knows.'

The **youth** cannot think of opportunities that could change their lives for the better in the near future. In fact, they go back ten years and talk about the soccer field where they all

went to play and pass the time in 'a productive way.' This field was meant to bring the youth together and eventually lead them to development activities. Today that field does not exist; it is given to a developer. The youth don't have a place to meet anymore. They 'spend their time in ordinary' places. They do not believe they have the means to overcome their present 'from hand to mouth' style of life. Since they have no land or any other resources and can't participate in any programmes they don't see the possibility for social and economic mobility. The youth believe that it requires a lot of investment in skills training and opening factories to bring any changes for the youth.

The youth believe that their problems could be solved when the community attempts to find solutions within its means. If not, the government should intervene. It should dig water wells, build reservoirs for the cattle. Government should 'install mills, build vocational schools, cattle fattening programs, electricity and health services.' The government can do all these things, say the youth, we have tried and failed.

Poor **females** point out that there were cooperatives that sell commodities like sugar and salt with less price than the present prices. Currently these cooperatives are not functional. So they are forced to buy these items from merchants who make a lot of profit. They would like to see the cooperatives back in business to realize some kind of social and economic mobility. For this focus group, there is no opportunity for improvement, but they will keep on trying. 'As long as our soul has not parted our body, we will make a livelihood out of selling cow-dung.' This is not a life that they think they will depart. 'Poor people have nothing. It is just struggle. We don't have education, and the land is used to bribes [the fertilizers] that are expensive.'

For the **farmers of the rural sites in Dessie Zuria Werda**, there is no chance of improvement. Even if it rains there are no seeds to be planted and it is not in days' or weeks' time that the crop becomes ripe to be harvested. If seeds are somehow to be found and if the rain is to be normal planting carried out in early July and the harvest expected next December. What is to be eaten to sustain life until then is the outstanding question. Able people are on the exodus and the weak are awaiting their death. The only alternative to avoid mass death and to sustain life is to get aid from government or aid organizations.

For the **elderly** any improvement in the future is either in the hands of God (Allah) or the assistance of government.

'If the creator turns his face to the people every thing could be straightened very easily. It is He who could open the eyes of the authorities to see into our sufferings and make them stretch their hands of assistance.'

Though very far fetched, improvement in the life of the community may be possible if it rains well for the next harvest and if they could be supplied with seeds, food and clothing until the next harvest, and if the forced distribution of fertilizers is discontinued.

The **female** group visualize nothing for the social and economic mobility of the community. They complain that they have no grain mill in the area and have to travel long distances to have their meager grain ground. They concluded by saying 'nothing has come to improve our livelihood except that our life has been developing from bad to worst and we expect nothing positive in the future.' Members of these group argue that all the problems of livelihood the community is facing have resulted because there is nothing in the area to improve the life of the people. The main source of livelihood is farming but there is not enough rain for a good harvest or sufficient land to till. There are no job opportunities.

According to the **youth**, all chances for social and economic improvement are closed. They see no possibility of land redistribution. The size of farm land has been shrinking as the farm land owned by a father is divided among his children. Even if the weather changes favorably, therefore, there is no land for the youth to cultivate. Before the Ethio-Eritrean war and the closure of the Dessie-Assab road, many farmers in the area produced vegetables and sold them at high prices to traders who sold them at a good profit in Assab. Though the farmers labored hard to produce the vegetables it was worth it because they sold them at high prices. The closure of the road blocked this means of livelihood and many farmers are hurt as a result.

The demand for vegetables around Kombolcha and Dessie is low and the price they pay is not inviting and is not worth the labor it demands of the farmers. Inconsiderate of all the difficulties facing the farmer, the high tax rate paid by all farmers invariably worsens the situation and disheartens the farmer. The natural calamity that hit the community and the impending famine is not realized by the government authorities and as conditions worsen the only open chance for the youth is migration. Already many youth have fled and many are to follow. In their words, 'Every direction is dark and we see not a single chance for improvement.'

According to the **mixed group**, the community members have done every thing at their disposal to thwart the danger of famine and to bring about social and economic change. They met at the plains of 'Mitti Kolo', 'Solae Gora', 'Mitti Girar', the market place and mosque and prayed in addition to hard work. Now, the importance and frequency of such meeting has dwindled as people have lost every drop of hope.

Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, most **male** residents of the community live as weavers. They see no help coming from outside, so they try to struggle alone. They seem to be discouraged by the number of people who are engaged in the same profession (weaving) because there is nothing else to do. The result is that they compete for the same market. In addition, the current economic crisis has left no money in the hands of the potential buyers of their products. The future is bleak unless, they say, either the government or private investors come in. For themselves, they are ready to resume life at a minimum level, to accept any sort of job opportunity.

Female groups felt that they suffer the most when living standards are declining as they are at present. They suffer when their husbands lose their jobs or their livelihoods. In addition to their household responsibilities, they go out to earn some money doing odd jobs to support the family. These are mostly selling local drinks and working women as porters. They hope these activities would be temporary. They expect the government to rescue them by creating jobs, but many also believe this may be wishful thinking.

The **youth** see very little, if any, opportunity for them in this community. They see their parents or other adults thrown or forced out of their jobs for reasons they cannot comprehend. They are at a loss as to what they could do. They seem to have no means to bring about changes in their lives. There are no social or political groups that cater to their needs. As a result many are desperate and demoralized. There is the potential to turn violent or to just leave the area. Female youth are a bit more hopeful. One is hard pressed to understand why since they face the same effects of poverty; they seem to have their own ways of getting free medication, however they also rely more on the security of the church and *tsebel* than their male counterparts.

In the **Addis Ababa sites**, the focus groups cited the following as opportunities that were available but now have been curtailed; In Site 5, an NGO established by a lady by the name of Sister Jember was functioning in the community. Among its activities the following were particularly seen as beneficial to the community: (i) the creation of job opportunities for the young and the disabled, (ii) the skills workshop run by the NGO, (iii) the project offered opportunities for daily laborers, (iv) the construction of a clinic, (v) inter-community road constructed, (vi) free schooling for children of the poor in the community, (vii) *baltina* facilities for the women to enable them to support themselves, and (viii) feeding program for the elderly and the disabled. Today, most of the NGO projects have been terminated due to lack of resources; only the feeding program is still functioning. The youth group cited the closure of the NGO project in the community as contributing to the vulnerability of the community because now there will be more unemployment.

In Site 6, participants felt that the opportunity of social and economic mobility is high only for those people who have money at their disposal, and for families who send their children to good public or private schools. Here education and saved money became the only means of escaping poverty. Factors that could bring opportunities for economic and social mobility seem to be very dark in the large community. Nevertheless, life is bright for those who are well educated and for those who have capital to engage in various

business activities. Most of the group put their hope to come out of poverty on the government and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Most able bodied male and female (others who are physically strong) forward their hope that it is possible to move out of poverty if the government create employment opportunity and credit facilities.

In the **urban site of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, the current free market policy paved a way and provided the opportunity to increase wealth only for those merchants who already had wealth and property. On the other hand , retailers and small scale traders lost out due to the free market policy. Some people may have benefited from government credit schemes to start *gullit* business. Other than this, there is no significant opportunity that brings social or economic mobility in this community. It is hoped that stabilizing the market condition is one opportunity that can bring social and economic mobility in the future.

For the **youth** in this community, there is a sense of hopelessness, rather than of opportunity:

'We have no job and we are dependent on our families. We have no food to eat. Our problem of food can be solved if there is job opportunities or employment. For instance they said there was a Mennonite mission project and 50 persons were employed here in constricting stone dams through food for work in which number of people benefited from 3 kilos of wheat paid them per day. This was a great thing for us. However this project closed and we missed this advantage. Besides this, there is a credit facility through kebele. However, most of us can't participate since the conditions of participating are above our means.'

There is a training center called Gomata that trains 10 persons from Kebele 47 in metal work, weaving and textile for 3 months. However, the trainees have no material to use and were not employed after graduation. So the training had no use or didn't bring improvement. So useful vocational training has to be given formally by preparing job opportunities to graduates.

3.5.3 Social Exclusion

Basically, in all study sites, there are no serious problems of social exclusion on the basis of religion, ethnicity or caste system. If there was any exclusion it would apply only for a handful of people who are considered as outsiders for some not-so-significant reasons.

[Back at our camp that evening, however, we discussed the issue of exclusion and came to a consensus on the issue. First, the community is predominately from one ethnic group and, hence, there is no exclusion on the basis of ethnicity. Second, people basically are of the same economic status and, hence, there couldn't be exclusion on the basis of social class. Third people have lived and intermarried for so long, ethnicity has not really become a source of exclusion for minorities, at least not as yet. Fourth, people are just too poor to pick quarrels.]

Rural Sites

The participants of the study in **Ada Liben Wereda rural sites**, indicate that there are a few factors that would result in excluding people. The main one is if one is believed to be '*bale wouqabi* - s/he who is possessed with the devil. *Bale woukabis* are seen as 'sick people' and 'do not like 'the breath of some people.' They don't go to funerals and people do not socialize with them. They don't even exit through the same door as the ordinary people. They have to use other exits. These people actually do not hurt people, but nobody goes near them. Since everybody knows them, there is no chance for them to join the social life of the community.

The people in the community are predominantly Orthodox Christians and understand Protestantism as a heresy. 'Pentecostals' are not allowed to be buried in the Orthodox Christian church yards. The body has to be carried to the town where a burial site has been set aside for them. Even if they are members of the 'idir' people do not attend the funeral; they declare their presence at the house of the deceased and slip behind. These secluded people can re-join the community and lead a harmonious life as before only when they are re-baptized by the Orthodox Christian order publicly. The peasant association cannot interfere in this matter and the issue is absolutely a sort of social sanction.

Another reason for exclusion is if one works on holidays. As Orthodox Christians, they do not work on Sundays and religious holidays, which are numerous in a year. Those who work are not physically confronted with, but are regarded as potential heretics. One other reason for 'exclusion' is defaulting on the monthly contributions to *idir*, or '*kire*'. This is mostly a factor of money than anything else.

Hence, social exclusion based on ethnicity or outlook doesn't seem to be an issue in this community. Consistently, every focus group said so. In fact, people seemed to be offended when asked this question. It was not wise to push on this question when people showed obvious irritation.

In the **rural sites of Dessie Zuria Werda**, many of the discussion groups seem to agree in the non-existence of factors for social exclusion. According to the remark of the poor **old men**:

Now that everybody is poor and there is no class distinction the only difference is in religion - very few here are Christians and the majority being Muslims. If a Christian dies, he will be buried in the church yard. A Muslim will be buried in their own burial place. But the mourning and grief is shared by all.'

The **youth** said they have no biases against anybody. The reason given is that the *Derg* 'educated' them not to look down on or exclude others socially because of the nature of their origin or occupation. They recalled craftsmen were subject to social exclusion and there was a tendency not to allow intermarriage among farmers and craftsmen. Now they see farmers have become poor and the craftsmen somehow manage to lead a better life.

Urban Sites

In the **urban sites of Ada Liben Werda**, the unanimous view stated by all focus groups

that there is no social exclusion in their community. The poorest of the poor, the disabled and the beggars, may be excluded because of their physical conditions. They may not be invited to social gatherings such as weddings or religious festivals. That is the extent of exclusion in the community. There is no wide-ranging exclusion on the bases of ethnicity or religion.

In the **urban sites of Addis Ababa**, all focus groups agreed that no one group in the community was socially excluded. However, as far as 'social' power is concerned, there are some individuals who have more power than others. The basis of such power were membership in the administrative body of the kebeles, education, good outlook and good speaking ability and the ability to convince others. In the **urban site of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, all focus group members pointed out that there was nobody in the community excluded for any reason.

3.5.4 Social Cohesion

Social cohesion for us means sharing ideas, helping each other, praying together, sharing the good and bad together, sing together at marriages and cry together at funerals. As our problems increase so does the social cohesion. The farmers of Ada Liben Wereda

Rural Sites

In **rural sites of Ada Liben Wereda**, there are a lot of occasions for people to meet each other. Some are religious (*Eretcha, Tabot, Tebel*) and some are social (*Baltina, Senbete, Tsiva*) and some are financial (*Idir, Ikub*). These are all informal local institutions that, this way or another, bring the people together. They have contributed a great deal to bring about social cohesion among the people in the community. The only problem is that they are not development oriented.

Crime and conflict seem to be at a minimum in this community. Time and again, the participants seemed to be surprised that we asked this question at all. They don't sense tension between the groups in the community because of crime- not even minor thefts, they say. Any potential conflict, even among individuals, are resolved by the *Shimagle* - the elderly of the community. But a few **young** people were not sure about the future. They seem to be getting restless about having nothing to do day after day. They don't see themselves engaged in crime now; but the future is hard to say.

In general, the consensus of all members of the focus groups is that social cohesion within the community residents increasing as compared to the last 10 years. This is because of two main events that took place in the last few years. First, the settlement program of the Derg brought a lot of people from different parts of the country to the area. Second, the Derg instituted the quota system. The result was that the area got crowded, land size decreased, and a lot of peasants became landless. In spite of these problems, and in the absence of any other source, people looked towards each other for help. The neighbor was the immediate source of help when some one was sick and had to be taken to the hospital (like pregnant women), when different natural disasters take place, or when drought hits. People needed each other and prayed together

Various informal cultural occasions and social practices in these rural and mostly

Christian communities bring people together and contribute to their cohesive social life. Such practices include:-

Idir :- This is a voluntary association formed by the people living in an area to assist each other in mourning occasions. An *idir* has formally elected, unpaid officials who lead the association. Members contribute a given amount of money monthly and/or make special contributions at the time of death, bury the dead and console relatives of the dead for at least three days. Everything that is related to the funeral and condolence is managed by the *idir's'* officials.

Baltina Mahiber:- This is also a voluntary association for women who come together to make food, embroideries, table clothes, sweaters, etc. for sale.

Tsiwa Mahber:- Is a religious association formed voluntarily by Christians of the Orthodox faith. Each of the thirty days of the month is designated to each of the saints and angles according to the Ethiopian Orthodox religion. *Tsiwa Maheber* is organized in the name of the saint, or angel of the choice of the members. Meeting of the association takes place in each of the member's house by turn on that saint's or angel's day where members gather, eat, drink and discuss their social problems and issues. Members of the association care for each other as brothers and sisters.

Another similar association followed by the Orthodox Christians is **Senbete** which is absolutely similar to *Tsiwa Mahber* except that it is observed in church yards, every Sundays or every other Sundays according to the agreement if the members, where each member takes food and drink to the church.

Timket is another orthodox Christian holiday observed once a year on the 19th or 20th of January. *Timket* literally means 'Baptism' and the day, according to the Orthodox Christian faith is observed in remembrance of the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the hands John the Baptist. On this day all the '*tabots*', or 'Arc of the Covenant', are taken out of all the Orthodox churches and carried by priests in great procession to fields near a spring or a river.

The *tabot* is kept for the night in a special tent in the middle of the field and prayers, songs and chants go on all the night and continue to the late hours of the morning. In the morning hours some people get bathed in the water and others get sprinkled on their faces by the priests after prayers are said by the priests and deacons and the water is consecrated. Late in the morning the *tabots* return to their churches followed by similar procession songs, dances, chants and allulations of women. The ceremony ends when the '*tabots*' are taken into their churches, but the secular merriment continues for the rest of the day.

Other meeting places of people include wedding ceremonies, the market place when people go in groups to fetch water, the call of neighbors to drink coffee when visiting the sick, and grain mill centers. In all these places people meet together, discuss their problems and experiences and exchange information. These cultural occasions serve as social lubricants. All the discussion groups indicated that there are no serious crimes known in the community except for minor personal conflicts which are easily rectified by the involvement of elders. Elders are highly respected and listened to in the community and when ever and wherever conflicts between individuals or groups arise,

they are there to solve them and normalize situations.

In the predominantly Muslim communities of the **rural sites of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, similar informal institutions like *kire* and *kadī* bring about cohesion among the residents. There is, however, a strong sign that, due to chronic poverty, many people are being forced to quit their voluntary social institution like *idir* because they cannot afford to pay their monthly contributions. Poverty is bringing about social disintegration:

Children cry when they cannot get their meals in time. The wife quarrels with her husband when he fails to bring in the necessary money and grain for the family. The young ones migrate to the cities. This way many families have dispersed and marriages have been broken. An elderly woman in Dessie Zuria Werda rural site.

On the issue of crime and conflict, residents argue that nature has brought every body in the community down to the poverty line and no one has the time and energy to fight or quarrel with others. Every body is busy thinking about themselves and their families and they have no time to pick fight with others. Every one is listening to the calls and torments of his hunger. *A boxing hand needs a full stomach.* Therefore such conflicts cannot be seen in the community and people are more cooperative than at any their time. This being so, however, there are some other types of conflicts to be noted.

Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, a community where, despite the economic hardship, there are a few social events. For **women**, the market, coffee ceremonies and *mahiber* provide the opportunity to get together and talk about current affairs. For men *tella* and *tej* joints are the opportunity. The common occasions for **males** and females are *idir*, *ikub*, church, and *eretcha*. The kebele also brings people together to inform them about government political and economic policies. Most of the social cohesion, however, is achieved in the informal gatherings of the traditional institutions, discussed above. Many understand that these social institutions have little relevance to economic development. They tend to leave economic matters to government.

For the time being, widespread and serious crime doesn't seem to be a problem in the community. There is concern, however, about the future. There are just too many young and adult people who are desperately looking for some thing to do for subsistence. Eventually, this situation may lead to some kind of conflict in the community.

In the **sites of Addis Ababa**, there are several occasions and social institutions where members of the community meet on an informal basis; these occasions and institutions strengthen social cohesion. *Idir* is one of the informal institutions which bring together all adults in a community or neighborhood. The institution involves both men and women. Every time there is death in the community or some household is mourning the death of a relative, all members of the *idir* go to the bereaved family to convey their condolences and support the family. There are also associations like *maheber* and *ikub* in the community which provide opportunities for people to meet. In addition community members meet each other in church and the mosque.

In relation to crime and conflict, the participants stated that there is little crime and conflict

in the community despite the widespread poverty. There is, however, some theft and burglary since the number of the unemployed is increasing. There is also some family quarrels because of poverty.

One of the peculiar features of the Ethiopian society is that it is rich with informal local institutions that helps to bring about social cohesion among its people. For instance, there are a lot of occasions for people to meet. Some are religious (*tabot*, *tebel*, *senbetes*, *tsiwa*) and some are social and financial like, *ikub* and *idir*. *Baltina* is also an important wing of *idir*, which is commonly practiced and institutionalized by female members of the *idir*. These are all informal local institutions that spring from within the society playing an important role in bringing the people together at any time to share whatever their feelings. In this respect they have contributed a great deal to bring about social cohesion among the people in the community.

In the **urban site of Dessie Zuria Werda** the market place, coffee drinking rituals, the Mosque, Church, *idir* and *iqub* are important institutions that bring about social cohesion in the community. Most of the residents are poor with no help from outside. Because of this, they need each other and help each other at the time of need.

There is some crime and conflict mostly because the tension created by in-migrants who compete for jobs that are getting scarce every year. This does not lead to major problems, however. There are also some petty thefts by young men who cannot find a livelihood.

3.5.5 Coping with Crisis

The overall consensus among the members of the focus groups is that they cannot cope with the crisis anymore. Governmental or non-governmental institutions are either resourceless or uninterested. In their absence, community residents rely on local social institutions. The most important have to do with praying, such as *Eretcha*, with a considerable amount of confidence that they will be heard. *Idir* and *Ikub* are also common important institutions at the time of crisis - although they are limited to non-developmental activities. At least, they help people meet their social, and to some extent, their financial obligations.

Other coping strategies include migration for the ever-growing young and landless group. This is related to the search for a work in towns. At the time of crisis, women tend to collect cow-dung and fire wood to sell, in order to meet their food needs. In the worst cases, they go to the extent of selling their belongings, such as tables and chairs; if they have any.

Rural Sites

In **Ada Liben rural sites**, the **male** groups indicated that they cope with crisis through participating in different daily activities (such as road construction). They also work for the relatively well-to-do farmers as shepherds or doing different agricultural activities. They also borrow money to buy farm inputs like fertilizers. Selling oxen and other properties and migrating to towns is also a coping strategy for many who have given up farming as a livelihood.

According to the **female** groups, coping with crisis includes working as daily laborers, selling local drinks (*tella* and *areke*) and fire-wood and cow dung. Some females indicated that those who own land but are too weak to plough leased the land to get half of the produce. Some, who are a little bit better and have milking cow sold the milk and butter and bought something for the family to live on. Most agree that many of the coping strategies mentioned above are not working any more. The government should take drastic measures such as encouraging investors to open opportunities and introducing a new land redistribution proclamation. In addition, population growth has to be controlled, fertilizers should be made affordable and pests should be eradicated.

In **Dessei Zuria Wereda rural sites**, **farmers** try to cope with their problems by cutting trees even when it is prohibited now. They engage in daily labor, *gulit* markets selling whatever earns them some income that could be used for food. They also pray for rain and hope against hope that it will rain. **Females** for the most part engage in cutting and selling fire wood and cow-ding. They also tend to go to towns to do all kinds of odd jobs. In some cases they sell their assets as a last resource of survival.

In general, most members of the focus groups praise the past and curse the present state of affairs. They all witness that the direction of development has been from something to nothing. When asked to compare their livelihood ten years ago and to-day, some discussion groups answered that there was nothing to be compared when it comes to poverty. They argue:

With the past regime, the main problems were forced military recruitment and forced settlement. At present forced military recruitment is non-existent though the youth are joining the army willingly for they have no other alternative. In the past the driving force to join the army was the might of government whereas these days it is hunger and lack of any alternative. Dessei Zuria Wereda female residents.

The last resort many people turned to as a means of survival is the sale of fire wood, cow-dung, grass and straw. Migration is a strategy for able people. Those who have no choice rely on prayers to God and Allah and hope for assistance from government or donor organizations..

Urban Sites

In **Ada Liben Wereda urban site**, the **unemployed** barely cope with the poverty crisis. Some use their pension money and many other beg for a living. Some others have left the community for other areas looking for relatives who could give them shelter. The adult males, particularly, who lost their livelihoods for various reasons, cope with the crisis by eating less and praying more. They have put all their hope on God and government. They hope the latter will come to their rescue and organize them in cooperatives like the good old days.

The **housewives** resent that there are no ways of coping with the poverty crisis in a proper way which include selling bread, *tella* and/or working as laborers. In the absence of these, the other ways available to them are selling whatever property they have, stealing and, worst of all prostitution. They know the damages caused by these improper coping strategies. But, many say, they are quickly running out of options. **Young** females show a lot of resourcefulness. They deal with unemployment by working as daily laborers whenever they can. They deal with their health problems by managing to get free health care services or by going to *tseble*. They deal with their financial problems by appealing to the relatively rich. They are optimistic that things will change for the better in the future. They hope the government will open factories, schools and hospitals.

In the **Addis Ababa sites**, individuals in the community cannot do anything to improve the situation by themselves. People are expecting assistance from outside the community, either from the government or NGOs. Most of the individuals in the focus groups expressed a sense of hopelessness. In relation to changes in the future, different groups suggested different answers. Poor professional **men** said that the government should provide job opportunities for all skill and professional groups. This will help improve our lives. Married **females** believe that NGOs should come to their community. This will help create educational opportunities for the children. The poor young females said they need NGOs to help them help themselves.

In **Dessie Zuria Wereda urban site**, community residents cope with crisis by cutting and selling fire-wood. This has become the main coping strategy for this urban community. The wood comes from the surrounding trees. Both men and women engage in selling leaves, daily labor and finally begging. Reducing the number of meals a day and changing the type of food to eat is also other coping strategies. Some also engage in selling valuable items and borrowing money from money lenders to cope with their problems. Both men and women migrate to far away towns engage in selling *tella* and *areke* on the streets. The painful coping strategy for many is not paying their *idir* payments.

3.6 Individual Case Studies

3.6.1 Rural Sites

Ada Liben Wereda, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia

Case 1: An elderly man

Ato Tesfaye is an elderly man, divorced with no children. He belongs to the Amhara ethnic group, and had lived in the area for about 40 years - the first 20 years as a 'prosperous' farmer. The Emperor had given him a piece of the land in the area since he had served in the army. 'The 1975 Land Reform took all my possessions including my land. I was immediately transformed into a beggar- the life I lived fro the last 20 years or so.' Today Ato Tesgaye herds cattle and is paid about 20 Birr a month. He is weak and cannot see properly. But, he says, they never deny him his pay.

How is life Ato Tesfaye? 'I told you, I don't have a family. I live alone. I get 20 Birr a month. I eat when I get money, I don't when I don't. Once you are a shepherd, what can you say? I eat left-overs, that is when people have left overs to give. There are many people who don't even have, left-overs to eat. But people like me. They know I am weak, so they give me something.'

How was life before? Before I came here about 40 years ago, I was a soldier in the Emperor's Army. I was paid 200 Birr a month. I was happy. But then, I was no more wanted in the army. So they gave me a piece of land here; it was one *gasha*¹. It was enough for my family and I was a good farmer.'

What changed your life? 'During the change [Socialist Revolution of 1974] they took my land. They basically uprooted me from my livelihood. They gave me 50 Birr and kicked me out. They didn't even give me a piece of land to sit on. So, here I am. A shepherd, for the last 25 years.'

What is good life for you? 'I am a weak old man now. What could I want? May the country be in peace. May God save as from people who change our religion. That is all I want. I want Ethiopia to live for ever. I want the farmers to go to work and come back home in peace. That is all I want.'

What is bad life for you? 'I hate thieves, I hate people who take what they don't deserve. Fortunately, we don't have a lot of thieves here. There is no conflict here. I have not heard any. They are all farmers, nobody else. Yes, I lost my land. They stole it from me. I hate people who take something which one worked hard for. Bad life is when one cannot work and live in peace.'

What needs to change for you? 'I told you all I need is peace and health. As long as there is someone who gives left-overs, I am happy. I don't have family, children. I don't ask for much - just my country. I want peace for my country.'

What about the future? 'I want to die in peace. I pray somebody will bury me. They like me here. They will bury me. I am not a member of *idir*. Why would a chicken mix with mules?'

¹One gasha is about 1 hectare

Case 2: A divorced woman

This is *Woizero Alemenesh Gudeta*, age 34 and is literate. She was married, and a mother of four children, 2 males and 2 females. She lives in a small house which she inherited from her mother who died five years ago. She rents out the small plot of land around her house to farmers for some return. That is her some of livelihood.

How is life? 'It is miserable; from hand to mouth. I married a retail trader who lives in Zewai, a town some 120 km south of Debre Zeit. I married him without my consent [forced by my parents] at the age of 15. I lived with him for ten years and we had four children until he chased me away from the house. He had loved another woman whom he later married. The three children are with him, one is with me. After the separation, I moved here and lived with my mother and supported ourselves selling *tella*. My mother died five years ago and since then I stopped selling *tella*.'

Why? 'It is not safe in this community for a single woman to sell *tella*, or else she will be taken as a loose woman or a prostitute. Life has become very difficult for me since my mother died.'

What about the other people? 'There are only two types of people here. Those who live selling cow dung and those who are rich farmers. In between there may be poor farmers and daily laborers. Most live hand to mouth.'

Who lives a good life here? 'We don't have people who live good life any more. The groups that had a good life within the community were those who owned vast farming lands. But now, the farm land decreased as it was divided among the children whose only source of livelihood is farming. Small traders used to also live a good life selling goods to the soldiers [the Air Force near by]. But when the soldiers dispersed [the current government had dismantled the Air Force in 1991], they don't have people to buy them things anymore. Many traders became unemployed and poor.'

What about the farmers? 'I think they could not meet the wide-ranging demands of government, like the quota to give so much of their produce in the form of taxes. Their land was confiscated. Many of whom I knew as rich before are poor and people cannot help each other anymore.'

What changes do you want to see? 'People should have something to work and live on. Nowadays very few people may be getting richer, but many are getting poorer and poorer. They don't even have enough to eat. People do not have the money to buy pesticides, their crops are ruined and they face hunger.'

What about the future? 'I don't see any bright future as my health is deteriorating and my life is declining. However, if I could somehow get some money, I would start a sort of a small business. And this could still happen if it is the will of God. Right now, I have nothing in my hand to plan for my future. But, I am an Orthodox Christian and I tell all my problems to God. I always go either to St. Michael's or St. George's church to tell my problems to God. When there are other social problems, I go to the peasant association's office. The church is the best type of institution to go to for miserable people like me.'

Does any body help you at all? 'No. There are no health institutions nearby, we have to go to Debre Zeit to get to a clinic. There is also shortage of drinking water. We have to buy water from far away at a price of 0.15 cents per pot. I have heard about one organization [NGO] that is assisting poor people. I don't know more.'

Any people who are excluded here? any conflicts? 'Why? There is no such a thing in the area. Many people here are settlers who came here from dispersed settlements during the *Derg* regime. They all have strengthened their social relations. As there are no secluded groups of people, there exists no conflict between groups because of exclusion.'

Case 3: A male farmer

Ato Birra Gabre is a Christian member of this peasant association. He is married and a father of four children, 2 males and 2 females. His oldest child is living with his older brother and, hence, is going to school. The remaining three are living with him but are not going to school because he can't afford to send them to school.

How is life? 'I was a good farmer 14 years ago when I was forced to leave the area where I was born. Due to the settlement program I came here with out my consent. The land given to me was by far less than what I used to have before the settlement uprooted me. I wasn't able to pay the amount of crop assigned by the government. The government fixed the price of our products. Eventually I lost my farm land to the government. I became landless and a daily laborer.

Life as a laborer is not reliable. Sometimes days pass with out work and coins to buy bread for the family. We live in poverty. Besides this, what is more depressing is the health condition of my wife. She is blind now. Since there are no health institutions in the area, I took her to Debre Zeit and then to Nazareth and Addis Ababa for treatment. Even though medical treatment is free in government hospitals because we have the poverty certificate from our peasant association, we couldn't afford to pay the transportation expense from here to Addis.

On appointment dates we somehow manage to go but don't have the money to buy the prescribed medicine from pharmacies as free medication doesn't include the supply of medicine. So she is now at home and suffering from the pains. Currently I have a small house and a garden area around it which is about 200 square meters. When I was a farmer I was able to feed myself and my family. We also had animals and some money saved for unforeseen needs. Now every thing is gone and we live in misery.'

What changes will improve your life? Ato Bira explains that people like him who are able and healthy can work and improve their lives if they could get some thing to work and some amount of money to start business. He tried many times to save money from his small income in order to start life again, with different profession other that farming. He wasn't able to make it because the money he was able to save was too small.

What are the major disasters the community? Pest and drought are the two major disasters that repeatedly devastate the life of the farmers in the area. It is not only farmers that suffer from the consequences, but every one in the community as the price of crops goes up and people get hungry.

Who helps you at time of trouble? He pointed his fore finger to the sky and said the only reliable and king is 'Waga' (the local word for God). I go to church and to the *wouqabi*. I also go to *Erecha* with the community at times of crisis. We pray there and our problems get better.

Any in equalities in the community? There are very few rich and many poor people in this area, he said. The rich have land and cattle while those in the middle have land but no cattle. The poor are those like me who have no land or cattle.

Case 4: A young woman

Abaynesh Alemu is a 26 years old poor young lady who is a divorcee and a mother of a daughter. She has been educated up to grade nine and she stopped learning because of marriage

How is life? "Life is not good at all. There is no work and there is no income. I was married to my husband for we loved each other and out of our own free will. Our life was beautiful at the beginning. But later on, things began to change. He had a monthly salary as a government employee and he started to decrease the amount of money he used to give me for household expenses. He finally stopped giving me any money and he loved another woman, left me and my daughter in an empty house and went away to the woman he had fallen in love with. He wanted to take the child with him but as he was an irresponsible person, I couldn't give him. I went with my child to my parents' house"

How do your parents live? "My parents are physically weak for farm work and so they hired laborers to till the small piece of land they owned. That was the only source of income for their livelihood and I baked 'injira' and washed clothes for those who needed my service and when I get such works I supported them with what I get out of it."

What are the main problems in the area? "The main problems in the area are lack of electricity and lack of potable water, and water shortage is the outstanding problem. We have to spend more than an hour to fetch and bring a pot of water. Life of the community is degenerating year after year with the harvest decreasing gradually. It has been long since many farmers leased their pieces of land because of lack of oxen and seedlings and went to near by towns to live as daily laborers. Repeatedly we had fire accidents in the area, but they were extinguished by the people with the assistance of the defense construction Enterprise and the Air Force."

What about the future? "In the future, I have the idea of improving my level of education, go to a town and lead a better life. A better life for me is to be healthy, peaceful and to live in love without hunger. Love is more than any thing. Money has no value in the absence of love."

How do other people live here? "People live here in harmony, with understanding and mutual support. Except poverty people have no any other problem. Sometimes, in rare cases, we hear of robbery and burglary. And that is not this much to be exaggerated. If government redistributes land and give land for the landless, and if it assists the poor somehow to start off, then life of the farmer can improve. Most important of all, however, is the water problem. Have we had water, disease would not have hurt us. People are not clever around here. Especially the males, whenever they get some coins, they go to drink with it. They are not hard workers. We are the women who suffer a lot."

Dessie Zuria Wereda, Debub Wello Zone, Amhara Region

Case Study 1: A married woman

Woizero Fate Reta is a married woman and has 6 children (2 sons and 4 daughters). She is 31 years old, can read and write and she and her husband own land which is arable for 9 days on which the family depended.

Asked "How is life?" replied in short "we are better than the dead a little bit". She went on to say "we have nothing to eat. My husband is a farmer year to year the production is getting less and less. Last year we got only 4 quintals of sorghum. This kept us only to breath. This year it will be worst as there is no rain. There is no hope at all. My husband and me including the elder son, who interrupted his education, are forced to work as daily laborers in towns to feed the family.

What is good life? "Good life "... continued fate, "is to have enough food and clothing for my children. Just educate them to be self reliant when we get retired. They must not be land tillers."

Do you think this might be attained? 'I don't think so. It is far away like the sky. We can't even afford to feed them every day let alone to educate them. Until now 3 of my children go to school without eating. When they come back home if I am able to give them some beans. I am afraid they may stop it in the near future. We have one ox, If you call it an ox. It has only 4 legs and only bones. I want it to be sold, my husband opposed my proposal. I know that is the last asset we have but what option is left to stay in life even for weeks?'

What must be done to change the situation? 'Only the rain and the government have the solution for our problem. The drought is very severe and unprecedented. We remember what happened before is year i.e. the draught of 1985. It was by far better than this one. The current situation has no match. If you so and look at Combolcha markets, you will find the hopeless peasants selling the last thing they have, including their roofs' old corrugated sheets. The major shocks we are facing year to year is drought. God stopped to listen to our prayers. Our 'dua' has failed to reach Him'

What institution do you go to? why? 'There is no one to turn to every one is poor and poorer than me. We have 'Kire'' the most important institution to bury the dead while the fate of every one is dying in the near future what institution do you expect to be more important than that. Collecting some dry branches and leaves, I always go and sell them in Combolcha "Aroge Gebeya" "(old market) and buy some beans for my children. It is only those fields, woods and the market I rely upon to pull along our life a little bit, nothing more'.

Are all people the same? equal? All are the same and equal. We have no trouble or conflict or misunderstanding. Under circumstances like this one we cry for Allah in one heart. Our old men and religious leaders advice every one to confess his sins, to avoid disagreement even to wash out all hostile feelings that one has buried for years. all this is done so as to be forgiven from Allah.

Case Study 2: A married man

* 'dua (Æ)' is the local term for 'prayer'

** 'kire' is voluntary association for mutual assistance during death and mourning

Ato Lulu Ahmed is 30 years old, Married, has no children, but has 5 family members. His education is up-to grade 8 and he is a farmer. Temporarily he works as representative of the farmers at the woreda level and is salaried and a full time activist. Lulu's comment to the question 'what is good life?' was as a farmer I view it through nature's proper cycle, meaning if it rains timely and sufficiently and the harvest we expect is gathered that is really good enough life for me. In terms of possession I can say a pair of oxen, a male and a donkey for transport, enough harvest which feeds and dresses the family through out the year and which enables him to send his children to school. This is good life. To quantify it from the experience of my life condition 40-60 quintals of sorghum is enough good life is, of course, is life with good health".

Are you living that good life? 'I am afraid I am not. I always dream it. I succeeded to obtain only 3 quintals of sorghum last year. Had it no been for full time job I am paid, working for the woreda administration, I would have migrated to Dessie for a daily laborer's job. Now they pay me 400 Birr a month which I share it with my family just for survival and I am the luckiest peasant around here".

What do you mean when you say you are the luckiest? 'Nature has turned her face against us every one is crying for Allah. Imagine how this job has rescued me from hunger. It is me and only 2 other farmers that could get the chance from the area. Am I not lucky?'

What are the major shocks around? 'The major shocks this community suffers every time is famine. It is not only the frequent draught that gives us the shock, but also its growing intensity and hopeless trend of our land. The hope is squeezed to emptiness in addition to nature's gloomy face, there is population explosion. Even this unproductive poor land is getting smaller in size every year. A father should have to share his land for his married sons. The situation we have faced now has no comparison it is the worst one ever seen. 90% of the surrounding peasants spend their time in the nearest towns Dessie, Combolcha and some in Djibouti seeking for daily laborers' job.'

What do you suggest to avert the situation? 'We need help the help should target not only to make us survive for today, but also to rehabilitate and sustain. As to the last one the only way out is resettlement program. This area is totally hopeless. It will never give you sorghum or any crop. There are plenty of idle but productive lands. Our country is very wide. They should help us to go and settle there".

What do you aspire? 'As to me I will never hope to be a farmer any more. I want to engage my self in business activity. Having a little shop and learn in my spare time and to be good professional to be a government employee'.

What institution do you go to? 'In a time of trouble, a trouble that affects all the community members like this one, we address for government bodies; we discuss the problem in 'Kebeles', 'Kires', pray together in mosques for Allah. Of all these, the most effective one to mobilize our people is 'Kire'. It handles the funeral ceremony of every dead. It is well organized and effective in terms of its purpose of establishment. The problem is, it is not development oriented. The service is for one's burial and consoling the dead family. These days our mosques are getting closed. The 'Kalichas' are forced to leave it for there is no food. It was the believers who served them food while they were devoting their full time for Allah. Now we have failed to fulfill that commitment.

Case Study 3: A female divorcee

Belay Ahmed I small is a 35-year old lady who is a divorcee and has a son. She is illiterate and makes her living by selling bread when she has the money and selling cow-dung when she has not.

* 'kalich' is religious leader or priest serving in mosques

Asked 'how is life?', she answered, "life form is scratching like chicken. I eat when I get something to eat and go without eating when I don't. I have accepted every thing as it is and I thank Allah for all, because everything has been done according to his will".

Do you have farm land? "No, I don't have farm land. Officials from the 'Kebele' peasant association asked me to pay land tax. I told them that I have no land they told me that if I pay tax I could be registered to get aid when ever any donation comes from the government or any other donor organization and if I am not registered I won't be legible for any assistance. so, I paid and they gave me a small piece of land to erect a small house".

What is good life? "If one can eat and wear without worrying and if he is healthy, them that is good life".

Any shock you remember? "I never forget the famine of 1977 E.C. Because of that famine we were forced to settle in other parts of the country. When we came back our land was given to others and we became landless.

Any hope or aspirations? "I only know when night falls and day breaks. Only Allah knows what He has prepared for me. I have nothing to hope or aspire for".

Were do you go when you face problems? Does any body help you at all? "I only cry to Allah. I have no one to till to. These days no one gives his ear to the poor. Therefore my only supporter and reliable guardian is Allah".

How do others live here? "You can tell from the face of the people. Their haggard faces show their sufferance. Few may have some thing to eat. Many get a meal a day or go without. That is the situation ".

Case Study 4: A widowed male

Ato Hassen Ali Heyas is 67 years old, illiterate old man with three sons. His wife died many years ago and so he is single. He was a strong farmer when he was young and now he is weak due to old age. "Now a days I have become dependent on my sons and am living with one of them. I have farm land of the size arable by *timad* of oxen for a day which now the sons are farming", the said.

How is life? 'Life is very bad form. I have no one to care for me as my wife died years ago. I can not marry another woman, because I have nothing to feed and cloth her. Life for me is roving from one son to the other.

What is a good life and who lives good life here? 'Good life is when the harvest is good, when your granary is full of grain, when you have money and cattle. A bad life on the contrary, as it is with us now, is when the land which is the base of your livelihood gets burnt and refuses to yield grain and you suffer from hunger. Here every body is poor and no one lives a good life.'

What do you think is the way to get out of this problem? 'The best way to get out of this problem is to pray or make '*dua*.' collectively with purity and love. But many people have grudge against each other in the process of land distribution as land from some one was given to another person and under such circumstances Allah could not reconcile with us. So our life has been going down year after year. Our religion which ought to be one as it first was has now been divided into four and Allah does not like this. If religion was to change the sun which rises from the east and sets in the west should have changed its direction rising from the north sating to the south. In the old days our father used to be very careful not to mingle soil from some one's land with theirs'. As they were honest the yield from a small piece of land was high. Now a days truth has disappeared and every thing is false including the soil and the crop.

What about the major shocks you remember? "Some years back they (officials) forced us to buy fertilizers and it burnt the soil. There was no crop. I buried ten of my children. Then followed my wife. There after I went into poverty".

What hopes and aspiration do you have? "As a back can not stand straight unless it is filled with some grain, man can not be strong with an empty stomach. So also, a society can not be strong with out truth. Truth shall come in its own time. The lucky ones may witness this occurrence and I may see it if he gives me the long life. When truth comes back to its place, the land shall reproduce in abundance what is given to it; the granary will be full and every body will be bright and hopeful. Let alone amassing in the granary, when type of hope do you ask me about".

What about the future? "If it rains things may change. But until we urgently need some assistance from government. If this is not to happen, we have to go wherever our legs took us. We cannot just sit down and wait for death to come to us.

Where do you go in days of difficulties? 'As every body is poor, I have no friend or relative to assist me. In days of difficulty the people (we) used to go to a place called *sole bereho* to pray or make '*dua*' sacrifices were made by money collected from this people. The prayer was effective. Nowadays, people have no money to make the sacrifices and the mass prayers ceased.'

Is every body affected equally? 'Every body is affected; but the degree may differ. However few they may be, there will be those who may pass the coming to moths with something to survive, those who may die and those who may migrate. The death and the exodus is already taking place and the change will be merely in magnitude.'

3.6.2 Urban Site Case Studies

Kebele 11, Wereda 2, Debere Zeit Town, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region.

Case 1: A disabled man

The name of the male adult is Corporal Zenebe Degefe. He lost his right leg in the civil war and walks with the help of a crutch. He has also lost his left eye and arm. He lives on a disability pension of 93 Birr a month. He is married and has three children. All these happened when he was just 26 years old. He was recruited in the army about eight years earlier when he was just 18. He served in the army, got married and had two children when he was sent to Eritrea to fight for the *Derg*. After he was injured he was released and sent back to his community. He has added one more child since his return.

Corporal Zenebe's wife is not employed, because there is no employment opportunity in the area. She can't start her own business selling local drinks because there is no fund to start it. Besides, there is nobody to take care of the children, one of them is 2 years old. Hence, they have to survive on his pension only. He explains life as very hard. He cannot send his children to school any more. The 93 Birr he gets cannot be stretched beyond just buying essential food stuff. In fact he had sent his oldest son to his grandparents in the country side, but he had to come back because he was sick and there were no health services in rural areas. Once in town, his son was unable to afford the medication since it involved a serious problem, puncture of the ear drums. So the boy is staying at home.

Corporal Zenebe tries to get extra income to support his family. He goes to the market place everyday to try his luck as a dealer. In his lucky days, which are few, he makes 3 or 4 Birr. This money goes a long way in helping buy necessities at home. He knows he can't go on like this for long. He says, in spite of his disability, he can do a lot of things if he had the start-up capital. For instance, if he had a sewing machine he could make good money. But, where will this money come from? The corporal feels hurt that he is dependent on pension and charity. He expresses outburst of pride and independence, and then gets depressed as he remembers that he is severely disabled physically.

The most serious concern for him is the future direction of his children. He is scared that they will end up on the streets. He will do his utmost to spare them from this. He will contact humanitarian organizations all over the country to ask for help. He says this with a lot of reluctance, because there isn't much he can do.

Corporal Zenebe thinks that there aren't enough rich people in the community to bring it out of poverty. The rich are not so motivated to help the poor. Even if they tried it would be too much for them. It is the government that he saves all his hope for. Corporal Zenebe doesn't believe that there is serious crime or conflict in the community. People are just too busy running up and down to pick quarrels with each other. There is a chance of some violence in the future unless some thing is done about the growing unemployment. This, he says, is the government's responsibility. He doesn't believe that there is social exclusion in the community, not because of religion or ethnicity. He doesn't feel excluded because of his disability either. In fact, he is a regular member of the neighborhood *idir* and as long as he pays his monthly fees he is entitled to all the services. He feels part of the community.

Case 2: A married woman

Her name is Woizero Teseme Kebede. She is about 45, married and the mother of three. Her husband, like a lot of males in the community, is a weaver. They have lived together in this community for the last thirty years.

Woizero Teseme, who never knew how to read or write, talks about the good old days with a lot of emotion. In those days, most of the males in the community, organized in cooperatives, had a stable job as weavers. They worked a lot and produced a lot of cloth. Raw material was cheap and available; the price of their products was regulated. There were many customers who bought the cloth. The weavers made enough money to support their family and send their children to school.

In the last ten years, explains the lady, things changed. The new government abolished the cooperatives. Weavers all of a sudden cannot find raw material in the market any more. Whatever was available was beyond their means. The customers disappeared, and their products went unsold for months. The weavers' life went into sharp decline. With them, so went the future of the community. The housing stock deteriorated, the streets could not be fixed, garbage could not be collected. In ten years, the community changed from one vital area to a mass of unemployed poor people living in the worst physical environment.

The family of Woizero Teseme lived in a one room house which they had rented from the owner for 6 Birr a month before the 1974 revolution. After the revolution, and after all extra houses and land were nationalized, they paid 3 Birr per month to the kebele administration.

Woizero Teseme accounts that there were quite a few families within the neighborhood who lived a comfortable life. They lived in good houses, owned private vehicles, television and radios. The number of such families decreased sharply as a result of the 1974 revolution. Whatever was left of them was wiped out by the policies of the current government's economic and land policy.

As for her and her family's future, Woizero Teseme depicts a grim picture. She explains that the shocks of the policies in the early 1990's has still to be recovered from. She still asks the questions as to why their cooperatives were dissolved? what happened to their properties confiscated at the time? will they ever organize in cooperatives again?

Woizero Teseme sees no part of the community excluded for any reason. The extent of violence is also minimal. These issues do not concern her at all. What is a serious problem is unemployment. She laments the fact that the livelihoods of the weaver community was reduced to mere subsistence in short a short time. She sees no hope that things will return to the old days. She believes there is no body who cares any more.

Addis Ababa Sites:

Case 1: An adult mason

Ato Negash Yadete is a 38 year old married man. He has a wife and 5 children. Though he is responsible for 7 persons (including himself), he has no regular income. He is a daily laborer; he is a mason by profession. The following are his answer to the lead questions posed to him.

What is bad life for you? 'I consider I live a bad life. I don't have a permanent job. I am a mason who works only when there is something to do. So, I don't have permanent income. Whatever little money I get, I spend it on food, my children's education and my idir payment. My wife doesn't work. The children are too small to work. So, they all depend on me. Life is therefore running here and there to secure the means of survival. We eat when we have the means, and go to bed with an empty stomach when we don't. Our life is between life and death. Life is bad when we get stuck or when it is insecure. It is bad when it feels like dying on our feet, or begging from benevolent persons or agencies.'

What is good life for you? 'A good life is when you live happily with your family. This requires a permanent and secure job where you make enough money to feed and cloth your family and also to save some. For instance, if you are a civil servant (a government employee) then you have income all the time and you need not worry about job security. This is even better than being a merchant because, a merchant has no income guarantee. He may get money today but is not sure about tomorrow. A government employee also has pension money when he is old.'

What are the changes needed to bring good life? 'I don't believe you can change things here anymore. This is really a bad situation. A lot of people are wasted away when they have hands and the skills to make a living. We can't start business in this house because it is not a good location for business. Neither could we engage in carrying on "air by air" business (i.e. illegal business conducted with the complicity of corrupt civil servants) because it is unreliable. Business without a license is illegal. To get a license requires capital, which is impossible for me. Therefore, the only way left to bring about changes in this community is if the government could create job opportunities to enable us to change our lives.'

Any major shocks in your life? 'I haven't been working for the last 12 months or so. The only source of income for the family is my wife's activity buying and selling pepper. I have virtually become a cripple, both physically and emotionally. I worry about my children's well-being, but I don't see solutions. I cannot cope with the increase in population and the number of people competing for the same job. I am reduced to waiting for others to help me (begging). The result is mental disorder, besides other problems.'

How do you cope with these problems? 'People just do not watch others die. Neighbors help neighbors. We try to help each other as much as we can. I have, for instance, a neighbor. When my family has nothing to eat we borrow some food from her. If she could not help us, I borrow some money from a friend and will pay him later when I get a job. If my house burns, my neighbor is the first to come to help. That is how we cope. Besides this, the *idir* is the only institution we have to rely on. I know this is true only when somebody dies. But, it would even have been worse without *idir*. Otherwise, even the *kebele* does nothing for us.'

Any hopes and aspirations? 'Our hope is for the government or NGOs to create job opportunities. If I can work again, I believe my life as well as my family's will be renewed. I will work hard and support my family, end even put some money aside.'

Are all people equal in the community? 'No! There are exporters and importers, mini-shop owners, civil servants, and us, empty-handed daily laborers. There are also beggars. Nevertheless, nobody is excluded in this community for any reason. We live together by sharing what we have. There are no conflicts because everybody is running to make ends meet.'

Case 2: A woman dependent

Woizero Berhane Reda is a 65 year old woman who has 4 children. She is a hair-dresser but nowadays she is getting old and is unable to carry on her work. She is dependent on one of her daughters who is a petty trader, selling onions on the streets.

What is bad life for you? 'I am illiterate and weak. I left my birth place and settled here 30 years ago. I don't remember when I was a happy person during those years. My worst time was when I had twins back in the years of Emperor Haile Selassie. I had nothing to feed them and it was a very difficult time. Over the years, I got old without seeing any improvement in my life. That is what I call a bad life. Living an empty life, and never having fulfilled what you aspired as a young person. At the end, you are totally dependent on somebody.'

What is a good life for you? 'First of all you need to make a living. That means a job. It would be better if you have some kind of skills. Then you need to be married, so that you can help each other. In that case, you can make enough money to eat and dress properly. You can even rent a decent house. That is good life for me.'

Any major shocks in your life? 'The year I had twins was also the year when Emperor Haile Selassie was deposed by the Derg. These events were a major shock for me. At that time I lost money and became empty handed; I was unable to feed my newly-born twins.'

How did you cope with these problems? 'At the time my neighbors have come to my rescue. I had and still have a lot friends from the old days. They feed me when I am hungry and lend me money when I need some. That is where I go in times of hardship. Idir is the other place where I go, not so much to get help but to chat with my friends about our common problems.

Any hopes and aspirations? All my hope is on my children. My daughter is a hard worker. Is she can get enough money to borrow, she will be successful in her business.

Are all people equal in your community? No, we are different. There are civil servants, large business owners, petty traders like my daughter, and weak ones like me. Most of the residents share the same problems of not having income because they can't find employment opportunities. There is, however, no exclusion. Everyone's life is one of love. Poverty makes us live in harmony. We have peace but nothing else. Everybody lives in their own home.

Case 3: A single man

Ato Workeneh Asfaw is single man with 10th grade education. He is unemployed and lives with his parents in a house built by his parents during the 'good old days.' According to him, he couldn't continue his studies because he had to work and earn some money in order to support his parents. He has no reliable permanent job and works as a daily laborer only whenever some work is available. His training up to the 10th grade has had no benefit whatsoever in terms finding jobs.

Workeneh lives in a household with five people, including his sister and her 12 years old daughter born out of wedlock. The daughter is in grade 3. His sister sells onions and tomatoes at the neighborhood *gulit*. She is the main source of income for the household. The house itself is small three room one with no yard or open space either at the front or back of the house. The whole floor area is 40 square meters.

Workeneh believes that a majority of the residents of the community are unemployed, very poor and living hand to mouth. They have no capital to start even the smallest businesses, although they are fully able and willing to work hard. Workeneh compares his family's situation with those few in the higher category of well-being. The well to do live in nice houses and educate their children in the best schools in the city or even send them abroad.

Workeneh believes that the best way out of this situation is for the government or any investor to start small scale industries in the area. There are a lot of young unemployed people who could be trained and productively employed if they had the chance. Workeneh believes the most serious problem is that of unemployment, particularly among the large group of young males and females in the community.

The one organization that had brought some good changes for the community is Sister's NGO. Workeneh describes that the NGO renovated and built houses for poor and weak people; trained young people in handicraft and metal works and supplied them with the tool and capital to start small businesses.

Workeneh sees no bright in the future. But, as a Coptic Christian, he says his hope is in God. He often goes to church to pray and he believes that if it is the will God things will change. One advantage, he says, is that the youth residing in the community are close and friendly to each other. One common thing that unites them is that they all strongly believe in God. This resolves any potential conflicts and misunderstandings among them. There is no exclusion in any form of any community groups. Workeneh believes that poverty has a uniting effect, because it put everybody in the same category facing similar problems. In this situation, Workeneh says, neighbors help each other and form the bond that helps them survive.

Case 4: A retired corporal

Corporal Gizaw W/Zena is a 53 years old. He was married but his wife was died long ago. He has three sons and four daughters. He learnt up to 9th grade.

How is life? I have eight family members. It is very hard to manage this family with this pension salary. None of my children reach to support me I am the only earning member of the family people who have jobs and other source of income could lead their life smoothly. The most important thing in life is to be physically well. This is because if he/she is well she/he can make money at least by selling his labor.

Who lives a good life here? 'If a man has job and has an additional source of income; he could lead his life smoothly. A person who has a job and has additional source of income besides his salary lives a good life in this community.'

What changes do you want to see? 'In order to bring a good life the following thing has to be fulfilled: Sufficient food, cloth, a good house, clean waters a diversified source of income.'

What about the future? 'The invading force of Eritrea should evacuate of removed from our occupied territories the sovereignty of our country should be regain. If we successfully compelled this task we will turn our attention to the development of our country. Therefore, our future lies first and foremost on keeping the territorial integrity of the country and since I am a citizen my future also lies as well.

Does any body help you at all? Whenever I am in trouble, I always go for help to my Kebele administration and village Idir and I hope they will sick solution for my problem.

Any people who are excluded here? Any conflict? 'In our society it is completely unacceptable to exclude someone from the society. Most of the people in this Kebele are poor. We live each other peacefully.'

4. PROBLEMS AND PRIORITIES OF THE POOR

Rural communities face different types of problems than urban communities. However, focus groups within rural or urban communities do not show major variations in identifying and prioritizing problems. There are, however, some changes in the prioritization of problems when looking back ten years. There are also some additional problems cited today that did not exist before and vice versa. Nevertheless, regardless of the site or focus group, the cumulative effect of the series of problems faced by all communities over a long period of time has resulted in one common denominator: deep poverty.

(Tables 4.1 through 4.3 , Annex 3, show the priority problems, and the changes in the last ten years, for all sites by the main focus groups. Figures 3 and 4, Annex 4, show the problems and priorities in rural and urban communities, respectively)

4.1 Prioritized List of Problems

4.1.1 Rural Sites

Regardless of location, the main problems of rural communities are basically the same. According to the participants, the number one problem leading to poverty and ill-being is drought, mostly caused by rain short-fall. Successive droughts in the country has had negative effect on production even in areas traditionally considered the grain baskets of the country. The effect of drought go much beyond the decline in production: rivers dry up and women have to travel for hours to get a pot of water; cattle die due to the lack of water; backyard gardens which had been a major source of food security for many become useless.

The second most severe problem is access to land. This problem is aggravated by three main sub- problems: (i) the rapidly increasing number of landless peasants, (ii) the shrinking farm land size either due to deforestation and erosion or to the fragmentation of farm lands, (iii) the government land policy which disallows re-distribution of land. The fact that land is owned by the government is also another impediment, according to the participants of this study, since it takes away the sense of ownership and security. In a situation where the main means of production is seen as 'no man's land', there is little protection and interest in investment. In an environment where land could be distributed and re-distributed at any time (as seen frequently in the past years), the farmer is not interested in long-term investment. 'Why would anybody invest on something that does not belong to them?' is a common question that many ask. No one seems to know the answer.

The third most serious problem in rural peasant communities is the lingering effect of the *quota* system of the previous government, the *Derg*. A lot of landless peasants, bitterly blame the quota system for being the main contributor to their present predicament. They just weren't able to deliver the amount of grain that the government demanded to buy at below the market price. This, with the added sub-problems of settlement and the removal of subsidies, reflect the main reasons why rural community members bitterly complain about government policy as the main causes of poverty.

The fourth serious problem in rural agricultural communities are pests. Farmers suffer helplessly from persistent pests that are destroying their crops. One looks at a green pasture from a distance but the farmers know better. The green pasture is infested with pests, and by the time of harvest there is nothing left to harvest. Many farmers cannot afford to buy pesticides.

Female groups in rural communities mostly share the priorities and the problems of their male counterparts discussed above. There are, however, some additional problems that they mentioned. They are deeply concerned that there aren't enough (if at all) health and school facilities; there are no grain mills or clean water sources anywhere near their villages. As a result, they spend a lot of their valuable time either grinding corns/*teff* manually or/and fetching water from distances which could easily take them more than two hours one way. Malnutrition and diseases were also mentioned as priority problems by most female focus groups in the rural sites.

In sum, the primary impacts of these problems on the communities is chronic poverty. The local terminology discussed above clearly reflect the level and degree of poverty in these communities. The shift in the proportion of households from higher to lower categories of well-being (as shown above) may also be explained by these problems. The concrete outcomes are also devastating. First and foremost, for a culture that has depended on agriculture for so many centuries, the absence of land signifies the absence of a livelihood. This, in turn, translate into having nothing to eat. This forces them to look for coping strategies. More often than not, these strategies turn out to be things that further exacerbate the problems. They include cutting trees or ploughing/grazing marginal land that should be left alone. No one blames the farmers for opting short-term solutions to save their lives at the expense of long-term environmental protection.

4.1.2 Urban Sites

The problems and priorities between urban communities vary to some extent depending on the type of profession that dominates the community. However, the number one problem in all communities is the same: chronic unemployment. A similar set of sub-problems are behind this main problem. The main one, according to urban community residents, is 'unstudied' government policies. These include (i) layoffs of government employees, (ii) the removal of subsidies, and (iii) demobilization of the *Derg* soldiers. The first two problems are blamed on the current government's free-market economy while the third problem is considered a political decision by the same government.

The second most serious problem in urban communities is rapid population growth. This is caused by other sub-problems such as (i) high birth rates, (ii) rural-urban migration, and (iii) dislocation of population groups from surrounding rural areas. Urban community residents explain that the high birth rates are the result of the absence of family planning programs while rural-urban migration is the result of drought in rural communities. The dislocation of population groups from rural communities is explained in terms of the 'ethnic conflict' that took place during the first few years of the current government.

The third most important problem of the urban communities, particularly stressed by the female groups, is the absence of vital services such as health, water, electricity, housing and sanitation. These are chronic problems that directly contribute to the worsening health and hygienic conditions of the residents. Many residents complain that there is very little attention given to these problems by local officials. Whatever is being done by some non-governmental organizations, according to the participants, falls far short of alleviating the root problems.

The consequences of these problems are seen in the form of the increasing number of beggars on the streets, the high rates of morbidity and mortality, and the overall unhealthy and dangerous sanitation conditions in the neighborhoods. This is not to speak of the less obvious signs of hopelessness and desperation among the urban population, particularly the youth.

Rural communities face different types of problems than urban communities. However, focus groups within rural or urban communities do not show major variations in identifying and prioritizing problems. There are, however, some changes in the prioritization of problems when looking back ten years. There are also some additional problems cited today that did not exist before and vice versa. Nevertheless, regardless of the site or focus group, the cumulative effect of the series of problems faced by all communities over a long period of time has resulted in one common denominator: deep poverty.

The following is a brief discussion of the priority problems and their consequences for rural and urban communities by selected focus groups.

In all the rural sites, the most frequently mentioned problem, by all focus groups, ten years ago was the 'quota' imposed on the farmers by the previous socialist government. Many were not able to pay and, hence, forfeited the land. This seems to be the root cause of the main problem today - landlessness.

For those who have land today, fertilizers are not readily affordable as they used to be during the socialist regime; there is no subsidy today. As a result production has declined. Add to it the problems of pests and hail, we have a very bleak scenario. The paradox is that the previous government subsidized fertilizers but imposed quotas. The result: farmers couldn't meet them and therefore many lost their livelihood.

Today, the present government, driven by the free market economy, lifted the quota; it also lifted the fertilizer subsidies. The effect on the farmers is equally devastating: they can't afford fertilizers, production decreases and eventually farming, with all the added problems, becomes a no-option as a livelihood. People are at a loss what to turn to.

For most members of the focus groups consulted in this study, the main problems are too big for them to solve. The root causes of their problems are either related to government policies or the will of God. Following the 1975 Land Reform, successive government policies have introduced measures that they think do not serve them. First, when land was redistributed to peasants in 1975, it came with the 'quota' system which, as we have seen earlier, negatively affected a lot of farmers. Besides, as peasant population grew faster than available land re-distribution had to stop somewhere - in

1989.

When in 1991 a new government, with the free - market economy, came in, the 'quota' system was abandoned; and so was fertilizer subsidy. Again, the poor farmers, were not in a position to buy fertilizers as the price went up beyond their means. With additional problems of pests and hail, production decreases and the farmer no more puts his/her trust on farming as a viable livelihood. It is no wonder, therefore, the farmer looks towards the government for solutions. The government, according to the farmer, created the problems after all. All they can pitch-in is their free labor.

As for the pests, hail and lack of rainfall the participants believe it is up to God. All they can do is pray. They mention *Eretcha* and *Gara Boru*, two institutions discussed in some detail in the next section, as the two venues they pray to God. There is a great deal of confidence and trust that God listens to their prayers. On the contrary, the participants seem to have very little confidence or trust both in the willingness and ability of the government to help. Successive government policies have had a negative effect on their livelihood. There is no reason to expect solutions from the government. Many people believe that the government has its own agenda which does not necessarily include their interests.

Another problem is the capacity of the local government, the kebele administration, to address their problems. Local government, more often than not, has no resources or visions to resolve problems of land shortage, for instance. Hence, they concentrate on political issues, which are not to the interests of the community residents. This is a view very strongly articulated by the young, in particular. There is, however, a general consensus among the focus groups.

4.2 Changes in Problems and Priorities

Categorizing problems by different well-being groups was a bit difficult thing to do. Certain problems may have been specific to a particular group of people. For instance, pests would be the problems of those who have land - people seen as relatively well-off. But, a number of problems like water, schools, health services cut across all categories of well-being. All in all, most of the problems stated by the participants affect the community as a whole. When push comes to shove, people in all categories of well-being suffer equally. This is because the difference among the well-being categories is not significant enough to allow those in the highest categories to withstand serious problems like prolonged drought for too long.

The participants in the various focus groups of this study indicated some major changes not only in the prioritization of problems but also in the problems themselves. Most of these changes, as we can see below, are reflections of the changes in the state system that the country underwent in the last few decades.

4.2.1 Rural Sites

Ten years ago the priority problems for the participants in the **rural sites** included (i) forced conscription into the army (ii) losing land without compensation, (iii) the ongoing civil war, (iv) the quota system, and (v) forced memberships in cooperatives, not necessarily in that order. Other problems that also existed ten years ago included resettlement policy, drought and hunger. In **urban sites**, priority problems ten years ago, included (i) forced conscription, (ii) the Red Terror, (iii) lack of services such as water and electricity, and (iv) health and sanitation problems.

The following 'presents the changes in problems and priorities in the rural study sites over the last ten years, as narrated by the different focus groups.'

'Ten years ago, the main problem was losing our land because we couldn't pay the quota imposed on us by the government; today, as a result of the quota system we have no land; we can't produce our own food, neither could we buy it. Things have worsened over the years.'

Laborers.

'Ten years ago, we lost our land, without compensation; we were forced to leave our livelihood to fight for the Derg. This was the beginning of our downfall. We never came out of this. Today, our land size is very small our food production is not enough to feed our families. We can't afford to buy fertilizers and farm oxen and tools anymore. The land does not produce as it used to.' **Farmers.**

'Ten years ago, we didn't have employment because we never were given land. There were no schools that teach us skills; but there was a literacy program. Today, we still can't find work or land to plough. Even those of us who went to school can't find jobs. What is the use of going to school? Most of our problems are the same as ten years ago.' **The Youth.**

'Ten years ago, the quota imposed by the government destroyed our lives as the farmers forfeited their lands because they couldn't fulfil them. We also had shortage of water because it rained very little and the rivers were far away. Today, we suffer from the lack of land which we lost because of the quota system. There are no schools or clinics in the area-you have to walk all the way to Debre Zeit.' **Widowed women.**

'Ten years ago, there was no water, hospitals and schools in this area. Today the main problem is the shortage of farm land or grazing land in addition to the problems of water and hospitals.' **Mixed group.**

The problems which were viewed as most serious some ten years ago were forceful recruitment of youngsters to the army and the forced supply of grain fixed by government bodies to the government at a price rate set by it. These burdens are now gone with the past military government and problems of other dimensions have emerged. The most serious problems to reckon with at present are famine and forced purchase of fertilizers whose price has sky rocketed as the present government has stopped its subsidy. In the past, fertilizers were highly subsidized by the government and there was very low in order to encourage farmers to use them and increase productivity.

4.2.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site**, both for **males** and **females** ten years ago the main problem was forced recruitment of their children for the protracted civil war which was prevalent in the country at the time. Today, as a result of the relative peace, there is no complaining about this issue. As a matter of fact as to the on-going Ethio-Eritrean war, many youngsters in the community have gone to the war front voluntarily. Parents believe that it is a just war and they happily send their children to defend the country.

For all focus groups, particularly for craftsmen, the most serious problem today is the loss of their associations. For weavers, for instance, the Weavers' Cooperatives used to be the main source of materials, tools and inputs. In addition, it regulated the price of their products. Today there are no such associations, thanks to the market economy. A lot of craftsmen resent the increasing number of jobless people getting involved in the weaving business, resulting in a rapid fall in the price of their products and the viability of weaving as a livelihood. There is a general consensus that with the associations, things would have been different.

The **elderly** and the unemployed face the increasingly high prices of goods and services. They, however, are more concerned about the impending prospect of being hungry and homeless. The **youth** blame the previous government, the *Derg*, for forcing them to become soldiers in a losing war. Many have been wounded and many others have died. Those who were lucky to come back alive have had nothing to do for the last ten years. Today they are faced with the problem of unemployment. Ten years ago, young women felt that fetching water from far away places was the most serious problems they faced. Another problem ten years ago was the lack of health services. Today, these problems still persist, but have been overtaken by unemployment.

For **females**, lack of electricity, of hospital service and water were the three most serious problems a decade ago. In contrast, the women identified unemployment, lack health services and electricity as the three main problems at present.

For **old women** find shortage of food (hunger) as the number one problem in the community today. The second most serious problem is unemployment followed by the increasing price of commodities. Ten years ago, the number one problem was forced entry into the military for the civil war. The second problem was the lack of water and the third was the lack of electricity. For **widowed females**, today, the lack of health facilities is the number one problem. The second and third problems are lack of medicine and unemployment, respectively. Ten years ago, the number one problem was unemployment followed by the lack of health facilities and lack of capital to start small businesses.

4.3 Problems that They Can Solve that Require External Support

Overall, the participants have similar views about what they can do to support themselves and what they expect from the government.

Ada Liben Wereda Rural Sites

Problems they can solve on their own	Problems for which they need external support	Comments
<p>1. If the government is willing to provide the finances, we can contribute through free labor</p> <p>2. We can provide the farm tools but not the oxen</p> <p>3. The main problems in this area are famine, drought, hail and too much rain. These are not problems that we can solve; it is all up to God.</p> <p>4. Ten years ago there was a sports field and we had somewhere to pass the time; now it has become a farmland</p>	<p>1. The government would have to provide fertilizer subsidy to help us increase productivity of land.</p> <p>2. The government can relieve us from our fertilizer debts.</p> <p>3. The problems of medicines, doctors and the problems of land are all in the hands of the government. It has the responsibility to alleviate these problems.</p> <p>4. The government has to give us land so that we can produce our own food.</p> <p>5. We need government help to bring in electricity, schools, health facilities, recreation facilities</p>	<p>1. The subsidies were stopped it 3-4 years ago and the farmers say it has been devastating.</p> <p>2. There is a strong sense among members of this group that the government does not pay attention to them and that they are forgotten.</p> <p>3. There is a feeling among the youth that they tried to do things on their own they do not have the resources</p>

Dessie Zuria Wereda Rural Sites

Problems they can solve on their own	Problems for which they need external support	Comments
All Focus Groups		
<p>1. As we are in the last stage of poverty, we are poor to do anything by our selves and hence we need the assistance of the creator and government. However,</p> <p>2. We can prevent flooding if we get the material</p> <p>3. We can plant trees if we get the seedlings</p> <p>3. If we produce enough we can pay taxes</p> <p>4. We can use the hoe in the absence of plough oxen</p>	<p>1. We need the government to give us food assistance.</p> <p>2. We don't want the government to force us to buy fertilizer with credit.</p> <p>3. We need seeds, pesticides.</p> <p>4. We need the government to establish factories here.</p>	<p>1. The residents feel that they are physically fit; but don't have the financial capacity to solve any of their problems. They feel that the rain problem is only solvable by the creator and it can not be bought; the government can help them at least by lending money.</p> <p>2. The residents of these rural communities are eager to provide their labor for development activities. They repeatedly said that is what they can afford; everything else is up to Allah and the government.</p> <p>3. There is a strong view here that the government is forcing them to buy fertilizers without subsidy. They say they cannot pay the debts any more.</p> <p>4. There are very clear signs that the farmers (even those who have land) are leaving their farms for the cities to be laborers.</p>

5. INSTITUTIONS

The main finding of this study highlights that communities both in rural and urban areas rely more on informal local institutions than on formal governmental and/or non-governmental institutions. The reasons may be two fold. First, there are no formal institutions, particularly in most rural communities, that give support to community residents. Second, there seems to be close inter-relationship between the cultural and/or religious beliefs and local informal institutions. The latter, therefore, have secured strong cultural or religions backing for many years and have survived (in fact, thrived) even harsh economic conditions.

The findings also highlight that, although there are some differences by place of residence and by gender, for the most part *idir* stands out as the most important local and informal institution. *Idir* is a burial society where the number one concern is that a deceased member (or members of a family) receive 'proper' burial. This means that during the three-day mourning period all the necessary arrangements ranging from digging the grave to feeding the mourners (and the members of the society) is taken care of by the society. Community members, especially the youth realize these activities are more for spiritual/religious or cultural satisfaction and have very little to do with development. Nevertheless, for many, proper burial takes higher priority than anything else. Membership fees, unlike other payments, are paid on a timely basis. This may be the case because, in both rural and urban areas, organizing people for development requires much more resources than organizing people for burial societies.

The second most important institution is the church, for Christians, and the Mosque, for Muslims. In both rural and urban communities and among males and females, the church and the mosque have been very important institutions because they provide spiritual comfort. They are also the place of burial, the last place of rest. These are very important issues for a majority of the people, especially older people. These days, however, the youth are showing as much interest in the church and mosque as the adults. An increasing number of young males and females crowd churches and mosques either to get religious lessons or to pray and listen to mass. This may very well be related to poverty - particularly the absence of jobs and the ensuing frustration and hopelessness.

The third most important institution for Christians are those semi-religious local institutions such as *mahiber/senbete* and *tsebel* which have been dealt with above. Among Muslims, in the absence of a Mosque in the community, worshipers go to a *zawiya* to pray. At a *zawiya* ceremony, usually there is a *Kadi*, a Moslem religious leader, who leads the prayer. It is clear from the discussions with the Muslim community that these religious ceremonies provide them with a great deal of comfort and satisfaction, despite the economic hardships.

Among the formal governmental institutions, the *kebele* and *Gibrina Biro* are mentioned as the important ones. *Kebele* is the lowest unit of administration in both rural (Peasant Associations) and urban (Urban Dwellers' Associations) areas. It is considered important because (i) it links the community residents with the government, and (ii) that is where community residents go to receive ID cards or any other kind of official document that is considered essential for residents. Not that they do anything about it, but *kebeles*

also provide the forum for discussions of public concerns and problems.

Gibrina Biro refers to the office at the Ministry of Agriculture where agricultural support is given to farmers in the form of extension programmes. These may include, training in modern agricultural methods, distribution of fertilizers or vaccination of cattle. For many farmers, however, such support has been declining over the years to the point where they do not rely on them at all.

(Figures 5 and 6, Annex 4, show the main institutions identified by the residents of the rural and urban sites, respectively)

5.1 Ranking of Institutions by Sites and Focus Groups

5.1.1 Rural Sites

In the **rural sites of Ada Liben Wereda**, there doesn't seem to be formal institutions to speak of, save for some governmental institutions at a distance of 8 km. There are no NGOs operating either. The people in the area have developed their own institutions, some religious and some social and others financial, to get together and address their needs. Although ranking institutions is not easy the three most important institutions, for the community as a whole are *Tabot* (church), *Eretcha* and *Idir*, all of them informal local institutions. The following describes how people relate to each one of them.

Tabot (Church): The locals use this term interchangeably with 'church'. A '*tabot*' is actually the arc of covenant which is kept at the holiest part of the church. This institution is the most important of all. Given the predominantly Coptic Christian religion in the area, this may not be surprising. The community residents have the following to say about Tabot; (i) it is something that we inherited from our forefathers, (ii) it is a cultural thing as well as a religious thing, (iii) that is where we pray to God to give us rain or to spare us from diseases, or from too much rain hail etc., (iv) that is where we get buried when we die, (v) it is where we christen our children, (vi) it is our permanent place of rest for our body, (vii) we 'cry in mass' to God, and (viii) it is where we get confidence.

Eretcha:² Literally it means 'wet straw' in Oromifa which is the local language of the area. There is a huge tree at the bank of one of the 7 crater lakes in the area. People go to the tree on the Sunday after *Meskal* with wet straw in their hands. The wet straw symbolizes the desire to have 'wet land', 'wet hands' etc. 'Wetness' is supposed to stand for prosperity: wet land allows growth. The main purpose, therefore, is to pray to God to make the land wet with rain. Hence, *eretcha*.

People's description of this informal and indigenous institution is as follows: (i) we believe in it and it works, (ii) we get together and pray when we need something desperately, like rain, (iii) we pray and get what we want at a time of greatest need, (iv) we pray and slaughter animals to get rain, (v) we go there to pray to have children, (vi) we go there and pray for our children's health, (vii) it is the same as the church because we go there to pray too.

Gara Boru: This is the name of a nearby mountain. It is not as significant as *eretcha*

² see following box for institutional profile

where people go to pray only once a year. In this case, there is no limit as to how many times a person could go to the mountain to pray. People's view about Gara Boru is as follows: (i) it is a place (a mountain) where we go and pray to God to give us rain, and (ii) we value this because it listens to *silet* [the vows to do something in return if God listened to their prayers; this could mean anything from a gift to the church to walking around the church so many times]

Idir: This is an informal local institution with a specific objective of assisting families who experience the death of a member. In this culture indeed throughout Ethiopia, it is very important to bury a family member properly. This includes a three-day mourning period during which time all adult members of the community visit at least once, and they have to be fed. This institution is so important that people give to paying the membership fees the highest priority. It has a membership and committee members elected by the membership. This is what the community says about *idir*: (i) we raise money and use it in time of need, especially when some member of a household dies, (ii) with the money we raise we buy coffins for the deceased, coffee and food for those who come to bury the person, (iii) we have our own chairs and cups to use during a funeral and the processions that follow, (iv) it is a gathering place and we meet each other at our weekly meetings, (v) it is not a development thing, but assists in funeral related expenses, (vi) we help those members who cannot afford these expenses, and (vii) if you are not a member, you don't get any of these

Ikub: This is an informal lending institution with members and elected leadership. Every so many days, weeks or months, people raise a fixed amount of money. They draw a lottery and the winner takes the money. This happens every time they meet, until all members have had the chance to collect their money. The participants say, (i) those who have money can benefit, (ii) it is a social thing and an economic thing, (iii) it is like a lending institution without interests, and (iv) it is good at a time of emergency.

Hakim bet: Literally translated, it means the house of a doctor. It is usually government owned, although a lot of private 'house of a doctor' are emerging in the last 5 years or so. The participants' view includes: (i) it is the place where we get cured when we get sick, (ii) we don't have *hakim* bets in the community but they save lives, (iii) we go there when we are sick, (iv) that is where we get injections, and (v) we buy medicine from there.

Tsebel: This is a place, usually nearby a church, where people drink and wash with holy water. It is informal and very closely related to the church: (i) it is our spiritual remedy, (ii) we drink the 'blessed' water and get cured, (iii) we cannot afford modern medicine, and (iv) it also works better than modern medicine

Tsiwa/Senbete: *Tsiwa* is an old and religious word for a 'cup'. It is an informal occasion where members bring food and drinks to the church to feed the poor and themselves. Participants explain, (i) we drink for our soul, and (ii) we get together and pray for us and for others.

Gebeya: This refers to a local open market place. The market place is the central place where people meet to sell farm products and buy consumer items such as salt and oil. The view of the participants includes: (i) we go to *Gebeya* to meet people, (ii) we go there to buy onions, and (iii) we go there to sell what we have.

The three governmental institutions that are important, but not anywhere as important as the social institutions discussed above, are the following:

Kebele: It is the general name given to the smallest unit of the government administration. In this case, it is the peasant association. Participants' views include; (i) it is our connection to the government, (ii) it is where we express our concerns that need to be addressed by the government, and (iii) we don't have a lot of confidence in it, but we don't have a choice.

Gibrina Biro: This refers to the Office at the Ministry of Agriculture where farmers get some support:: (i) that is where we are supposed to get fertilizer to increase our production, (ii) we get extension programs once in a while, started only recently, (iii) they give us training once in a while, (iv) our cattle get medication, (v) they show us modern agriculture methods, and (vi) they teach as about animal husbandry (but they do not provide the animals)

Police: (i) they protect us from trouble makers, and (ii) they maintain our security.

Institutional Profile in a Ada Liben Rural Site: *Eretcha*

By far, the most important institution for the residents of these communities (which includes the peasant associations in sites 1,2, and 3) is *Eretcha*. This is an Oromifa word, when directly translated into English, means 'wet straw'. Oromifa is the main language in the area. We spoke to an elderly man about *eretcha*, and the following is how he described it.

'We Oromos are farmers. Our livelihood is based on water, and, hence, we believe in wet things. The farmers' crops and cattle depend on wetness. Once in a year, the first Sunday after *Meskel*, we go to this *warka* tree by Lake Hora³. We pray to God as follows [literal translation]:

Dear God our creator
You made us pass the night peacefully
May you also make us pass the day peacefully
Save us from the kicks of horses
And the eyes of wicked people
Please listen to what we are begging from you
Oh God, the creator of land, mountain and the *Warka tree*⁴
Make a good rain for us
Make our land wet for us
Like this straw we are carrying in our hands
Since these are your creations too
Make the rain come down in peace
Please don't give us bad things with the rain⁵
Like the pests and the hail and lightening

We celebrate *Eretcha* once a year, the Sunday after the *Meska*⁶ celebrations. Men women and children go to the *Warka* tree by Lake Hora to pray and to vow to God. The tree stands tall by the lake - which used to be just a small river. God made it a big lake now. We walk 2-3 hours to get there. The area is green and beautiful at that time. There are a lot of people. They come from all over the country. There are many people from Addis. They all carry *eretcha*. The elderly bless the people gathered one by one. We pray to our God, our *Ayani*, who created the river, the tree and who was there before and who is here now. We pray for rain, we pray for wetness - like the straw in our hands. Then we kill oxen - 3 of them. We raise money to buy the oxen. Everybody contributes what they have. We make coffee. We eat and drink. It is a day-long celebrations.

How is this related to you livelihood?

You see, as soon as we go back home, the rain starts coming down. No pests no hail, no lightening. Just pure water. We get what we prayed for. It is directly related to our life, our chance to eat, raise cattle, drink water. It means the health of our children. It means no pests or hail that would destroy our crops. You know, our livelihood depends on rain. Our prayers at *Eretcha* work. Some people [the Amharas] laugh at us. They say 'can the Oromos bring rain here?' But our prayers do work. Even the *ferenjjs*⁷ come here to see. It gets so crowded there isn't enough place to park for those who come from Addis Ababa.

How much do people trust in Eretcha?

If you come on that day you will see with your own eyes. People very strongly believe in *Eretcha*. They believe it protects them from bad things. They believe it gives them what they prayed for. They feel insecure if they don't make the yearly trip to Lake Hora. They feel they must do what their forefathers did for years - they don't know for how many years. It is, they say, like joining their spirits. There is no exclusion if some people chose not to go. But people need to go if they want to live peacefully. Especially, if they have promised to do some thing, they must do it. The young people go too. But it is because they want to watch when we pray. Or they go there to play. But we pray for all.

³Lake Hora is one of the seven crater lakes in the area.

⁴This is the tree under the celebratiobns take place.

⁵This is in reference to the belief among the people that pests come down from the sky with the rain

⁶Meskel [The Finding of the True Cross Celebrations] in Ethiopia usually falls during the third week of September

⁷Local term to refer to white people

Do people live equally here?
Look at my fingers. Are they equal?

5.1.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, the ranking of the different formal and informal institutions in the community by the different focus groups is diverse. Overall, the kebele office seems to be the most important one, particular among the adults. The second most important institution is the church.

For the **unemployed**, It is interesting to note that this group of people identify formal government institutions as the most important institutions in their lives. They value the kebele office highly because (1) it resolves conflicts (2) it provides ID cards. (3) and maintains houses and neighborhood streets. The Police Station is important for them because it protects them from thieves and maintains peace and order in the community. The courts are useful because they resolve civil cases and contribute to justice. Also important for this group are the church and idir.

Adult males also consider the kebele office as the number one institution that affects their lines. The reasons given are similar to those stated by unemployed males. However, the second and third important institutions are different. They are the informal institutions of idir and relatives. Idir is a very important institution for them because it facilitates proper burial at the time of death. This is very important for them. Idir also brings people together to talk about current issues in the community. The informal mutual help among relatives is also seen as an important institution for this group of people. Relatives come to each others rescue before other institutions like idir. This relationship is informal and limited to close relatives.

For **12th grade completes**, the money lender as the most important institution. This is because they believe money is the means to revitalize or start new businesses. In the absence of formal governmental or private banks this group look toward local money lenders as a substitute. Since many young males are unemployed they desperately look for somebody to lend them some money to start-up a small business. Many hope to buy and sell food items and make some profit. They see the money lender as their only hope. A related institution is the market place, which is the second most important institution for these young males. For obvious reasons, they hang around the market-place day in and day out.

For **female students** in this community the hospital is the most important institution. They argue (1) health services can be freely or cheaply obtained, (2) the hospital is not too far from the community, and (3) healthy people are more productive. Tsebel which is also related to health and well-being, is the second most important institution for this group. The additional benefit of *tsebel* is that it is free and provides the religious comfort. The third important institution for this group is the police station. They believe the police have the means and the responsibility to bring peace and order in the community. They consider this to be essential in a place where there are a lot of unemployed and hungry people.

For **housewives**, *idir*, followed by *tsebel* and *mahiber*, is the most important institution for the housewives' focus groups in this community. It is interesting to note that all three of them are informal social institutions. These women consider *idir* as the most important one because it takes care of all the necessary arrangements for a proper burial in case of death in the family. *Tsebel* is important because, in the absence of the means to go to a hospital, it provides free cure and remedy from illness. *Mahiber* is important because it provides the opportunity to meet with fellow residents of the community to chat about their mutual concerns. It also allows them the chance to feed the elderly and the weak in the community.

For the youth, the *kebele* is an important institution followed by the church and the hospital. The *kebele* is regarded as the most important of all because it facilitates free medical care for them. An additional benefit of the *kebele* is that it is the nearest local government body. The youth seem to be dependent on *kebele* good will to get their ID cards as well as certification for free medical services. The church and the hospitals are also useful for the group. The former because it gives them comfort at a time of distress and the latter because it cures them from diseases.

For the **mixed group**, which includes all age and sex groups, the *kebele* stands out as the most important institution. The three most important reasons are: (i) it resolves disputes among people, (ii) it provides the necessary official document including ID cards, and (iii) it runs the small houses that many live in. The second most important institution for this group is *idir*. The two reasons given are that *idir* helps people at a time of death in the family and that it provides that chance for people to meet. The police station is the third important institution since it maintains peace and order in the community.

Site 6 in Addis Ababa

Most people in this community struggle as weavers or as petty traders. There are quite a few who are unemployed and disabled. The residents of this community are bitter about their state of affairs. There is no single institution that has the potential to affect their lives in a positive way. When pressed, they identify the *kebele* as the most important institution for community residents. This is not because the *kebele* is involved in welfare or development activity, but because it facilitates free medical care or provides identification cards. Community residents go to *kebele* office reluctantly because they have to get legal resident status which they need. In fact, they see this as a government ploy to put them under some kind of control.

The other social institutions that they mentioned is *idir* and the church. They are very clear about the importance of *idir* but they are also aware about its limitation. Because *idir* is not involved in any type of development activity, residents hesitate to identify it as a very important institution. The church is also important but people go there mostly for personal reasons. There are no consultations on development issues.

In the absence of an important institution these days, residents fondly talk about their cooperatives that were disbanded when this government came to power. There was the Weavers Cooperative, Consumers Organization, the Youth Club and the Cart Drivers Organization. Through these organizations members used to get loans and/or raw

material at affordable prices. There was control of price and regulation of membership. Weavers, cart drivers and consumers were all happy and relatively well-off. The youth played at the playground provided to them by the kebele administration.

In 1991, with the advent of the new government and the free-market economy, all these ceased. It hurt the entire community. Particularly hit were the weavers. They could no more get the raw materials; if they did, they were too expensive. Price was deregulated and anybody who wanted to become a weaver became one. The result was the downfall of weaving as a livelihood which greatly contributed, with other development mentioned earlier, to the downfall of the community both in the economic and social aspects.

As a way out, community residents suggest the formation of workers' associations all over again. Workers could be organized in small groups to help each other. There are many skilled and hard working people in the community. With a little help, cattle fattening, pig farming or poultry are all viable possibilities. The problem is where to get this help. Community residents resent that there are no platform to talk about these and other development issues. There are no governmental or non-governmental parties that take the initiatives. Residents lament the lack of vision among community leaders. *Kebele* could have played a major role here but it hasn't. Many see it as a political entity only.

Fortunately, many residents argue, there is no large scale conflict or crime despite the wide spread poverty in the community. On the contrary, people have shown the tendency to help each other at a time of need. They, for instance, raise money to send a sick person to the hospital. If this was institutionalized some how, they would have considered it the most important institution in the community.

Institutional Profile in Addis Ababa: Sister Jember's NGO

In your view, what is the most important institution in the community?

The most important institution in this community is the one known as Sister Jember's NGO. I think many will agree with me.

Why do you say that?

There are many reasons for saying that: First, as a result of the effort of this institution, children who never would have had the chance to go to school have received schooling free of charge. Second, virtually all the houses of the disabled and weak people in this community have been renovated free of charge by the same institution. Third, all the poor and mostly weak people have received food and clothing from Sister's NGO. In addition to these, the NGO has contributed a lot by training people to help themselves and become self-sufficient.

What other institutions are you comparing it with?

There are no other NGOs here. Even if they existed here or in other areas, other NGOs do not compare with Sister's NGO in any way. There are local traditional institutions like *idir* in the community. But *idir* doesn't help us while we are alive. It is non-developmental.

How does this NGO influence people's life?

It is mostly geared to help the most vulnerable section of the community like those who are old and disabled. They feed and give them hope. They educate their children in technical know how so that they can compete in the job market. These children, in turn, help their parents. This brings a big change to the better in the well-being of families.

Is the approach effective?

There is no other NGO that I know of that has been more effective. Its activities have had positive effects over a broad cross section of the community residents.

How do you feel the impacts?

We see a lot of young people supporting themselves after having gone through the training. We see a lot of old and poor people living in much better housing conditions than before. We see the sanitation conditions of our neighborhoods improve because of the latrines built by Sister's the NGO. We also see people with no means of buying food eating because of the food program of the NGO. As far as we know there is no body in our community who has been negatively affected by the activities of the NGO.

How else does the NGO support people in times of difficulty?

The NGO helps sick people get medication. It covers their funeral expenses when they die, if they don't happen to be members of *idir*.

Who has influence over the NGO?

The founder of the NGO, Sister Jember, is the director of the NGO. However, if the residents have some complaints of grievances, there is a mechanism to voice them. For instance, last Easter there was no meat available for those beneficiaries of the feeding program. They voiced this concern and an ox was slaughtered for them. There is some say by the community residents in the NGO's activities.

How is the NGO linked to well-being?

This is a very poor community. There are a lot of young and old people who need help. The community itself is falling apart and dirty. The NGO interferes in many ways. Those important ones that are linked to well-being are the skills training workshops, the feeding programs and the construction of houses, roads and latrines. All these are strongly and positively linked to the residents well-being.

In the **urban site of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, for the **male focus groups**, *Idir* is the main institution for the elderly males followed by the Church and the Mosque which are both ranked second. The third most important institution for this group is the *kebele*. For craftsmen, the most important institution is the Church followed by the Mosque and the *kebele*. For the adult male group, the hospital is the most important institution. The second and third most important institutions are *idir* and neighbors.

Elderly women consider *idir* as the most important institution in their life. The Church and the Mosque are equally important and are considered the second most important ones. The market place is the third most important institution. For widowed women, the Church and the Mosque are equally the most important institutions. *Idir* and the hospital constitute the second and third important institutions.

For **housewives**, neighbors form the most important institution, followed by the Church and the Mosque which are both the second most important. *Idir* is the third most important institution. The **youth** also consider the Church and the Mosque equally most important institutions. The *kebele* followed by relatives is the second most important institution. For the mixed group, *idir* is the most important institution, followed by the Church and the Mosque. The third most important institution is relatives.

In the **rural sites of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, the **farmers** indicated that the mosque is the main institution followed by *idir*, the *kebele*, the Training Center and the clinic. They consider the market place as the most important institution, followed by 'Work' and the mosque. Illiterate old males and landless males consider the Kebele Administration as the most important institution. Wereda Administration is the second most important institution for the elderly males while *idir* is for landless males.

For poor **old females** *idir* is the most important institution followed by the mosque and sheik. For the mixed women group *idir* and the mosque are the two most important institutes. For married women the health clinic is the most important institution while *dua* and *jimet* (both Muslim Prayer houses) are the second and third important institutions.

The **Mosque** is an important institution for the Muslims as church is to Christians. Moslems go to their mosques for individual and mass prayers. Children get their basic education and learn the 'Koran' in the mosques. People celebrate their religious holidays in their mosques.

Work is visualized as a supportive institution by the discussion group, the reasoning behind it was:- (i) to overcome the demands of livelihood and to be free from difficulties, (ii) to do away with or prevent hunger, (iii) not to face lack of what to wear, (iv) not to beg others or to become dependent, work is an important institution to go to if it is available.

Peasant Associations are grass-root level public institutions legally organized by decree during the early days of the socialist government in rural Ethiopia. The urban population was organized in the form of Urban Dwellers Associations. People understand the peasant association as part and representative of government and state their relationship with it thus: (i) we go to our 'kebele' peasant association to report our problems, (ii) to get poverty certificate for free medication, though the certificate is not so effective, (iv) to express our grievance, and (v) when ever there is boundary disputes or conflict among

neighbors.

Collection of Cow dung and fire wood has also become an institution. Going down the ladder of the poverty line, this becomes the last resort of livelihood and as many people are in it now it is considered as an institution where people go to in times of difficulties.

Market is understood as an important institution where people go to buy or sell the necessities of life. It is also an important place to meet friends and relatives from far away places. It is also the means for the exchange of information. **Migration** is the last alternative where a person can save his life if he/she can make it. The aim is to get some thing to do, to eat and live. Related to this is the act of going to relatives and friends and become dependent on them.

The Wereda is the government institution next to 'kebele' peasant association where people go to appeal against 'kebele' decisions and when the 'Kebele administration passes their case over to the 'Wereda'.

'Kire' is an important, voluntary social institution where in people organize them selves in their nearest vicinities to help each other in times of death and mourning. There could be many '*kires'*/*idirs*' in a community depending on the size and settlement pattern of the community. Members contribute a given amount of money or something in kind periodically and use it in times of condolence to entertain guests and relatives of the deceased and for funeral expenses. As the beneficiaries put it: (i) it makes our burial possible when we die, (ii) members condole with each other, (iii) it makes possible for us to get grain for the '*Sedeke*'*, (iv) it helps us for get our grieves when our dear ones are deceased, and (v) elders in the '*idir*' reconcile people when they quarrel.

Sheiks are male religious leaders who administer the mosque and resolve conflict among people. '*Dubarti*', female celebrates in the religious order also play a reconciling role like the *shekhis*. An important social function of the two is to 'make dua', i.e. to pray, when people are sick or face some problems.

Jimet is also another social institution where people go to in times of difficulties and to see their wishes be fulfilled. The sick ones go there to be cured. Those who have no children vow to do something if they do have one and when it comes true they go to the '*Jimet*' with their promised gifts.

Tsebel is holy water treatment for the sick. The water is usually from natural springs and it entails no payment. Those who couldn't get cured by medical treatment and those who cannot afford to go to the medical centers frequent this institution. **Mitikolo Meda, Miti Girar** and **Sole Meda** are open meeting grounds or plains for social gatherings, prayers or discussions.

* '*Sedeke*' is a ceremony of always gibing after the death of some one according to inostem practice.

Jimet: A Mini- Institutional Profile from Gerado Peasant Association, Dessei Zuria Werda Rural Site

The interviewee who is picked to illustrate about the most important institution in the community is an elderly man, 67 years old, married and a father of 8 children.

"The most important institution in the community," he said, "is the 'Jimua' or, 'Jimet' which literally means 'Friday'. Friday is the most important day of the week for the Muslim's as Sunday is for the Christians. This institution is very important, because it plays an important role in the social relationship of the community. If one is hurt by any one in the community and if the two parties can not settle their problems, the affected person brings his case to the 'Jimet'. The accused shall be called upon and will be asked if he has committed the wrong doing. If he confesses the truth, verdict shall be given to rectify the wrong doing. If he denies the act, he will be asked to hold the stick of the spear pinned to the ground and swear that he didn't commit such an act.

"If the concerned individual has sworn falsely, it misfortunes - His animals may die, danger may come on his for times, his family or himself. He may fall sick and may even die. If he regrets and confesses the truth at later stages, he may save himself from damage.

"The 'Jimet' is some what like the church for Christians. Christians go to church when they feel down. In the 'Jimet' service, there is no religious boundary. Many Christians use it to. As it is in many Christian churches here also we have a holy spring which cures sick people when, they drink it or bath in it.

"The 'Jimet' in this kebele is the only such institution for the residents of Dessie and the surrounding area. Until some years ago it was led by a 'Sheik' a religious leader, who got very old and died. Nowadays there are his descendants and committee members, elected by the people, who are working with them. The members are elected by their ability fidelity and acceptability.

"'Jimet' is not merely a ground for complaints and accusations, but many people, Muslims and Christians alike, do come with their promised gifts for fulfilling their wishes. The sick regains health, the one who has no child gets one, the one who has been in a problem gets over it, etc. The money and variety of gifts thus collected will be handled by the committee and shall be feasted upon on the "Mewleed" or birth day of Mohammed every year.

"On the feast day three or more oxen are killed, 'chat' is chewed, prayers are said and blessings are made. The 'Jimet' is very effective as it takes no time for the for the prayers to be answered and for the curses to come true. The 'Jimet' there fore is an institution of social control. It is highly feared and respected by the community.

"People refrain from doing bad to others in fear of what shall come on them by the 'Jimet'. In this way it helps the community to live peacefully. On days of difficulty prayers are held with 'Chat' for its passing over and this process is known as 'dua' which is also practiced for individual cases. The community has the right to inspect the earnings of the 'Jimet' and chase out irresponsible committee members when they come across such people and in so doing the community ascertains the healthy continuation of the institution through it is rare to find any dishonest act for every one has the fear of being cursed.

Because of the 'Jimet' people do not commit crimes and every one respects the rights of others. It creates a healthy atmosphere for people to work and live. Therefore, it is very important for the well-being of the community.

6. GENDER RELATIONS

There are two major issues here: First, there seems to be a consensus that gender relations are very much influenced by the dominant culture in the area. Second, in the last few decades, and probably mostly as a result of poverty, gender relations are showing clear signs of change in favor of females.

The typical responsibilities of women at the household level include preparing food, taking care of the children, and fetching water and fire-wood. These are responsibilities that women as well as men agree belong to women, although there are differences by gender as to the reasons. Men believe that these tasks are delegated to women because they are 'physically weak' and the tasks do not require a lot of strength. Women, on the other hand believe that they do these, which they consider physically tasking, because they do not want to be labeled 'lazy' or 'unfit' to be a wife. They strongly argue, contrary to males, that some of their routine tasks such as carrying water on their back for hours require a lot of physical strength.

The roles of men and women at the community level is also an extension of the same logic that females, on the whole, are physically weaker than males. Hence, women are limited to preparing food and drink at social gatherings. This is particularly true within the *idir* concept where the role of women is limited to feeding the people who come to the funeral ceremony. So much so that within idir there is *baltina*, a sub-group created to see to it that women carry out this task properly and efficiently. Other than this, women's role in the community as administrators or decision makers is minimal.

There are signs, however, that females are claiming more and more of their legitimate rights. They are now elected as *idir* or association chairs. It is not quiet clear whether this is mostly a reflection of the change in the culture which, in itself, could have many reasons. Or, whether it is a poverty-induced deterioration of males' control over females. A lot of people are saying that males cannot afford any more to kick their wives out of the house as easily as before at a time of divorce.

The role of men in the household is kept to a minimum because it is supposed that men spend a lot of time and energy outside the household. However, they make decisions in the household on matters that have to do with finances such as buying furniture or matters that have to do with the discipline of the children. In addition, men are supposed to do the difficult tasks of cutting wood or protecting the household from any intruders. This is an extension of the argument, on the side of the males, that men are physically stronger than women. Males also assume all the major responsibilities of decision making on matters that affect the well-being of the community. They are almost always the chair of the peasant associations or *kebeles* and/or *idirs*. They are also the judges, members of the police, the security and all other prestigious positions. These are position of power, not shared with women, that give men a lot of influence on decision making at the community level.

Violence against women, both in rural and urban areas, has been going on for a long time without inhibition. Although there are some signs, particularly in urban areas, that women are gradually asserting their rights, violence against women is still widespread and unattended. In this study, violence against women is observed both at the household and community levels. The most common household violence against

women include beatings and forced acceptance of marriage. Women are beaten in the house for any reason that may include failure to prepare lunch or dinner for the husband. They are also beaten if the husband comes home drunk or if he simply feels like doing it.

Women are also forced to stay in a marriage that they do not like for many good reasons. This particular type of violence is enforced by putting economic and/or cultural pressure on women. In the former case, at a time of divorce, women get very little, if any, of the property they commonly produced with their husbands. In fact, women might end up with the additional burden of raising the children alone in the case of divorce. In the latter case, if a woman leaves her husband her parents (or other supposedly concerned relatives) take her back in the name of peace. This leaves women with no choice but to live in a marriage that they do not like. At the community level, the most common violence against women is the *telefa*. This refers to abducting women against their will or consent. Telefa is a serious crime which involves rape.

6.1 Men's and Women's Responsibilities within Household and Community

6.1.1 Rural Sites

In the rural sites of Ada Liben Wereda, men focus groups list multiple responsibilities for women in the **household**. Mostly, they have to do with the preparation of food and drink:

'Women, bake injera, make wet, prepare tella and purify the butter we use. In addition it is their responsibility to bear and raise our children, wash our clothes. There is nothing that women can help the men with; that is how it was all the time. We inherited this.'

Men **farmers** feel there is a natural division of labor. 'Breast-feeding, for instance, is natural and is left for women. We men are mostly farmers, as you can see. We stay out and get tired since we toil the whole day. Women support us in this way.' In the views of the **women groups**, in addition to those activities listed by men, women also fetch water, collect cow-dung, sow seeds and take care of the seedlings. They also make local drinks like *areke* and *tella*, either for consumption or for sell.

'Women are not educated and hence these are their obligations. Women also do not want to be labeled lazy. They make and sell local drinks because they need some money to buy household consumer items such as oil, salt or firewood. The men do not supply these.'

Men are considered the head of the household, responsible both for internal and external affairs. Men's responsibilities at the household level, in the eyes of men, include cutting trees, building houses and barns, herding cattle etc. 'These are responsibilities that we inherited from our ancestors. Women do not have the know how, besides the culture does not allow them to do these things. Men also have more strength; they can stand the hail and the rain. Besides, that is what they can do. Men have direct responsibilities in educating and disciplining the children. That is because they can be more authoritative than women.' Men also sell and/or buy cattle when necessary. Sometimes, men also wash clothes and watch the children when the mother is not at home. The women group acknowledge these responsibilities of men at the household level.

According to **men laborers**, women's responsibilities in the **community** includes all the support they give to their husbands on the farm (which includes ploughing, weeding, and harvesting) as well attending to social obligations such as funerals and *baltina*. This, according to them, is what they need to do 'if they want to improve their life, since what the men do is not enough.'

Male farmers see the role of women in society as supplementary:

'They, after all, become members of peasant associations when we die and they might as well learn how to farm. There are natural things they have to do too. Like breast feeding. But, they can't become community leaders since they don't get into elections because they are not educated. We don't think they want to be elected, anyway.'

The **female groups** also believe that women need to carry out their societal obligations by feeding people who return from a funeral ceremony, or by getting to *baltina* and helping prepare food in groups at a time of wedding, christening etc. 'They have to do this because it is our culture. They need to organize in *baltina* to help each other that way. Besides, if a woman doesn't do that, who will bury her when she dies? Who will feed the people returning from a funeral?'

In the **rural sites of Dessei Zuria Wereda**, the assignment of responsibilities by sex, it appears, has been given cultural and religions cover. There is the belief that women carry out only those activities that befit their nature. According to the male groups, it is natural that women carry out what is assigned to them as they can not do what men do.

'It is Allah who has differentiated women's and men's responsibilities. It will culturally be out of the way and shameful if a man does any of women's responsibilities.'

According to this 'normal' and 'natural' practice women:

- bake '*Injera*',
- prepare sauce,
- clear cow dung,
- fetch water from a river or a spring,
- prepare coffee,
- wash clothes,
- assist the male in his farm work,
- make embroideries,
- assign household expense,
- take care of the children,
- spin cotton thread,
- purchase household necessities from the market,
- collect fire wood,
- pound or grind grain,

Men's share of responsibilities like wise are also assigned by Allah. As the reasoning goes, "Allah has made these responsibilities to be undertaken by man because he has

the might '*kiwa*' to do them. What has been done by Allah can not be undone by man." According to the natural assignment there fore, men:-

- carry out farming activities extending from preparation of land to harvest collection,
- erect houses and fences,
- split wood for fire,
- provide money for the house expense,
- repair houses and fences,
- slaughter cattle when necessary. This function, however, does not cover every male for all males are not instituted to slaughter cattle except '*kalichas*'.

6.1.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, the overall consensus is that men are committed to be the source of the family income, whereas women manage household affairs. Due to cultural and other reasons men should get some kind of livelihood before they get married. But after marriage, specially these days, women are not confined at home preparing food for the family. When the means is getting scarce and insufficient they try to support the family in addition to what they do at home. The more the men become jobless, the heavier the burden on the women. They engage in *gulit* retailing trade and daily labor work. Generally speaking the conventional belief of men as the only source of family income and the confinement of women at home is changing rapidly.

At the household level, the responsibility discharged by women in all groups include preparation of food for the family, buying food items from markets, fetching water and washing. Additional responsibilities include raising children and keeping the house clean. In households where the men do not make enough money, women engage in making and selling *tella* and *areke*. The reasons why these responsibilities are discharged by women are many. The most frequent ones are traditional. Men are just not supposed to do household activities like cooking or caring for children. On the other hand, men's responsibilities at the household level is mainly winning the daily bread- either in the form of salaries or daily labor. Men are also supposed to 'run' and represent the household, mostly their own way. Men's additional responsibilities include protecting the household from external danger such as theft.

Women's responsibilities within the **community** is limited. They involve activities within the informal social institutions like *idir*, and religious meetings and holidays. In these social and religious get-together women are responsible for decorations and preparing food and drinks. They feed all the people who come to attend the occasions. These services are highly appreciated especially when a person experiences death in the family. During the time of war (like the current war with Eritrea), women play a major role in the preparation of dry food for the soldiers. Some women even travel to the war front to feed the soldiers. This has been the case in successive previous wars.

Men's responsibility within the community tend to be more predominant and 'important.' They literally run the community either as kebele leaders, idir leaders or religious leaders. Looking at the traditional leadership, the elderly (almost always males) have a lot of influence over the community. They are highly regarded and respected because they resolve potential contradiction between community groups, reconcile split families, and

advise young people against indecent behavior. Their authority in these regards is not challenged by women at all. Men also have other responsibilities at the community level. They represent the household at most community meetings, they dig graves, they lead the occasions at weddings, religious and social ceremonies. Men also take the overall responsibility of maintaining security in the community.

In the **urban sites of Addis Ababa**, all the focus groups, regardless of the sex of the members, have similar answers to the questions raised about gender relations. The reason why the relations between men and women and the community are the way they are has to do with tradition. The division of labor in the household as well as elsewhere is culturally defined. The culture obliges women to work in the home and men outside the home as breadwinners. While there are some women who are civil servants, daily laborers or petty traders, they are expected to additionally do house work, even the more well-to-do households have house maids to help the working wives. In general, men are not expected to work in the house because their 'muscular' physique dictates that they do something 'difficult and hard' outside the household. Women, on the other hand, are 'physically weak' and are not the bread winners.

Things, however, are changing these days. Women have more say now compared to the past. Women used to submit to men's wishes within a marriage; today, if they are not happy they leave and do it alone. In the past, marriages were arranged; today women marry the men they chose.

At the **household** level, women's responsibilities include preparing food and drinks, preparing coffee, washing and cleaning, child care, spinning, caring for visitors, caring for the sick in the house. In general, men feel that they are the head of the households, always. As such, their responsibilities in the household include washing clothes (sometimes), child care (sometimes), repairing the fence or house, breaking bread on ceremonial occasions, killing sheep or chicken on holidays, covering the household expenses, supporting family through paid employment. There are some women, however, who argue that men do not feel responsible for any household activity other than demanding something to eat.

At the **community** level, women's responsibilities in the community range from preparing food when a member of idir dies (baltina) to serving as kebele chairpersons if elected. In between, women also play roles in community wide events such as weddings, *senbete* and *tsiwa* - most of this involves feeding the participants. Men, on the other hand, involve in several community wide events that require 'strength' such as standing as security guards at night, installing tents for weddings or mourning, construction of sanitation activities and mediating peace between quarreled parties. Men also take the responsibility of carrying patients to hospitals and facilitating any development activities.

Interestingly, these responsibilities also supported by all men focus groups. They feel this is the natural division of labor, and it is also accepted culturally and even the women themselves accept this division of responsibility as natural. Basically, men are considered as the head of the household, responsible both for internal and external affairs. There is a consensus between all men and women over considering men as the first figure held with responsible especially with matters related to earning to income for his family. This is because men have more physical strength and carriage to do this thing.

In the **urban site of Dessei Zuria Wereda**, the following represent the list of **household** responsibilities indicated by the focus groups.

Men's Responsibilities

- Bringing income to the house
- Farming
- Constructing/building house
- Cutting wood
- Taking care and watering vegetables or crops around the garden
- Protect the house from thief
- During holidays the men slaughter sheep, goat, chicken etc.

Women's Responsibilities

- Cooking food
- Looking after the children
- Washing cloths
- Fetching water /building house
- Preparing local drinks (*tella* and *areke*)
- Spinning
- Coffee preparing
- Budgeting household expenses.

The main reason for this division of labor is the cultural classification of activities among men and women. Activities that need strength have to be accomplished by males and most activities in the household are accomplished by females. There is a prohibition in their culture that women never cut the head of hen and/or sheep while men do not cook. Besides, males have responsibility to play the main roles at the holidays since the are considered the head of the house.

At the **community level**, men's and women's responsibilities include the following:

Men's Responsibilities

- Engage in administration of community
- Engage in trade, beyond the *gulit* level
- Participate in daily labor/work
- Lead *idirs*.
- Participate and chair meetings

- Resolve conflicts among individuals
- Carry the dead and dig graves
- Put tents for wedding ceremonies or funeral services
- Protect the community on nightly shifts

Women's Responsibilities

- Participate in community meeting
- Participate in small scale trades at *gulits*
- Participate in different development activities
- Participate in *idir*
- Participate in wedding ceremonies, usually cooking food and preparing local beverages like *tella* and *areke*
- Participate in *mahiber* or *tsiwa*
- Prepare food items for funeral services

Most of these activities are culturally dictated. For instance, strictly for religious reasons, women among Muslim are not allowed to go to burial places. So they grief only at home. Although this is not true for Christian women, there are certain things that they cannot do. For instance, they cannot dig graves or carry the deceased.

6.2 Men's and Women's Decision-making within Household and Community

6.2.1 Rural Sites

In the **rural sites of Ada Liben Wereda**, at the **household** level, according to the **men focus groups**, women have definite decision making roles when it comes to preparation of food or buying food items. 'They exercise some rights. They decide on how much salt or pepper is needed for the household. This is because they know these things.' For the most part, women's role in decision making within a household is not significant. 'Women are suppressed in this sense. But they do make decisions on how to spend our money, or how much money to save. They definitely have a role to play when a female child gets married. Because, this is their business.'

For **women groups**, women decide on what to buy from the market place. 'This because it is her marriage; she is concerned about her house. She is worried about her family.' Overall, men decide most household decisions, and more. 'We control our wives as well as children. Especially the children, or else they could be spoilt. We also have the upper hand in deciding what cattle to buy or sell. This is because we have the experience and the knowledge. Women do not have the courage or knowledge to do these. Besides, the culture doesn't allow them.'

Women agree that they have a role to play in deciding weddings. But, the final say is in the hands of the men. Men have all the decision making rights when it comes to all major household activities.

At the **community** level, women's decision making depends on whether they are elected kebele officials or leaders of *idirs* or any other social institutions. Since they are not because 'they are not educated and have had no experience' their participation in community-level decision making is insignificant.

Men, however, state that they have the upper hand. 'We are listened to by society; we control our lives and children. It is men who participate in elections - for peasant administration or for local institutions. The one area where women have the upper hand in society is when their skills (*Baltina*) are needed - this is true always when they are needed to cook at weddings or at mourning.

Men are responsible for the household income. The family mostly depends on this income and hence men decide every thing. There are exceptions; those women who have no husband can decide fully on themselves regarding their children and property that they have.

Many believe, however, with the introduction and influence of education and the mass-media, women's role in the decision making process in the community has increased largely. They say, "the extent of women's role in the house hold and in the community varies from house to house, depending on the educational and wealth status of each house hold. The more educated and wealthy the family, the more liberalized are the women and participate largely in the affairs of the community."

In the **rural sites of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, from the nature of division of responsibilities and functions by sex at the **household** level, one can apparently see that the woman's share is limited to indoor activities. She is responsible for the preparation of food, and takes care of the family and in this sphere no one is to dictate her as it is her special ability. It is a shame for the man to go into the woman's kitchen. She decides by herself what type of food to cook and what things to buy from the market.

The woman also has the right to decide as to lend kitchen utensils to neighbors who need them or not. She also has the decision power on the use of the things of her personal use, but not of course to sell them. The man is the overall leader of the house hold. His working share is out door and should not interfere in petty household affairs. Trivial affairs are left to the women. He decides on things nominally. taken as man's belongings and national issues. He should always be ready to go to the war front of called upon or his own free will.

Many major decisions are however made through negotiation and understanding. Then man alone, for example, can not sell his ox without consulting his wife. If done so without common understanding it is unacceptable act by the community.

At the **community** level men have the right to be leaders of their 'idir' if elected. Women who are widowed or unmarried and heads of families can be members of an 'idir' and can be elected; but people refrain from electing them due to traditional influences. Men can learn the Koran and become '*kalicha*' and teach the Koran is their turn which is also possible for the women. Men can be elected and become public leaders in the 'kebele' peasant associations. This chance is open for women too. But the women do not show up as candidates and people tend not to elect them as the religions and traditional out

look and value for women is very influential still.

Men had the authority to decide in all matters traditionally and the concept of the equality of women to men and their participation in decision making is a new idea. In mosques men and women do not pray together.

6.2.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, decision making at the **household** level depends on the weight of the issue at hand. The culture dictates that the most important ones, like divorce and the children, mostly end up in favor of the men. There is a proverb which fits this particular issue. In Amharic there is a proverb, when literally translated, means 'no matter how much women know, it is the men who have the last say'. Women, obviously are not happy with this, but they accept it because they can't help it.

Men's role in the decision making is clearly dominant. Most women groups believe that this is a man's world and that they are at their disposal. They respect and carry out their orders to conform to culture, and not because they like it. They do not challenge these customs. Or else, they risk being outcasts. But they see hope in the future. Things are slowly but surely changing as result of education and hardships.

At the **community** level, one agreement among the female focus groups is that women decide on matters that have to do with food at social and religious gatherings. Women also have a lot of influence over how to decorate halls at weddings and other similar celebrations. In the last something missing here twelve women have taken the responsibility of preparing dry food for the Ethiopian soldiers fighting against Eritrea. Other than these, it doesn't seem that women have a significant role in decision making on many community issues. There are rare instances where women are elected as kebele leaders. Even then the elected women do not necessarily reflect a changing role in women decision making in the community.

Men, on the other hand, seem to have a monopoly of decision making in major community-wide issues. This comes in many ways. First, men dominate the prestigious elderly group that is entitled to bring people together at a time of conflict. Second, men are almost always elected as kebele administrators, judges, police and other prestigious positions. Third, the culture confirms the attitude that men make the decisions when it comes to important community issues.

In the **urban sites of Addis Ababa**, it is the view of most focus group members that, these days, men or women do not make unilateral decisions both at the household or at the community level. In important matters, they consult each other and come to a consensus agreement. In less important matters, women decide on all household matters such buying food stuff and furniture. Budgeting the household expenses is also women's decision. Men have very little say in deciding household matters.

Although there is some progress in the last few years, women's decision making at the community level is limited to *baltina* activities.

In the **urban site of Dessie Zuria Wereda**, women's decision making in the **household**

is related to the responsibilities that they have at the household level. For the most part, they can make decisions on what to cook and what to buy for the household within the budget given to them by their husbands. Personal items are decided by the women themselves.

Men on the other hand make the 'important' decisions. For instance, they decide who will marry who and when. The men also decide as to the amount of money that needs to be spent in the household on a monthly basis. Again, for cultural reasons, males decide on issues of relationship between the household and the community. This, however, is changing. More and more women are challenging the authority of men.

At the **community** level, women actively participate in community idirs, but do not assume leadership positions. This is also true for kebele administration. Men, on the other hand, are almost always members and leaders of *idir*, *ikub*, *kebele* and any other community groups. This situation being challenged by women now. Women are demanding that they equally take the decision making responsibilities in every day life including challenging poverty.

6.3 Violence Against Women within the Household and Community

There were some issues raised as to what constitutes violence within the household. A lot of the times men (and women in some cases) didn't consider certain acts as violence. If a woman does not do what she ought to do in the house or if she fails to fulfill the will of the husband, she is liable to be kicked if the misunderstanding arising there of is not cut short. Men are looked at as heads of families and if they can not get along with their wives, the wives are chased out of their houses. Men are physically stronger than women and rely on force to govern the house and dominate the women.

It is also reported that sometimes men love other women when the wives are at home and when the love period is over they return to their wives and the wives have to accept as they have no right to complain or bargain. If such adultery was committed by the women, they could face even death by their husbands. As some observe, however, violence against women on the household level has decreased and understanding between the couples have ensued, partly as a result of worsening living conditions.

6.3.1 Rural Sites

In the **rural sites of both Ada Liben and Dessei Zuria Weredas**, there is a list of violence against women at the household level which include the following as described by the participants:

Beatings: 'Because she might fail to prepare lunch or not prepare lunch in a good way and doesn't meet what is expected of her.' 'Women are also beaten because they are seen like 'a difficult mule; such a mule needs to be beaten all the time.'

Being looked down upon: 'Women are constantly looked down upon, putting them in continuous strain and tension.'

Deprived life: 'Women do not get what they want at home and there is always this possibility to run away. The men know this. So they constantly put them under surveillance and pressure which puts a lot of stress on women.'

Forced life: 'Women are put in a situation where they cannot leave a life that they don't like. This is because the men are not willing to share property at a time of separation; even if it is not significant.'

'Women cannot abandon the home because if they do their parents bring them back to the men. So they live quietly but not necessarily willingly.'

'Women are just thrown out of the house without getting anything. Hence, they dare not quarrel with their husbands.'

At the **community** level, violence against women include:

Telefa: This refers to abducting a woman if she shows unwillingness (on her or parents' part) to a proposed marriage. Telefa involves beatings and rape. Women do not receive protection from the PA; some even consider it as a legitimate cultural thing. Telefa is a serious crime against women. After a woman is abducted and raped, the perpetrator simply abandons her. The woman will not be able to marry after that; her life is destroyed. Even if someone wants to marry at a later date, the man who abducted her will stop the marriage by saying she belongs to him.

Women do not get equal justice; they are always fearful and do not demand their rights or forcefully explain their problems; men dominate them because they have more power. Most women in the focus groups do not believe that they have more power today than a decade ago. Their responsibilities are still limited to specific household activities like cooking, washing and bearing children. The real decision making is in the hands of men. This is how they explain their situation:

'We work more than men. We help men on the farm - nobody acknowledges that. We cook and wash, fetch water, go to the market and take care of the children. In spite of these, we still do not get what we want - not at home, not in the community. The only thing that we organize for is to participate in baltina where we prepare food and drinks for various reasons. This has been going on for years, and it goes on now.'

6.3.2 Urban Sites

In the **urban site of Ada Liben Wereda**, at the **household** level, both men and women groups specify similar things. There is a difference, however, in terms of the degree of acceptance of the action as violence between males and females. Beating women is a common violent act within a household. Whenever a disagreement arises between husband and wife that cannot be settled peacefully, the husband beats the wife to settle the matter. This is particularly true with husbands who habitually get drunk.

Another violent act against women is to kick them out of the house with little or no consideration about their fate. Unlike beating, this is not seen by men as a violent act. Women, on the other hand, see it as a serious violent act since this things usually happen at night when they are at physically risk leaving their home.

Another violence against women comes in the form of insults. Men consider this as a right to insult and harass the wives even in front of other people. It is considered as an offense for a woman to even try to explain herself under such circumstances.

At **community** level the most common violence against women is *telefa* (abduction). Robbery and rape are also frequent crimes against women. Generally speaking, from the gender relation point of view, the change in attitude seems promising. Women hope a better life and freedom from violence in the future. Economic condition and education have decisive roles.

In the **sites of Addis Ababa**, members of the male focus groups hesitate to say theta there is direct and strong violence against women within the **household**. Things have changed, they say. Some women groups, however, point out some violent behaviors of men at home. They include (i) men refuse to give the wives adequate money for household expenses, (ii) they spend the night outside and make their wives angry, (iii) they take their wives money and spend it on *tej*. Even these women admit that things are improving a bit these days.

Another group of women say that there is indeed violence against women within the household. However, most of it is related to the consequences of poverty. There is also violence against women from males who are habitually abusive. Such men are also addicted to drugs and alcohol. Again, the men focus groups do not see significant violence against women at the **community** level these days. they admit there was violence before, but not now. They believe women are treated just like men.

The women group differ. They talk about rape as a violent action against women but not talked about for various reasons. They also point out that women do not get paid anywhere close to what men are paid for the same job. Women in society are not regarded as high as men. The female focus groups also state that female students are exposed to violence and intimidation at schools by some male students. They are beaten and forced to give money to male students.

In the urban site of Dessei Zuria Wereda, violence against women in the **household** includes:

- Women being beaten by their husband
- Being left behind (with no husband) but with the children
- Husbands marry other women without the wives' consent
- Husbands insult and abuse wives
- Husbands come home drunk
- Women do not have enough money to manage the household

According to some members of the focus group, the level of violence between husband

and wife is decreasing. The reason is poverty. Husbands and wives have to get along in order to come out of poverty which is affecting them equally. Some others disagree. They argue that all the above mentioned violence happen because men are still the bread winners and they feel they can do whatever they like.

Community level violence against women include mostly rape and *telefa*. These happen on the way to fetch water, market or to school. These crimes, particularly *telefa*, are not always seen as crimes, particularly by elderly men and women. They argue men have been practicing *telefa* for centuries. They see it as a legitimate way of finding wives. Young men and women disagree. They argue that *telefa* is a criminal action which is fading away anyway because of changes in community awareness and attitude.

7. SUMMARY AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary

Terminologies:

1. *Males and females in both rural and urban areas use similar terminologies to describe their state of well-being.*
2. *All terminologies depict bad quality of life: mostly helplessness, desperation and dependence.*
3. *The three most commonly used terminologies describe the state of (i) having nothing to spare, (ii) living a day to day life, and (iii) being above the dead and below the living.*

Well-being:

1. *The categories of well-being show that there are many more households in the lowest categories than in the middle or upper categories.*
2. *The criteria used for categorizing households as well-to-do or poor depends on whether there is enough land and cattle (in rural communities) or whether there is good business or permanent employment (in urban areas)*
3. *The changes in the proportion of households from one category to another show that, in the last ten years (i) a lot of households have moved from the middle to the lowest category and (ii) a new category of the weak and disabled has been added.*

Security, Mobility, Exclusion and Coping Strategies:

1. *In rural areas security has to do with land and cattle whereas in urban areas it has to do with permanent employment with pension.*
2. *Social and economic mobility in both rural and urban areas are continuously threatened by events such as droughts or by government policies, particularly the free-market policy and its implications .*
3. *There is no exclusion, both in rural and urban areas, for economic, ethnic, religious or cultural reasons. In fact, many believe that 'poverty' has become a uniting factor along with the local social institution such as idir.*
4. *To cope with their problems women in rural areas sell fire wood and cow-dung; in urban areas they engage in construction work. Men in both areas work as laborers. These are not seen as viable strategies at all.*

Problems and Priorities:

1. *The problems and priorities do not show major differences by gender, but they do by place of residence.*
2. *In rural areas the most serious problems are (i) access to land, (ii) drought, and (iii) the quota system.*
3. *In urban areas the most serious problems are (i) unemployment, (i) rapid population growth, and (ii) the absence of health and sanitation services.*
4. *In both rural and urban areas participants believe that most of these problems were caused by government policies which include demobilization of soldiers, lay-off, and removal of subsidies.*
5. *The effect of these problems have been wide spread malnutrition, mortality and morbidity, migration, crime and prostitution.*
6. *Women on the whole, show better coping strategies than men.*

Institutions:

1. *The most important institutions, both in rural and urban areas as well as for males and females, are informal local institutions.*
2. *Idir, followed by the church/mosque and semi-religious institutions (such as tsebel and zawiya) is the most important social institution for all people.*
3. *Government institutions are seen as important only in so far as they provide official document (such as ID cards) and are not directly related to well-being.*
4. *For the most part males control and influence these institutions although females are gaining some ground lately.*

Gender Relations:

1. *Both in rural and urban areas, gender relations are defined mostly by the influences of culture and religion.*
2. *Culture dictates that women engage only in household activities (cooking and washing) while men take care of the rest (ploughing and trading).*
3. *At the community level, men tend to hold all the key positions that give them the edge in controlling and influencing events.*
4. *In the past few years, particularly in urban areas, gender relations are showing clear signs of change in favor of women.*
5. *It seems that poverty is one of the factors that brought about these changes.*

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are meant to stimulate debate and should not be taken as a blue-print for policy change.

1. *Public policy should play an important role in poverty reduction. The government cannot simply abandon the poor. It is clear from this report that the participants of the study do not consider the present government to be a friend of the poor.*
2. *Public policy should be "poverty sensitive". Policy makers should carefully weigh the impact of economic and social legislation on the poor and their livelihoods.*
3. *The needs of the rural poor are different from those of the urban poor. Within these two broad groups are sub-groups based on occupation, gender and age. The poor are thus not an undifferentiated mass but rather consist of a diverse group of distinct interests and priorities. For the rural poor, the priorities are land, agricultural inputs, extension programs, and the problems of food security caused, as they see it, by drought and rainfall variability. For the urban poor, they are unemployment, and municipal services.*
4. *As is clear from the interviews and focus group discussions in this report, what the poor need is not charity but programs to help them help themselves.*
5. *There is an urgent need to reconsider some of the public policies that the poor identified as having had a damaging impact on their livelihoods. These include land tenure policy, the policy of economic liberalization, and policies having to do with farm subsidies and economic support to farmers.*
6. *The economy should be stimulated to create large-scale employment opportunities which will offer jobs to the poor. This is the task of government, the private sector and international donor agencies.*
7. *Equally important is the formulation and implementation of sound food security programs, especially for the drought prone areas of the country. The problem of food security is the problem of poverty.*
8. *Some of the poor can easily support themselves if they are given the opportunity. Such opportunity includes providing them credit and financial assistance, improving the tax burden of small and micro-enterprises, etc. Micro-finance programs geared to the needs of the poor should be given serious consideration.*
9. *The poor are in great need of basic social services as education, health and water and sanitation. There should be a concerted effort to provide such services to the poor.*
10. *The poor in urban areas believe that they have been poorly served by the municipal authorities. They need better housing, lighting, and water and sanitation services. The lack of municipal services has exposed poor*

neighborhoods to serious health hazards.

11. *The most significant institutions in the lives of the poor are informal self-managed associations and religious institutions. This is a clear indication of the alienation of the poor from the state and their lack of confidence in public officials.*
12. *While traditional gender relations and gender division of labor have remained unchanged in all the communities selected for this study, there are indications that poverty has given women a greater say in household affairs. Support programs to the poor should therefore build on this positive outcome.*

Annex 1: Map of Ethiopia Indicating the Study Sites

Annex 2: Community Characteristics

As indicated earlier, the consultations with the poor were conducted in three different areas of the country: Ada Liben Wereda in Eastern Ethiopia, Dessie Zuria Wereda in Northern Ethiopia, and in Addis Ababa which is centrally located (Please see Country Map, Annex --) On the basis of the discussion with the various focus groups (listed below) as well as the data collected using the 'Site Community Characteristics' format, and field observations brief profiles of each site are given below; the detailed community characteristics of each site are provided in Annex--

Ada Liben Werda

Ada Liben Werda is one of the weredas in East Shewa Zone of Oromia Region.

Rural Sites

Site 1: Kajima Peasant Association (PA)

Site 1 is Kajima Peasant Association, located about 55 km east of Addis Ababa. It is located in Region 4 (also known as Oromia Region). The nearest major town to this site is Debre Zeit, with a population of 73,372 in 1994 - the last national census.

There is no infrastructure to talk about in the site. There are no hospitals or clinics in the vicinity. The residents of the peasant association have to walk all the way to Debre Zeit Town (about 7 km away) to get any type of medical services or medications. There are no telephone, electricity or postal services. Agricultural extension services (providing seedlings) have just began in the area. The benefits, according to the residents, are yet to be seen. There are no non-governmental institutions operating in the area at all.

According to its Chair, Kajima Peasant Association had a total of 282 peasant households, and a total of 1,640 people, according to the 1994 census. The majority of the male population (up to 60%) are engaged in subsistent farming; about 30 percent have no land and, hence, no livelihood; the remaining 10 percent live as daily laborers. The women, for the most part are housewives. There are few (about 5%) who sell local drinks like *tella* and *areke* for a living; there are also those (about 10%) who work as daily laborers. The population of the peasant association has changed quite a bit in the last ten years or so, according to the residents.

The economy, the way the residents put it, has 'fallen' to its lowest level ever. In the Winter, heavy rain (including hail), followed by heavy flooding, destroys their crops and sweeps the top soil away. In the Summer, there is a tremendous shortage of water. Everything dries up. That is when there is food shortage and the men look for work in nearby towns; the females fetch and sell fire-wood and/or cow-dung for a living. The price of consumption items such as oil and coffee has also gone up in the last ten years.

The majority of the residents of Kajima are from the Oromo⁸ ethnic group, and speak the Oromifa language (although Amharic is widely spoken too). About a quarter of the men and 15% of the women are literate, according to the Chair of the association. They are

⁸The Oromo are the largest ethnic group in the area. Amharic is the official language of the country

also mostly Coptic Christians. There doesn't seem to be any tensions or conflicts among the residents on the basis of either religion or ethnicity. There is no caste system. People seem to live with peace with each other. As one resident put it: 'We are just too poor to pick a quarrel with each other. We are the poorest of all in this area. What do we quarrel about?'

There are administrators 'elected' by the members of the peasant association. Women, for the most part do not participate - since they are not members of the association. The leadership comes from the ruling party in the country, the EPRDF. The residents indicate that they trust their leaders and the police only to some extent. They seem to have a greater degree of trust for the court (justice) system, however.

Historically, the Kajima Peasant Association is a settlement created in the late 1970's by the previous socialist government, the *Derg*. The settlement program of the Derg which was undertaken mostly in the 1980s relocated a large number of poor peasants from all over the country (but mostly from the northern highlands of Ethiopia) in the southern and western parts of Ethiopia where land was supposedly to be found in abundance.

Most of the settlements proved to be a dismal failure. In the late 1980's a lot of them were abandoned, and the settlers either migrated to urban areas or to their areas of origin. A few settlement communities remained to this date. Kajima is one of them. Although the issue of settlement kept on coming up once in a while during discussions, it didn't stand as a significant factor of their present state of affairs.

Site 2: Kurkura Dembi Peasant Association (PA)

Kurkura Dembi is one of the 138 peasant associations in Ada Liben Wereda. It is about 55 km east of Addis Ababa, the capital of the country, and about 10 km from the nearest main town of Debre Zeit. The latter has a population of 73,372 in 1994. Kurkura Dembi itself has a total of 2,912 people living in 528 households.

Kurkura Dembi is a PA formed 13 years ago when the socialist settlement program was undertaken throughout the country. Most of the people are Oromos and Orthodox Christian. Mixed agriculture (crop and livestock production) is the main stay of the people. The majority of the residents of the community are farmers and produce once a year based on *meher* rain. The main crops produced are mainly *teff*, beans, pea, wheat and barely. Some members of the community work as daily laborers and fewer people are involved in selling local drinks, mostly *tella* and *areke*.

Despite the location of the road which is only 8 km from the main road, there are no telephone, postal, electric or water services in the community. There are no schools or any health services available to the farmers, unless they walk to the Debre Zeit.

Kurkura Dembi is a predominantly agricultural community. The chair of the association estimates that there are 700 households and 4200 people living in the community. The percentage of children age 6-12 attending primary school is about 25; the percentage of children age 12-18 attending secondary school is about 20. The chair also estimates that 20% of the males and 10% of the females residing in the community can read and write.

The community is about 8 Kms from the main road. Residents, have to travel about 10 Kms to access telephone postal services and health services. There is, however, a Ministry of Agriculture Development Agent (DA) near by the community.

The majority of the male residents of the community are farmers who produce mostly teff, wheat and corn. There are some who work as daily laborers in nearby towns and those who are engaged in grain marketing. The majority of the female residents are house wives although there are some females who sell local drinks and sell fire wood for a living.

The most common social groups are religious ones since Christianity dominates in the community. There are no ethnic, tribal or caste based social groups in the community. There is no conflict in the community, and the residents get along with each other very well.

In the last ten years the population of the community has increased while the overall economic situation has decreased. There hasn't been any severe natural disasters, however. The community is very poor compared to the communities in the area.

Also in the last ten years there has been occasional price increases that affected the buying power and needs of the community residents. There is one NGO operating in the general area, but the community residents have not benefited from its activity which is supposed to provide water.

There is a community government whose leader is elected by the residents. The leaders have always come from the same political group, the ruling party.

Community residents have high confidence in courts/judges well as village community leaders. There is however, no confidence in local government/municipal officials. Residents have some confidence in the police

There is very little opportunity if at all, for community residents to undertake community development activity together. However there is no tension among different groups that keeps them to get together for various religious and traditional festivals. There has never been incidents of violence or use of force between different social groups.

Site 3: Dibdibe Wajtu Peasant Association (PA)

Dibdibe Wayito Peasant Association is one of the Peasant Associations of Ada Liben Wereda, East Shewa zone of Oromia Region. The chair of the peasant Association estimates that there are about 800 peasant households (and a total of 5000 people) living in this farm community.

Only about 5% of the children age 6-12 attend primary schools; at this age most children tend to herd cattle rather than go to school. About 10% of the children age 12-18 attend primary school. Due to the National Literacy Program initiated by the Derg regime, approximately 75% of the males and 50% of the females in the community can read and write.

The nearest permanent road from the community is about 8 Kms away near a small

town called Dukem. Community residents walk to this town (for about 2 hours) to get access to telephones, post offices or clinics. Although there is a power line this passes nearby, only about 5% of the community residents have electricity service. There is no agricultural extension office at the site, but there is at Dukem.

The main sources of livelihood for the males in this community are agriculture (95%) and petty trade (5%). Females, for the most part, are housewives although some are engaged in selling local drinks such as tell a to supplement the family's income.

Virtually all community residents are Coptic Christians. Hence, the main social groups are religious in nature. These include *mahiber* and *tsiwa*. There are no social groups based on ethnicity, race or caste.

The Chair of the Peasant Association describes that there are much more people today compared to 10 years ago. Over the last ten years the local economy has gotten worse, and will continue to decline for the foreseeable future. Occasional natural disasters such as drought and flood have contributed to this decline in the local economy. There has also been occasional food crisis which has driven the price of food above the purchasing power of the community residents.

There is a community government which is elected by the community government which is elected by the community residents. The leaders, however, almost always belong to the ruling party. Hence, through these elected leaders, the federal government has direct control of the community activities.

There are no NGOs operating in this community.

The community residents have high confidence in courts/judges as well as the village/community officials. There is, however, no confidence in the local/municipal officials whereas there is little confidence in the police.

The community residents get along quite well. They find it very easy to get to gather informally, particularly during religious holidays and festivals. There is virtually no conflict between different individuals or groups residing in the community. Residents feel a strong sense of belonging in their community.

Urban Sites

Site 4: Kebele 11, Debre Zeit Town

Kebele 11, founded in 1978, is one of the 15 kebeles located in Debre Zeit, a town with a population of 72,000 about 45 km east of Addis Ababa. The town is surrounded by seven crater lakes, and fertile farm land suitable for *teff*. Lakes *Hora* and *Bishoftu* are literally within the city limits, attracting a lot of tourists mostly from the Addis Ababa area.

The kebele itself has a 1994 population of 4,623 living in 1,073 households. The youth age group (below 16) amounts to almost half of the population. There is a large group of unemployed in the kebele. A majority of those males who work are engaged in semi-professional jobs like weaving, carpentry, and brick laying. Most do not have permanent jobs, and a few are civil servants. Most women are housewives, but many are engaged in petty trade at *gulits*, or in selling local drinks like *tella* and *areke*.

There is a health center, an elementary school, and a market place within the kebele. The quality of the health center and school is highly questionable according to the residents. There is no adequate garbage collection or sanitary services in the kebele. As a result many are exposed to hygiene related diseases such as typhoid, diarrhea and dehydration.

The Oromos dominate the ethnic distribution of the community, but there is also a large ethnically mixed group. Both Amharic and Oromifa are spoken widely. Coptic Christians are the majority with a considerable Muslim population.

The Kebele is located at the outskirts and rundown area of the town. It is very crowded with dirt streets and open garbage and waste disposal. The housing stock is depleted and there are a lot of young and old people roaming the streets with no obvious thing to do. About 1,200 households and 5500 people live in this kebele.

According to the Chair of the kebele, only about a quarter of the boys and 20 percent of the girls in the age group of 6 to 12 attend primary school. About three fourth of the male and about 35 percent of the female residents of the kebele can read and write. Those who are literate give the credit to the National Literacy Campaign conducted during the *Derg* regime.

There are telephone services in the kebele only for those few who can afford them. There are public telephones but are managed by private shop keepers and are too expensive for the ordinary citizens to use them frequently. For emergency purposes, telephones are easily available.

There is a postal office in the kebele. Electricity is also widely available. However, only a handful of the households can afford to have their private electrical outlets. Most share their outlets with neighbors and share the bills. Many complain that the electric bills have skyrocketed in the last few months for reasons that are not clear to them.

Despite the hazardous sanitary conditions, there are no health services within the community. People either walk or take the carts to go to the nearest clinic on the other side of the town. A lot of people are concerned about the health of their children. Many are

victims of typhoid and diarrhea.

Other than the very few who are relatively well off traders, the three main sources of livelihood for men, which accounts for about half of the male adults in this kebele, are daily labor, petty trade and driving carts. These workers make just enough to stay alive, and have nothing to save for education or medical care of their children. Another 40 percent are unemployed. Weaving used to be a major source of livelihood about ten years ago. Today, their cooperatives have dissolved and only about 5 percent make a living out of it. Many talk about the good old days before the free-market economy destroyed their cooperatives and their livelihoods.

A vast majority of females in this kebele, about 65 percent, sell *tella* to support their families. There doesn't seem to be a 'housewife' category any more since almost all housewives are engaged in some kind of trade as well, and the dividing line is becoming less and less apparent. There are also those who sell small food items at *gullits*. These women make such a small income that they barely feed their family. Anything else, like buying shoes or paying for uniforms, is out of the question. Many children have stopped going to school because of these problems.

There are no social institutions that contribute to the well-being of the kebele residents. There are the usual religious associations, like *mahiber*, both for males and females, that have more of a religious nature than development orientation. People faithfully pay their dues and shares to these in spite of the fact that they are hard pressed for cash. There are no associations or groups based on ethnicity, religion or race. Some people may identify with each other on the basis of political orientation. But these are limited and have no bearing on the larger population of the community.

It is widely believed in this area that the local economy has greatly deteriorated in the last ten years, particularly since the advent of the new government in 1991. The reasons, given by the residents of the community, are numerous. Some of them include: demobilization of soldiers which suddenly created a class of large unemployed youth; in-migration from the surrounding rural and semi-urban areas as a result of the ethnic politics initiated by the current government; and the dissolution of the cooperatives which destroyed the livelihoods of many crafts people, especially weavers. All these, according to many residents, are blind government policies. Many do not understand why a government would dissolve cooperatives that work, and they consider it the single most damaging crisis in the community.

Like in many other kebeles, the leadership is elected by the residents. Many believe, however, that these elections are manipulated by the political party in power at the national level. The result, they say, is that you always end up with a member of the ruling party in the leadership. This, although better than what they had during the last regime, has caused a lot of resentment and indifference among the residents.

There is very little confidence in either the local administration or court system. The widely held view is that they do very little in the interest of the residents. They are seen more as the appointees of government than the delegates of the community. There is some confidence among the residents in community leaders and the police. The former because they resolve problems between groups in community and latter because they keep peace and order.

The number of times that groups within the community used to meet for social gatherings is dwindling rapidly. It is becoming more and more difficult for community leaders to organize social meetings because many residents are losing their sense of belonging in the community. Besides, there are no places where they can meet any more. The former cooperatives used to provide the platform to meet and discuss communal issues. Now that these places are closed, people cannot meet anymore. Even the playgrounds are not accessible for young children to play.

The chair argues that this kebele is the poorest of all the 15 kebeles in the town. Despite, or because of, the economic hardship, there is very little violence in the community. Conflicts on the basis of ethnicity or well-being category is virtually unknown. In fact, there are those who argue that the poverty prevailing in the kebele has the effect of uniting the people. Neighbors help each other, and people form more bondship at the time of need.

Addis Ababa Sites

Addis is the capital of Ethiopia.

Site 5: Kebele 30 (also known as Pensioners' Area), Wereda 3, Zone 1

Kebele 30, also known as *Tureteгна Sefer*, is one of the 14 Kebeles in Wereda 3. This area is in the middle of the most commercialized portion of the city of Addis Ababa which is also the most densely populated. The 1994 national census shows that there were 1,913 households and 9,428 people living in this kebele. Almost half of them are age 15 and below.

According to the residents of the area, the Italians, during their brief occupation of the country between 1938 and 1943, started the neighborhood for old and disabled people. Hence, its name *Tureta Sefer* (translated into English: Pensioners' Area). The Italians also built a store in the neighborhood to keep food for these people. This building has now become a ground mill.

At the time of Emperor Haile Selassie, a major bus terminal was built in the kebele, further exacerbating the density and unemployment problems in the area. Although the terminal was moved to another place a long time ago, the area remains to be one of the most crowded and blighted neighborhoods in the city.

There are telephone, electric and water services in the community. However, most households share these services in common. There is no hospital or a clinic in the kebele. The residents of four kebeles, including this one, share one clinic. There are severe problems of latrines, kitchens and waste disposal. Housing and crowded living are also a major problems in the kebele.

The main NGO in the area, that attempts to address some of this issues, is Inter-wholistic Approach for Urban Development Project (IWAUDP). It is also known as Sister Jember's NGO. This NGO has been involved in constructing roads, latrines, housing units and recreational centers for the youth. It is said that the NGO is not as active as it used to be.

The main source of livelihood for men in this kebele is craftsmanship - plumbers, brick layers, pipe workers etc. The majority of the adult men in the kebele are daily laborers of petty traders. There are large groups of unemployed and beggars. Women also work as daily laborers and petty traders (*Gulit*) although a majority call themselves housewives and totally dependent on their husbands. There is a consensus that the community is not only hard hit with poverty but also that it has shown a major decline in well-being in the last ten years. One main reason, according to the residents, is the demobilization of the *Derg* soldiers.

A majority of the residents of this kebele are Coptic Christians, although there is a large Muslim population too. The ethnic background of the residents is so mixed that it could be called the ethnic melting pot of the entire country. Hence, there is no exclusion here on the basis of ethnicity. Other than minor theft cases, there seems to be very little violence and conflict in the kebele

Kebele 30 in Wereda 3 of Zone 1 in Addis Ababa is a densely populated area in the middle of the commercial section of the city. In 1994 the total residents were 9,428 almost half of them age 15 and below. Only a quarter of the children between age 6 and 12 are enrolled in primary schools; only 15 percent of the children between 12 and 18 are attending secondary schools. About half of the adult males and 75% of the adult females in the kebele cannot read or write.

In spite of the fact that the community is located in the middle of the commercial sector of the city, there are no telephone or postal services easily accessible to the majority of the residents. There is, however, one clinic located within the kebele. Electricity, although mostly shared as opposed to private, is available for a large majority of the households.

A majority of the male adult population are engaged as daily laborers; there is also about a quarter of them who beg for a living. Most working females in the community are engaged in petty trade (*gulit*) and in selling *tella* and *areke*. There are also those who work as daily laborers, some are beggars.

There are no clearly identified social groups in the community. These are urban residents who have come from various parts of the country. As a result, there is a wide mix of ethnic groups living side by side peacefully. Most people are Coptic Christian although there is also a large Muslim population. There is very little, if any, social conflict or tension on the basis of religion or ethnicity.

The population of the community has increased by about 30% in the last ten years, according to the Chair of the kebele. This might be one major reason for the overall decline in the economic and physically conditions of the community. Prices of consumer goods have also increased and affected the buying power and, hence, the well being of the residents.

The kebele administration is the primary government body in the community. The Chair is elected by the residents every four years. However, a lot of people question the legitimacy of this election. They cite the fact the leadership always comes from the ruling party in the country as the main reason for their concern.

The sole NGO, Sister Jember's NGO, that has been operational in this community for some time, is losing its momentum due to the lack of resources. The community used to benefit a lot from this NGO and was getting along with it very well. The consequence of the eventual phase out of this NGO is not fully understood yet.

The community residents have high confidence in the fairness of the court systems in their wereda. They also trust and show confidence in the local community leaders to some degree. They have, however, little confidence in the local government, municipal and police officials.

It is very difficult, according to the Chair, for the residents of this community to get together informally for different occasion. This is because people are too busy trying to make a living that they hardly get the time for get together. Even when they have to come to *idir* meetings, they spend just enough time to pay their fees and run away. There are no development activities in the kebele to bring people together. The only occasions are at the time of death when *idir* members are required to carry out their

community responsibilities. During such times, *idir* members relate to each other in an informal and friendly manner. These gatherings have created a very strong sense of belongingness in the community among its residents.

It is strongly stated that this kebele is among the poorest in the whole wereda. It is highly congested and the physical blight has reached catastrophe proportions. The sanitation condition is appalling and so is the garbage disposal problem. There are a lot of people who are unemployed and many others who depend on daily labor as the main source of livelihood. Women, mostly engaged in petty trades and in odd jobs, are particularly vulnerable to the increasing health hazards in the community. Many do not see a way out of this situation.

Site 6: Kebele 23, Wereda 11, Zone 4

Site 6 is located in Region 14, Zone 4, Woreda 11 Kebele 23. It is commonly known as Sheromeda. It is particularly situated in the northern part of the capital bounded by Entoto Mountain. It is one of the most densely populated Kebele in Addis Ababa. According to the information found from one of the early settlers of the area, the village was found after the evacuation of the Italian power. It is known as a Home of Dj. Metaferia and his followers who was one of the Wars lords of Minilik the II after sometimes ago many houses were built by one foreigner called Grard around this area. He also distributed these houses for homeless people in the city.

The area is commonly settled by the Dorze ethnic group. Weaving is one of the major sources of livelihood for men in the area. Since this activity needs vast area for making cloth. Although now the reality is completely changed and there is high population pressure at present previously, it was highly preferable for weaving activity due to its area wise.

Concerning infrastructure the area is not that much developed with respect to health service there are 5-7 private Clinics in the area. However, concerning public or government health center can be found in the neighboring kebele. There is also one kindergarten and elementary school within the kebele. 85% of children with the age of 2-6 have access to basic education. 85% of children with the age of 8-12 have access to basic education. 50% of the total adult population able to read and write. 45% of the total number of women in the kebele able to read and write.

Dessie Zuria Werda Sites:

Urban Sites

Site 7: Kebele 11 (also known as Membere Tsehaye Neighborhood)

Urban Dwellers Association (UDA) or Kebele 11 (also known as Membere Tsehaye Village) is one of the 20 Urban Dwellers' Associations found in Dessie Town. This village was forest land before King Michael first established Dessie Town in 1909. Up to the *Derg* regime in the early 1970s, this neighborhood was known as Wolamo Sefer because it was a recreational area for soldiers from the Wolamo and Kefa areas of the country. During the *Derg* regime, when there was re-classification of urban areas, this neighborhood got the current name of Kebele 11 or Urban Dwellers' Association. The name Membere Tsehaye was given to the neighborhood after the Teklehaymanot Membere Tsehaye Church was constricted in the area.

Kebele 11 is found in the eastern part of Dessie Town. It is surrounded by mountains and there are Workena and Gerado rivers in this kebele. Ayiteyef, the historical hall built by king Michael, is found in this UDA.

According to the Chair of the UDA, about 2,500 households or about 10,000 people live in this urban community. About 50% of the children age 6-12 are attending elementary school; about 40% of the children age 12-18 are attending high school. About 60% of both males and females of the community can read and write, a result of the National Literacy campaign of the last regime.

The residents of this urban community have access to public telephones and a post office located at the UDA's office. A vast majority (about 80%) of the households also have electric service, either in private or in common. There is also a clinic run by the Red Cross in the community. Residents also utilize the main clinic of the town which is located in another UDA. There are no NGOs operating in this community.

The main source of livelihood of most males in this community include daily labor, retailing, and selling of wood and handicrafts. Most females, on the other hand, are engaged in retailing (at *gulits*), selling of fire wood, *tella* and *areke*. Some of the women are house wives and depend on their husbands income.

The most common social groups in this community are religious in nature. They include *mahiber* and *senbete*. There are no groups based on ethnicity, race or caste system.

In the last ten years the population of this community has increased drastically. At the same time the local economy has gotten much worse than before. The successive disasters such as rain erosion of the top soil and deforestation has contributed to the decline in the overall economy of the area. Occasional political changes and price hikes have also contributed to this decline.

The community has elected political leaders who always come from the ruling party of the national government. This party controls the local politics and economy through the local government administrators.

Although, in general, the people in the community get along with each other quite well, there is no time for them to get to gather socially. Each person is busy trying to make a living.

There is high confidence in the courts by the residents of the community. There is also some confidence in the village and community leaders and in the police. There is, however, little confidence in local government or municipal officials.

There is a strong sense of belonging among community residents. Different social and economic groups of people live peacefully and without conflict. However, they find it very difficult to get together informally or to undertake community activity together. This is partially due to financial reasons. There are also no groups to organize such activities any more.

Site 8: Gerado (or 01) Peasant Association (PA)

Gerado is one of the peasant associations found in Dessie Woreda, South Wollo zone of Amhara region. It is located about 7 Km from Dessie, and is surrounded by mountains. Gerado, which is a name of a nearby river, was formed during the settlement programme undertaken in the country in the 70's and 80's. Hence, people who live in this area are from different corners of the country. Gerado has a population of about 5,000 living in about 1350 households. The people are predominantly Muslim and from the Amhara ethnic group.

There are no electricity, postal or telephone services in this rural community. There is a Mosque, a clinic and a training center which the residents consider useless. There is an elementary school. There is no NGO activity in the area.

The main source of livelihood for men is farming, supplemented by selling wood and by daily labor. A few community members engage in petty trade. For women, selling of fire wood and cow-dung, spinning and selling cotton threads comprise most of their income generating activities. The local economy of the community is getting worse from day to day. One of the main reasons indicated was the drought which occurs frequently and destroys their crops. Another is the increasing number of landless and unemployed young people.

Community members get along very well. Since the population is virtually all Muslim, religious institutions form the basis for social cohesion. Residents find it very easy to undertake community activities together whenever they get the chance.

There is very little, if any, conflict and/or crime in this neighborhood.

Site 9: Kalina (02) Peasant Association (PA)

The site is located in Region 3 located in the northern highlands of Ethiopia. The peasant association (PA) itself is about 7 Kms from the main nearby town of Dessie, which includes the a gravel road to the right side of the main road. The PA includes considerable mountainous terraces up to 3000 meters above sea level as well as extensive low land fields. There are about 2000 households and up to 15,000 people

living in this PA.

More than 90% of the community members are farmers. But currently dealing with land seems fruitless for them. A lot more farmers are inclining to go somewhere else to get their livelihood frustrated by the frequent drought. The women for the most part are housewives.

The PA was formed in the 1977 proclamation, that had resulted in a fundamental socio-economic change in the country including land for the tiller. But the worn-out land couldn't help the poor people in terms of economic sustenance. The recurring famines could not be challenged. The government as a solution to the problem had conducted a resettlement program in different parts of the country for this and other drought-affected areas. This program was considered by the local people as genuine in its motive. The management and the execution of it was disastrous. The overall assessment from the group discussion to search a long-lasting way out of this problem seems to rest on the same solution.

The cost in terms of feeding the ever-increasing population is massive. Three devastating cycles of drought have taken place in the area in the last 30 years. Every cycle seems to be stronger than the previous one in area coverage and number of people affected.

The factors believed for these disasters are over-farming of land, deforestation, loss of the natural values from earth and unwise management of cultivation. Generally they are all speaking ecological and man-made problems.

There is no infrastructure worth mentioning in the PA. It is far and inaccessible. The people go to Dessie for every service they seek. This is true with the exception of an elementary school that entertains about 1,000 students.

If there are any significant changes that occurred recently in this particular peasant association, it is only the sadly intensified drought that squeezed the last hope of every household. And, of course, there are the newcomers, the settlers, who were moved a decade ago through the "cursed" resettlement programme.

When the change of government took place in 1991, as well as the economic and political policy of the country, these hopeless peasants had been uprooted from their villages (by then were jungles, untouched zones, but now habitable with tremendous life and capital investment) from every corner of the country. Since there was no place to entertain them, they were to come here where they come from. They say that one out of three could reach this place. These newcomers were given a plot of land of 625 sq.m. each. They are more than 200 households and numbered now more than 1500 people representing 10% of the community.

The general assessment one can't miss from this peasant association is the poor rain distribution, the hail, the pests, the fertilizers, worthlessness, rather unbearable debt forced to make them sell every asset they have to settle. Altogether, they have drained the capabilities to cope with survival. Now those who survived all these were there hoping for the Belg rain in which the area is highly dependent, but there is not a drop of it.

Site 10: *Mitti Kolo Peasant Association*

Mitti Kolo is a peasant association located about 25 Km from Dessie Town and about 3 Kms from Kombolcha Town. It is located on the main road to Assab, the former Red Sea port City of Ethiopia. This general area has been hit hard by famine and successive drought for a long time. More and more are leaving farming for daily labor in towns near by. A lot of people have resorted to selling fire wood and cow-dung as an alternative way of life. These practices have further exacerbated the situation since they affect the environment negatively.

This year has been particularly difficult. The farmer (even those with land) can no more support the family because of declining productivity caused mainly by drought pests and lack of fertilizers.

Mitti Kolo is a peasant community of about 2200 households and 10000 people, according to the PA chair person. Most residents are Muslim. There are two schools in the community and about half of the children age 6-12 are attending primary school; only about a quarter of the children age 12-18 are attending secondary school. Among adult males about 25% can read write while about 20% of the females in the community can read and write.

The community is located nearby a main road and the residents have no access to public telephones or post offices no household has its own telephone line, although there is telephone at the school. There is an agricultural extension office where seedling and fertilizer services are provided to the community for pay.

There is no health care clinic in the community Residents bitterly complain about malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The main source of livelihood for men is farming although more and more men are now engaged in daily laborer and cutting trees. Most women are housewives. There are also some who sell firewood for a living.

There are religious institutions that bring the residents of the community together on holidays. These include *kire* and *zawiya* for the predominantly Muslim believers of the community. There are no ethnic or caste based social groups or institutions. Residents get along with each other very well.

In the last ten years the population of the community has increased dramatically. This is because of high birth rates as well as the displaced people from the nearby part of Assab. During the same time, the local economy has become much worse. Some of the main contributing factors include drought, pests and the increased price of fertilizers. Inflation is a major problem in the area.

This is also an area hit hard by successive droughts and occasional flooding during the winter season. The heavy rains have also been the main reason for productivity decline because of eroded soil and washed crops. There are no NGOs operating in the area.

There is elected local government. The leadership always comes from the ruling party in government. The community has confidence in the court system. They believe the judges are honest and face no external pressure. There is also some confidence in

village or community officials. There confidence level in local government is little while in police it is high.

The community residents find it very difficult to get together informally for different occasions. This is mostly because they spend all their time trying to make a living. It is easier to organize for development activity since people sense the benefits. There is also a strong sense of belonging in the community. There is no tension in the community and people live peacefully. There haven't been serious violence between different social groups in the community.

Annex 3: Tables

Table 3.1 - The Ten Most Common Local Terminologies of Well-being for each study site

Ada Liben Wereda:

Site 1:

- ሃይል ስለሌለኝ - [life is] from hand to mouth only
- ለገንዘብ ለመገኘት ማቆየት - waiting to die while seated
- ማጠገን ማድረግ - we gather/push cow-dung [for a living]
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት - [it is] a day-to-day life
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - [life is] scratching dirt like a chicken
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we eat when food is available, we go to bed with an empty stomach when it is not
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - so long as blessed people are around, nothing will happen to me
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - may [God] not make me the lunch of the hide [I sleep on]
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - if one eats one day, one will go to bed hungry the next
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - even water is a rarity for us

Site 2:

- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we have nothing for our throat [to swallow]
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we eat chickpea or beans and go to bed
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - our livelihood is quarreling with us
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - it [life] is just going down-hill
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - those who are alive do not die in sleep
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - [our] livelihood is as useless as a piece of straw
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - it is worse this year
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we are above the dead and below the living
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - [life is like] sitting on a stone like a monkey and watch our livelihood go down the drain
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we live by the grace and will of God.

Site 3:

- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - wasting life without [seeing] happiness
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we are left tied like straw
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - whether it comes or not, it is the yearly crop only [that we live for]
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - if you have just delivered a child, you carry the child and go to work
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - [we are] always a calf, never a bull
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we toil, but there isn't a drop
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we couldn't even pay our taxes
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - we live on coffee [not food]
- ማንኛውም ቀን ለማኘት ማድረግ - if we have an ox we don't have land, if we have land we don't have an ox

- ሃሊ ሃገር ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - on the surface we have cloth on, what is inside is something else.

Site 4:

- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - there is no one who lives happily
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - [life is] eating whatever is available
- • ሰላም ለሌሎች ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - God is not helping us
- • ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - [life is] burdening us
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are dependents
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - [it is a life of] no thought for tomorrow
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - [life is] that cannot go beyond food
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - if one eats breakfast, there is no supper
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we have nothing to wear, we are naked
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are deprived and pale [due to poverty]

Dessie Zuria Wereda:

Site 8:

- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it has been five years since we ate off the land
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are full of debts (forced purchase of fertilizers)
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - the land has become infertile/unproductive
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it is a livelihood no body cares to remember
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - animals and people die while moving
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we live on selling fire wood and cow dung
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are in a problem but have no place to hide
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - what life do we have? it is on and off
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it is all over
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are in the lowest stage of life

Site 9:

- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are like orphans, we are dying of hunger
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - the land didn't catch [produce]
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we live on picking fire wood
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it has been eight years since we became poor
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - while those who have eat, those who don't cut their nails
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are between life and death
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are now buying what we eat [instead of producing it]
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it is half of life [not full life]
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we are dying of hunger
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - we have neither dream nor imagination

Site 10:

- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - it is burning hunger
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - life is like being flogged
- ስለሆነው ማንም ሳይሆን ማንም ሳይሆን - hunger is [like] a hyena

- Mì u=ÁKpeuf uīw ›eð˘MìU ›Kkc • "Ç=Á" < 'U wKA/ Ÿ^w ¾uKÖ U" İw ›K wKA -
- the child cried and the father mentioned the hyena; but the child continued to cry; since he figured the hyena is no worse than hunger
- • IM ²SÆ Öö,, U" 'ca "' < - what is life when there is no friend or food.
- \l ²M³L "' < „KA ›Ã"xU - the soul is tough, it does not pass out soon
- ÁK" gÖ" uM}" u¾• 3" < (u¾u["Ç" <) k}"M - we sold every thing we had and have become homeless
- ›"x] K)"x] u=ÁÖÑō }ÁÃµ ²ō - no one has any thing to help any one
- ÁK Ñ>²? ¾T>Áe[İ "' < - [life is] that makes you look older than your age
- SÚuÝ SL" h ÁxG< - have no options at all

Site 7:

- †`a ›Ç] - we live on retailing [commodities]
- ¾k" e^ ›v^] - we chase daily laborer's job
- ›Ñ"U ›x"U Ñ@• " ›SeÓ" "' < - we thank our Lord whether we get some thing or not
- 'ca um ÁS" LK" < "' < - life is for those who have adequate salary
- ŸJÇ" } ö ^d'" ThhM ›M%oM"U - we can't improve ourselves, we consume all
- 'ca [Hw • "ÇÃðÉ" KTUKØ SaØ "' < - life is a struggle (run) not to be wiped out by famine (hunger)
- W'öe u^{a3} ›f"xU }xwnK(• "Í= Ÿ²=I 'cae SS²³D ÁI" 'u` - rather than living such type of life, it is better to die; but the soul dies hard
- uSV}" < • ¾k" "' < - we envy the dead
- k" ¾xK~ ÉG - time became against me and exposed me to poverty
- mx' • "É^ Çx ÖÓa ›Ç] - existence based on baking and selling of bread

Addis Ababa:

Site 5:

- ¾c" < • İ ›Ã,, ›Ç] "' - we live as dependents on others
- e"xU e"Ñ"U "' < - we gain and lose at once
- V^˘" ¾"Ák "' < - we have low morale
- 'ca ›ud "' < - life is hardship
- ¾^u" "' - we are the hungry ones
- w'É ÁnÖK" - we are those who suffer from cold
- ¾SÚ[h" < ui• "' < - [Life is like a] terminal disease
- }v[" ›Ç] "' - we run here and there to survive
- Áō wK" • "É^K" - we go hungry
- uTxf • "Á • wÉ w%o' • "KöMóK" - we talk to ourselves like a mad person because we are poor

Site 6:

- 'ca • "Ç" < 'U "' < - it is better to keep quite
- • Øu" }cpK"M - we already washed and hanged
- • "Á "ō ua S• - [life] is flying here and there like a bird

- • "Å ›<_ Æ` ›É["]" < - we are living in jungle like a wild
- animal
- c" <'• <" }uM,, ›MsM - our body has worn-out
- ¾" <h ' <a - it is a life of dog
- MĐ%oo'" SGÃU ›É`Ñ" ›ekSØ"†" < - we have left our children illiterate
- ¾MĐ%oo'" Ñ<Muf • "uLK" - we are exploiting our children's labor
[we are spoiling our children's future]
- ' <a ›ÇÒ']" < - [life] is like just climbing steep slop mountain

Table 3.2
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Ada Liben
Wereda Rural Sites: Farmers

Well-being Category in local language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion of Households %
Site 1			
vK ìÒ	Those with grace	1. They have food throughout the year 2. They feed the family 3. They have cattle 4. They have land to lease	35
'e) —	They Lower [category of] farmers	1. They have no land 2. They have no cattle 3. They rent land from others 4. They share the produce	40
ÿ<K=	Daily laborers/ carriers	1. They have no permanent source of income 2. They work for food 3. They have no land 4. They have no cattle	20
'K e"ÿ<M	Physically disabled	1. They can't work 2. They beg for a living 3. They are sickly	5
Site 2			
Ñ@•	The lords	1. They have 3 pairs of plough oxen 2. They have 3 or 4 cows 3. They have donkeys and goats 4. They have up to 4 <i>kerts</i> of land	10
S"ÿK—	Those in the middle	1. They have a pair oxen 2. They have some sheep or goats 3. They have at least a donkey 4. They have some land	20
ÉG	The poor farmers	1. They may have on ox 2. They have no cattle 3. They have no land	30
ÊS—	Those who carry hoes	1. All they have is a hoe 2. They work for others for food 3. They have nothing else	40
Site 3:			
ÿõ}— Ñu_	Higher farmers	1. They have enough land 2. They have up to 4 pairs of oxen 3. They have money to buy fertilizers 4. They can acquire additional land	5
S"ÿK—	Those in the middle	1. They have some land 2. They have 1 or 2 pair of oxen 3. They have some money	10
	Those who are	1. They have a small piece of land	

ᐅ)– Nū_	lower farmers	2. They have one ox or a pair of oxen 3. They barely make it	20
ÉH Nū_	Poor farmers	1. They have a very small piece of land 2. They have no cattle They plough their land by renting oxen	65

Table 3.3
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Ada Liben
Wereda Rural Sites: Widows

Well-being Category in local language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion of Households %
Site 1			
vK "wlf	Those with property	1. They plough [a lot of] land 2. They have 2-3 pairs of oxen 3. They can pay taxes 4. They have cattle to sell	15
um	Those with sufficient [means]	1. They have land 2. They have a pair of oxen 3. They pay taxes 4. They harvest just enough for family consumption	25
UeY="	Those you feel sorry for	1. They have no cattle 2. They don't plough [since they don't have land] 3. They have no chicken 4. They don't pay taxes	60
Site 2			
¾)hK	Those who are better off	1. They have oxen 2. They have land plough 3. They produce their food 4. They got their land during the <i>Derg</i>	10
Ó[–	Those who have problems	1. They have no food 2. They sleep without eating 3. They have neither land nor oxen 4. They survive by collecting and selling cow-dung	65
À"T	The weak	1. They have health problems 2. They are disabled 3. They can't afford to pay <i>idir</i> fees	25
Site 3			
¾T>hM	Those who are better	1. They have 2 pairs of oxen 2. They have land 3. They have produce 4. They hire farmers	*
f"i ¾T>hM	Those who are a little better	1. They have a pair of oxen 2. They have land 3. They plough themselves	*
		1. They are daily laborers	

U"U ¾K?K"<	Those who have nothing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. They cannot plough 3. They sell cow-dung 4. They cut wood 5. Those who have lost everything 	*
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* It was impossible to obtain proportions from these elderly women

Table 3.4
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Ada Liben
Wereda Rural Sites: The Youth

Well-being Category in local language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion of Households %
Site 1			
ፕክ ሰጋ	Those with grace	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They don't take loans 2. They can feed themselves and their families 3. They have two pairs of oxen 4. They have 12 <i>kerts</i> of land 5. They have donkeys to carry water 	20
ፎክ ስህ	Poor farmers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They borrow money with interest 2. They don't have a pair of oxen 3. They don't have cows to milk 4. They don't have goats or sheep 5. They don't have donkeys to carry water 6. They carry water and wood on their back 	80
Site 2			
ሶጋ	Those with adequate wealth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have 2 hectares of land 2. They have 1-2 pairs of oxen 3. They can feed their families throughout the year 4. They can afford to pay hospital fees 	10
ሶጋ	Those in the middle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have 1 hectare of land 2. They have a pair of oxen 3. They can sell cattle to pay hospital fees 4. They can borrow money 	20
ሆጋ/ፎክ	The destitute	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have no land or oxen 2. They have no farm tools to work somewhere 3. They are daily laborers 	70
Site 3			
ሆጋ	Rich	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have enough food and more 2. They have 3-pairs of oxen 3. They hire other farmers 	10
ሶጋ	Those in the middle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They can support then selves 2. They have 1 pair of plough oxen 	70
ፎክ	The poor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They live hand to mouth 2. They lease their land <p>They children work for the rich farmers</p>	20

Table 3.5
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Dessie
Zuria Woreda Rural Sites: Farmers

Well-being Category in Local Language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Site 8			
፳hLM ¾T>vM	Those who are better off	1. Those planted tree 2. Those engaged in daily labor 3. Those have 0.75 ha. of land 4. Those rent their land	20
¾SÚ[h	Those live in the last living standard	1. Those have no ploughing tools 2. Those have no livestock 3. Those have no anything can be sell or change 4. Those engaged in daily labor 5. Through going to near by towns carry materials	80
Site 9			
Gw• U	Rich	1. Who have oxen 2. One who can afford invitation for starved guests 3. Who have money 4. Who uses irrigation for his farm	11
S"ÿK—	Middle	1. Who have little amount of money 2. Who can sell crops on mules back to Borena* 3. Who brings grain from Harbu** and retails here 4. Who owns productive land 5. Owns oxen 6. Who can feed himself through out the year with out shortage	11
ÉG	Poor	1. Owns very little size of land 2. Tills the land by hoe not by ox 3. Collects insufficient production 4. Most of them are those who came the failed resettlement programme	78
Site 10			
Habtam	Rich	1. Those who have two oxen and land	10
Mekakeleg-na	Those with middle	1. Those who own working tools only	5
Deha		1. Those who borrow from lenders 2. Those who have sold their shelters	

*** Borena and Harbu are little rural towns far away 120 and 40 KM. respectively from Dessie

	Poor	and [live any where] are homeless	85
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Table 3.6
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Dessie
Zuria Woreda Rural Sites: Widows

Well-being Category in Local Language	Literal Translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Site 8			
hM ÁK	Better off	1. Have pair of oxen 2. Plough by them selves 3. Half of them afford to educate their children	15
ÁG	Poor	1. They live on land lease and daily labor 2. No education for the children 3. Eats only for today	80
›"K e"Ÿ<M	Disabled	1. Sleeps in shelters and mosque or open fields 2. Survive in people's charity	5
Site 9			
¾}hK ' <a ¾T>•\	Those who live in better life	1. Have trees in rear part of their compound. 2. Have home animals 3. Have enough farming land 4. Hare a pair or two ploughing oxen 5. Can afford to hire a poor farmer for farming	*
βa ›Ç]- (ÁG Ñu_-)	Tillers (Poor farmers)	1. Who have lands but not ploughing oxen 2. Breaking ground by hoe or share the land with someone for they can not plough by themselves 3. Hired for other farmers	*
Ÿ<uf d' TÑÊ gÜ ›Ç]	Cow-dung, grass, fire wood sellers	1. No farming land 2. No kin to help them 3. Widowed 4. Living in the sell of fire wood grass, dried leaves	*
Site 10			
ÁK"<	Those who have the means	1. Those who have a large plot of land 2. Those who have many cattle 3. Those who have clothes	20
ŸK?K"< ¾}hK	Better ones than those who have nothing	Those who have a small plot of land 2. Those who have few cattle 3. Those who have something to eat 4. Those who have land but no cattle 5. Laborers	30
		1. Those who have no land 2. Those who have no cattle	

U"U ¼K?K"<	Those who have nothing	3. Those who work for the haves 4. Those who collect and sell fire wood and cow dung	50
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Table 3.7
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Dessie
Zuria Woreda Rural Sites: The Youth

Well-being Category in Local Language	Literal Translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Site 8			
ጃጋክ ሺህ	A better off farmer	1. They have a pair of Oxen 2. They have wide land 3. They have house 4. They can pay interest for the credit they take	Not given
ሶሃክ	Those at the Middle	1. They have one ox	Not given
ገጋ	Lower	1. Those have nothing 2. Those have not even a single hen 3. Those can not take credit	Not given
Site 9			
ጃጋክ <	Better off	1. Who have 2-7 oxen 2. Who sells cow's milk 3. They have a land to be ploughed for 3-6 days 4. Those who are capable of using irrigation	20
ሶሃክ	Middle	1. Have a single ox 2. Have a land to be ploughed 3. Are capable to use irrigation	10
ላገ (ጃጋህህ)	Poor (The worst)	1. No ox or cow 2. No chicken 3. No land	70
Site 10			
ጃጋክ	Better off	1. Those who have oxen 2. Those who have cows Those who have food for at least three months Those who are farmers and also weavers	3
ላክ	Poor	1. Those who can work to live 2. Those who have a small piece of land.	10
ጃጋህህ ላክ	Very poor/ destitute	1. Daily laborers 2. Those who have no land 3. Weavers Those who sell fire wood, cow-dung and grass for living	87

Table 3.8
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Ada Liben
Wereda Urban Site: (Site 4)

Well-being Category		Criteria	Proportion Households %
Unemployed			
ጸጋኛዎች	The Better-off	1. Run their own businesses 2. Car owners 3. Crop wholesalers 4. Own their own houses	1-2
ላቀ ገቢ ያላቸው ሰው	Those with low income and salaries	1. Government employees 2. Retailers 3. Daily laborers	50
ሰው ላይ የሚመኑ ሰው	The poorest	1. Dependent for their life on others 2. Sleeping in churches or on streets	48
Housewives			
ገቢ ያላቸው ሰው	The who live spoilt, luxury life	1. Own considerable amount of wealth 2. Educate their children properly 3. Own their houses 4. Own shop and cars 5. Eat as much as they want	10
ሰው ላይ የሚመኑ ሰው	Those in the middle	1. Next to the best one 2. House owners 3. Own their own businesses 4. Afford to feed and educate their children 5. Own complete house furniture	30
ሰው ላይ የሚመኑ ሰው	Those who have nothing	1. Healthy but penniless, surviving, selling labor 2. Eat once a day 3. Engaged in prostitution, no permanent shelter	55
ጸጋኛዎች	The worst of all	1. Physically disabled 2. No assets at all 3. Spend most of the days with out food 4. Living around the church by begging	5
The Youth			
ገቢ ያላቸው ሰው	The rich	1. Have enough income 2. Have house and complete furniture 3. Own hotels 4. Own cars 5. Own stores	5
ሰው ላይ የሚመኑ ሰው	Those in the middle	1. Have a cart 2. Have a shop 3. Have a bicycle	20
		1. Live on day to day basis	

ÉG	The poor	2. Share a room with others 3. Employed by rich people 4. Collects some unwanted or damaged items from market	75
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Table 3.9
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Dessie
Zuria Wereda Urban Site: (Site 7)

Well-being Category	Literal Translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Unemployed			
uxU ¼}hK<	Well off	1. Have their own house 2. Have private car 3. Have bar 4. Afford sending to send their children to school	5
S"ŸK—	Middle	1. Have either their own house or rent nice house 2. Self sufficient to feed their family 3. Send children to school 4. They can borrow if problem arises	10
´p}—	Lower	1. Those who are engaged in daily labor, retailing at <i>gulit</i> 2. Live in rented but poorly built house 3. Some of them send their children to school	70
ÁunKf	Devastated	1. Live in open air street or in church yards 2. Disabled physically 3. Live on begging	15
Housewives			
Ál" ' <a	Good life	1. Have their own house 2. Afford sending children to school 3. Have limited amount of money in their savings 4. Can afford expenses to buy what is needed for consumption	10
S"ŸK—	Those in the middle	1. Government employees or of private organizations 2. Their income is adequate only for food They can't afford medical expenses if they are sick 4. Sell <i>injera, tella and areke</i> 5. Those can feed their children and buy second hand cloth only	70
¼SÚ[h	Those last (lower) status	1. Are engaged in daily labor 2. They eat if they get work otherwise not 3. Those who pick coffee 4. Those who sell fire wood	20

The Youth			
S"ŸK—	Middle standard	1. Merchants 2. Government employees 3. Pensioners	15
´p}—	Lower	1. Fire wood sellers 2. Retailing, <i>gulit</i> business 3. Those who bring water for others	85

Table 3.10
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Addis Ababa Sites
Unemployed

Well-being Category in local language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Site 5			
Hw• U	The well to do	1. They own trucks 2. They have stores 3. They have hotels or bars 4. They are either whole sellers or distributors	1
SÖ'— Ñu= ÁL†" <	Those with average income	1. They have pastries 2. They have <i>tej</i> houses 3. They have full time jobs 4. They have small shops	10
†"‰o]-«	Those engaged in petty trades	1. They sell vegetables and peppers 2. They engage in retail trades 3. They work as daily laborers 4. They are engaged in daily construction activities	60
¾' @ u=Ö?	The beggars	1. They are disabled 2. They are old men and women 3. Those who lost all their property 4. They beg	29
Site 6			
Gw• U	The rich	1. They have grain mills 2. They are merchants 3. They have cars 4. They have good house	1
SŸŸK—	Those in the middle	1. They are government employees 2. They have small stores 3. They sell <i>tej</i> 4. They have cattle	5
ÁH	The poor	1. The weavers 2. They sell wood 3. They are daily laborers 4. They sell at <i>gulits</i> 5. They are dependents	89
		1. They are homeless	

• ĨÓ uxU ÅH	Extremely poor	2 . They are beggars 3 . They are disabled	5
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Table 3.11
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Addis Ababa Sites
Housewives

Well-being Category in local language	Literal translation	Criteria	Proportion Households %
Site 5			
Hw• U 'ÒÈ-«	The rich merchants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They own businesses 2. They have stores 3. They rent houses 4. They own cars 5. They educate their children 6. They can eat as they want 7. They live in large houses 	1
S"ŸK—	Those in the middle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are government employees 2. They have regular monthly salaries 3. They own small shops 4. They live in medium size houses 5. They rent <i>kebele</i> houses 6. They eat at least twice a day 	3
ÀH Áx	Those who have nothing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have no jobs or regular income 2. They have very little to eat 3. They hassle a lot for a living as daily laborers 4. They have no houses; they share with others 	96
Site 6			
Ÿõ ÁK	Higher level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government employees or those who have permanent job 2. People who have private house People who can hire a servant 	10
´p ÁK	At a lower level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. people who has very small shop 2. People who live in Kebele house or in a rented house 3. People who are able to send their children to nearest government school 4. Daily laborers 	5
uxU ´p}—	Bottom level/ at a very lower level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Enjera</i> Beaker 2. People who make their living by being a servant (Ñ[É) 3. Engaged in activities like food for work People who can not afford money for renting house 5. People who live in common 6. Beggars 	85

Table 3.12
Well-being Categories, Criteria, and Proportion of Households: Addis Ababa Sites
The Youth

Well-being Category	Literal Translation	Criteria	Proportion of Households
Site 5			
Hw• U	The well off	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are the high level merchants 2. They are the high level civil servants 3. They own commercial vehicles 4. They own nicely furnished houses 	5
Ø\ ' <a ¾T>•\	Those who live a good life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They live comfortably 2. They are drivers 3. They are the low level civil workers 3. They are the petty traders 	15
'p}— ' <a	Those who live poorly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They sell bread 2. They are the daily laborers 3. They are the petty traders 	50
uxU 'p}— ' <a	Those who live very poorly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They sell <i>chat</i>, fire wood 2. They sell <i>kolo</i> on the streets 3. They are weak 4. They are unemployed 	30
Site 6			
Gw• U	Those with wealth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those who have mill house 2. People who sell grains 3. Those who have private and business car 4. Those who live in a villa (house) 	1
S"ÿK— Ñu= ÁL†"<	Those with enough/ sufficient income	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government employees 2. Those who have small shop (retailer) 3. People who engaged in Tej business 4. Those who have cattle 	5
ÉH	Those with nothing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weavers 2. Fuel wood carriers 3. Daily laborers 4. People who retail bread and enjera petty traders 5. People who are dependent on others people who can't make his/her living 	89
S"Ö= ÉH (KT™ç)	Dirt poor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People with no home 2. Beggars 3. Disabled 	5

Table 3.13
Changed/Trends in Well-being Categories, Ada Liben Wereda Rural Sites
by Focus Groups

Category Focus Groups	Site 1:		Site 2:		Site 3:	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Farmers						
The with wealth/ property/grace	45	35	15	10	20	5
Those in the middle	-	-	20	20	60	10
Low-level farmers/poor	30	40	35	30	15	20
Daily laborers	-	20	30	40	5	65
The disabled/ weak/elderly	25	5	-	-	-	-
Widowed/elderly women/female-headed households						
Those who are rich	15	10	40	10	*	*
Those in the middle	50	25	50	65	*	*
The poor/destitute	-	-	-	-	-	-
The disabled/weak	25	60	10	25	*	*
The Youth						
Those who are rich/high	25	20	20	10	15	10
Those in the middle	15	-	35	20	80	70
Low-level farmers/the poor	60	80	45	70	-	-
The disabled	-	-	-	-	5	20

Table 3.14
Changed/Trends in Well-being Categories, Dessie Zuria Wereda Rural Sites
by Focus Groups

Categories/Focus Groups	Site 8:		Site 9:		Site 10:	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Farmer						
The better off /rich	20	20	44.5	11	20	10
Those in the middle	50	-	50	11	10	5
Those who live poorly	30	80	5.5	78	70	85
Widows/elderly women/female-headed households						
The better off /rich	45	15	*	*	20	-
Those in the middle	-	-	*	*	30	10
The poor	57	80	*	*	50	90
The disabled	3	5	*	*	-	-
The Youth						
The better-off/rich	30	-	*	20	10	3
Those in the middle	60	5	*	10	20	10
The Poor/have nothing	10	95	*	70	-	-
The extremely poor	-	-	-	-	70	87

Table 3.15
Changed/Trends in Well-being Categories, Ada Liben Wereda Rural Sites
by Focus Groups

Category/Focus Groups	Ada Liben Wereda		Dessie Zuria Woreda		Addis Ababa			
	Site 4		Site 7		Site 5		Site 6	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Unemployed								
The better-off/rich merchants	5-6	1-2	10	3-5	5	1	5	5
Those in the middle/Government employees	34	-	60	10	70	10	45	5
Lower incomers/the poor	20	50	25	70	15	60	45	89
Daily laborers	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The poorest/ devastated beggars	-	48	5	15	20	29	5	5
Housewives								
The rich/who live in luxury	20	10	-	-	20	1	15	10
Those in the middle	50	30	65	70	10	3	-	-
The poor	-	-	30	10	10	96	10	5
The poorest/ devastated	30	55	5	20	-	-	75	88
The Youth								
The rich	20	5	-	-	15	5	7	5
Those in the middle	20	5	20	15	20	15	13	10
The poor/low-class	-	-	80	85	45	30	20	15
The Poorest/ devastated	50	75	-	-	20	30	50	50

Table 4.1
Ranking the Top Five Major Problems and Priorities, Ada Liben Wereda Rural
Sites by Focus Groups

Problems	Site 1		Site 2		Site 3	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Farmers						
Lack of farm land	-	-	2	1	-	-
Lack of farm input (oxen, tools)	-	3	-	-	-	-
Production decline	-	1	-	-	-	-
Lack/cost of fertilizers	-	2	-	3	5	3
Hail/Pests	-	4	4	2	-	-
Lack of water	4	5	1	4	3	4
Lack of health services	-	-	3	5	-	-
Debts from forced purchase of fertilizers	-	-	-	-	4	2
Famine/lack of daily bread	-	-	-	-	-	1
Loosing land without compensation	1	-	-	-	-	-
The civil war	2	-	-	-	-	-
The quota system	3	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of electricity	-	-	5	-	-	-
Funding raising for unclear causes	5	-	-	-	-	-
Forced conscription [of the Derg]	-	-	-	-	1	-
Forced grain supply to government	-	-	-	-	2	-
Widowed/elderly, female-headed household						
Absence of health facilities	(2)	2	-	5	4	3
Lack of farmland	(3)	1	-	-	-	-
Shortage of rain	-	3	-	-	-	-
Hail/Pests	4	4	-	-	-	-
Lack of water	(3)	5	3	2	3	-
Lack of electricity	-	-	4	3	5	-
Malnutrition	-	-	-	1	-	-
No grinding mills	-	-	-	4	-	-
Famine	-	-	-	-	-	1
Debts from forced purchase of fertilizer	-	-	-	-	-	2
Drought/lack of rain	1	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of schools	(2)	-	-	-	-	-
Forced conscription [of the Derg]	-	-	1	-	1	-
Settlement policy [of the Derg]	-	-	2	-	-	-
No grain mills	-	-	5	-	-	-
Lack of transportation	-	-	-	-	2	-
The Youth						
Lack of farm land/unemployment	1	1	-	1	-	3
Lack of electricity	-	2	-	-	-	-
Lack of farm input (oxen, tools)	-	3	-	-	-	-
Hail/Pests	-	4	-	2	-	4
Lack of water	4	5	5	3	1	5
Malnutrition	-	-	2	-	-	-
No grin mills	-	-	-	-	-	-
Absence of health services	3	-	-	4	5	-
Lack of schools	-	-	-	5	2	-
Lack/costs of fertilizers	-	-	-	-	-	1
Declining productivity	-	-	-	-	-	2
Lack of electricity	2	-	-	-	4	-
Lack of vocational schools	5	-	-	-	-	-
The quota system [of the Derg]	-	-	1	-	-	-

Forced conscription [of the Derg]	-	-	3	-	-	-
Numerous Kebele meetings	-	-	4	-	-	-
Lack of transportation/road	-	-	-	-	3	-

Table 4.2
Ranking the Top Five Major Problems and Priorities, Dessie Zuria Wereda Rural
Sites by Focus Groups

Problems	Site 8		Site 9		Site 10	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Farmers						
Debts from forced purchase of fertilizers	-	1	-	-	-	2
Hail/Pests	-	2	2	-	-	-
Drought/rain short fall	3	3	-	-	5	3
Lack of Support	4	4	-	-	-	5
Increase in population	-	5	-	-	-	-
Famine/hunger	-	-	-	1	-	1
Lack of health services	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of seedlings	-	-	-	-	-	4
Forced membership of cooperatives	1	-	-	-	4	-
Forced military service	2	-	1	-	1	-
Landlessness/unemployment	5	-	-	-	-	-
Forced settlement [of the Derg]	-	-	-	-	2	-
The grain quota [of the Derg]	-	-	-	-	3	-
Widowed/elderly, female-headed household						
Famine/hunger	3	1	*	-	-	2
Cloth problem	4	2	*	-	-	3
Diseases	5	3	*	-	-	4
Lack of schools	-	4	*	-	-	-
Transportation problems	-	5	*	-	2	-
Production decline/failure	-	-	*	1	-	-
Expensive market price	-	-	*	2	-	-
Housing problems	-	-	*	3	-	-
Lack of rain	-	-	*	-	-	1
Landlessness/declining land size	-	-	*	-	-	5
Forced conscription	1	-	*	-	-	-
The quota system	2	-	*	-	-	-
Abuse by husbands	-	-	-	-	1	-
Theft	-	-	-	-	3	-
The Youth						
Production decline/failure	-	1	-	1	-	-
Landlessness/unemployment	-	2	-	2	-	2
Lack of transportation	-	3	-	5	3	4
Lack of health services	-	4	-	4	2	1

Lack of electricity	-	5	3	-	4	-
Lack of water	4	-	2	3	1	5
Lack of emergency aid	-	-	-	-	-	3
Drought	1	-	-	-	-	-
Migration	2	-	-	-	-	-
Forced conscription	3	-	1	-	-	-
Lack of transportation/roads	5	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of grain mills	-	-	-	-	5	-

Table 4.3: Ranking the Top Five Major Problems and Priorities, All Urban Sites

Unemployment	Ada Liben		Dessie Zuria		Addis Ababa			
	Site 4		Site 7		Site 5		Site 6	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Unemployed/laborers								
Unemployment	-	1	-	-	5	1	4	1
Lay-offs	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of cooperatives	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Demobilization of ex-soldiers	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inflation/high prices	-	5	-	-	-	2	-	-
Housing shortages	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	4
Water problems	4	-	1	1	-	4	3	5
Sanitation/public latrine problems	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	3
Neighborhood roads/bridges	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	2
Roadsides lights	-	-	4	3	3	-	-	-
Lack of market places	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Lack of health services	-	-	5	5	-	-	-	-
Forced conscription	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Diseases	2	-	-	-	5	-	-	-
The Red Terror	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of electricity	5	-	2	-	-	-	5	-
Housewives								
Homelessness	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unemployment	-	2	-	1	-	1	5	1
Lack of daily food	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inflation/high prices	-	4	-	-	-	-	2	-
Sanitation/public latrines	-	5	-	-	-	-	3	5
Lack of health services	4	-	-	-	2	2	-	2
Lack of electricity	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-
Lack of schools	3	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Lack of medicine	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
Food shortage/insecurity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Housing problems	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Forced conscription	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation/road problems	2	-	3	-	5	-	-	-
Increment in water expenses	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Increment in light expenses	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Crime	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of telephone services	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Water problems	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-
Garbage disposal	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Lack of kitchen	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
The Youth								
Lack of money/finance	2	1	-	-	2	-	-	-
Diseases	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Population increase	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increasing in-migration	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unemployment	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	1
Lack of health services	-	-	4	4	3	2	-	3
Lack of electricity	-	-	3	-	-	3	5	-
Lack of schools	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	4
Lack of medicine	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
Food shortage/insecurity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Lack of water	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	5
Lack of market places	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Lack of road/transportation	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-
Lack of kindergarten	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-

Increase in family size	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increase in migrants	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of grain mills	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Forced conscription [of the Derg]	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sanitation/latrine problems	-	-	-	-	5	-	2	-

Table 5.1
Ranking of Institutions in Ada Liben Wereda Rural Sites by Focus Groups

Institutions/Focus Groups	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3
Farmers (Elderly)			
<i>Tabot</i> /church	1	-	2
<i>Eretcha</i>	2	-	-
<i>Gibrina</i> Biro (Ministry of Agriculture)	3	-	-
Police Station	4	-	-
<i>Wouqabi</i>	5	-	-
Woreda Administration	-	1	-
Daka Boru Mountain	-	2	-
Relatives / friends	-	3	-
Peasant Association (Kebele)	-	4	1
Idir	-	5	-
Tsiwa / Mahiber	-	-	3
Adbar	-	-	4
Grain - mill	-	-	5
Widowed Women			
The Church	1	1	1
Eretcha	2	-	-
Hakim Bet (Hospital)	3	3	2
Idir	4	5	-
Gara Boru Mountain	5	-	-
Peasant Association (Kebele)	-	2	3
Police Station	-	4	4
The Youth			
Arata (Money lenders)	1	-	-
Idir	2	-	-
Erecha	3	3	-
Hakim Bet (Hospital)	4	4	3
Peasant Association (Kebele)	5	5	1
The Church	-	-	4
Wouqabi	-	1	-
Relatives / friends	-	2	-
Arata (Money Lenders)	-	3	2
Traditional medicine	-	-	5

Table 5.2
Ranking of Institutions in Dessie Zuria Wereda Rural Sites by Focus Groups

Institutions/Focus Groups	Site 8	Site 9	Site 10
Farmers			
The Church / Mosque	1	2	3
Idir	2	-	-
Peasant Association (Kebele)	3	4	4
Training Center	4	-	-
Health Services (Clinic)	5	-	5
Neighbours / relatives	-	1	-
Kire	-	3	-
The Market Place	-	-	1
Work	-	-	2
Widowed Women (Elderly)			
The forest	1	4	-
The Market Place	2	-	5
Idir	3	-	1
Health Services (Hospital)	4	-	-
Peasant Association (Kebele)	5	3	-
Kire	-	1	-
The Mosque	-	2	2
Sheiks	-	-	3
Dubarti (Dua) (Praying)	-	-	4
The Youth			
Dua (Praying)	1	5	-
Traditional medicine	2	-	-
Health Services (Clinic)	3	4	3
Peasant Association (Kebele)	4	1	4
Police Station	5	3	-
Kire	-	2	-
Idir	-	-	1
The Mosque	-	-	2
Tsebel (holy water)	-	-	5

Table 5.3
Ranking of Institutions in All Urban Sites by Focus Groups

Institutions/Focus Groups	Aada Liben Woreda	Dessie Zuria Woreda	Addis Ababa	
	Site 4	Site 7	Site 5	Site 6
Unemployed/laborers & elderly				
Kebele	1	3	4	-
Police Station	2	5	5	4
Courts	3	-	-	-
The Church / Mosque	4	2	3	2
Idir	5	1	-	-
Tsiwa	1	4	-	-
Sister's NGO	-	-	1	-
The elderly	-	-	2	-
Health Services (health station)	-	-	-	1
Tsebel	-	-	-	3
Neighbours	-	-	-	5
Housewives				
Idir	1	3	1	1
Kebele Administration	2	5	-	-
Tsebel	3	-	-	-
The Church	4	2	3	3
Mahiber	5	-	-	-
Relatives/Neighbours	-	1	4	-
Ikub				
Health Services (Hospital)	-	4	2	-
Tsebel	-	-	5	4
The elderly	-	-	-	5
The Youth				
Kebele	1	2	5	-
The church	2	1	4	-
Health Service (Hospital)	3	-	1	4
Municipality	4	-	-	-
The market place	5	-	-	2
Relatives	-	3	-	-
Traditional healers	-	-	2	-
Sister's NGO	-	-	3	-
Government forest	-	-	-	1
Grain mill	-	-	-	3
Idir	-	-	-	5

Annex 4: Figures

Figure 1
Visual Analysis
Causes and Impacts of Poverty
(Rural Communities)

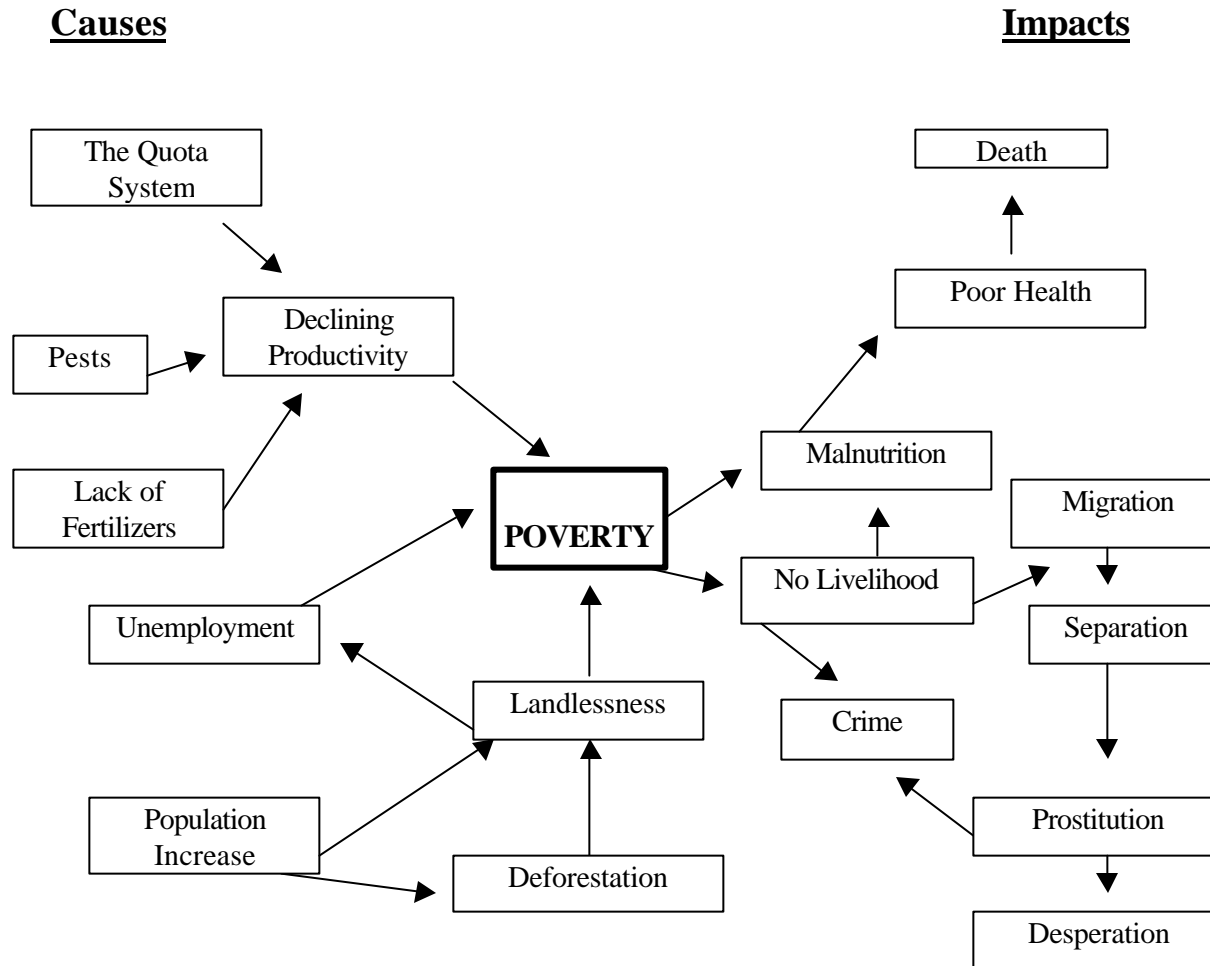


Figure 2
Visual Analysis
Causes and Impacts of Poverty
 (Urban Communities)

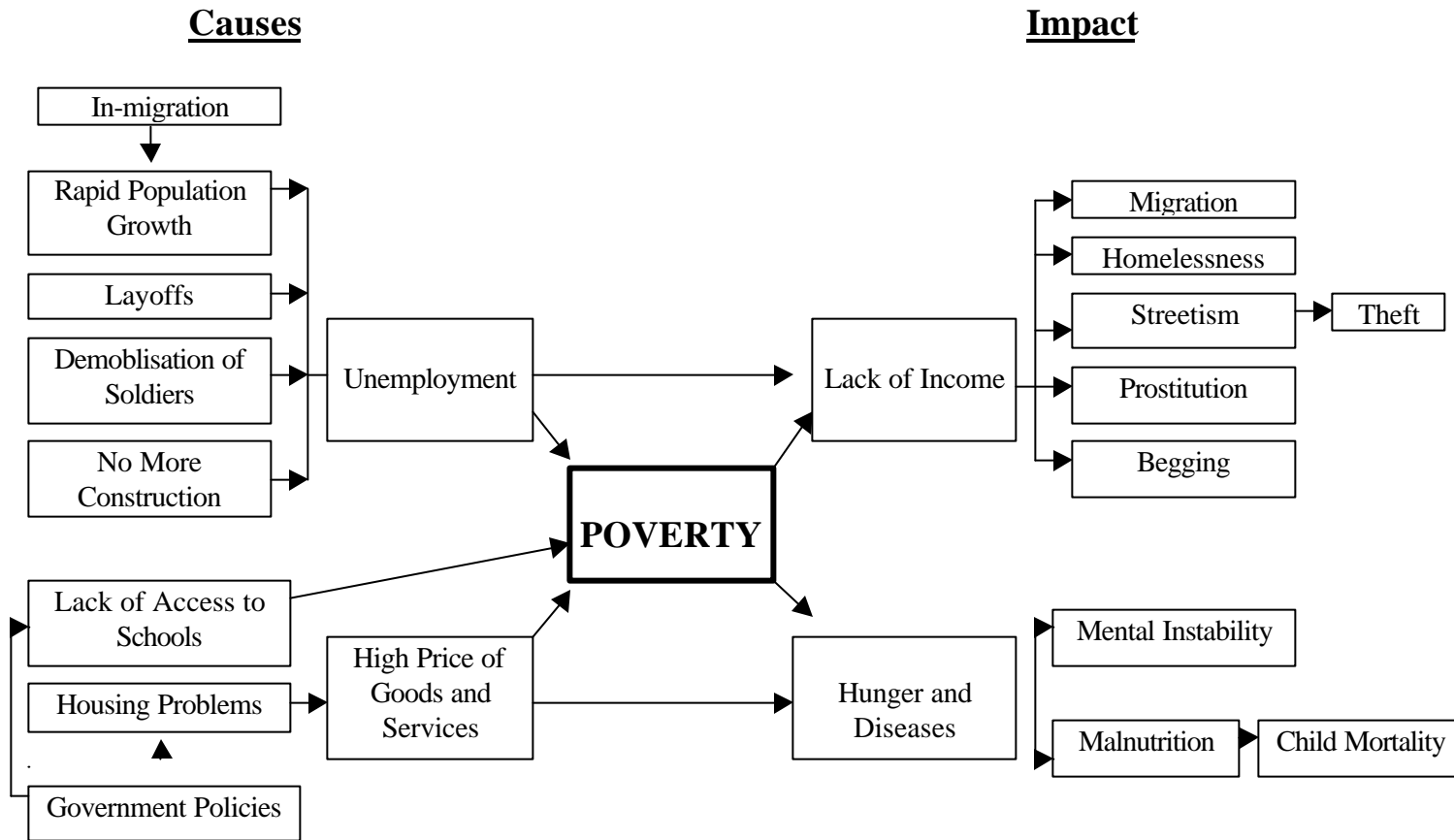


Figure 3
Visual Analysis
Problems and Priorities
(Rural Communities)

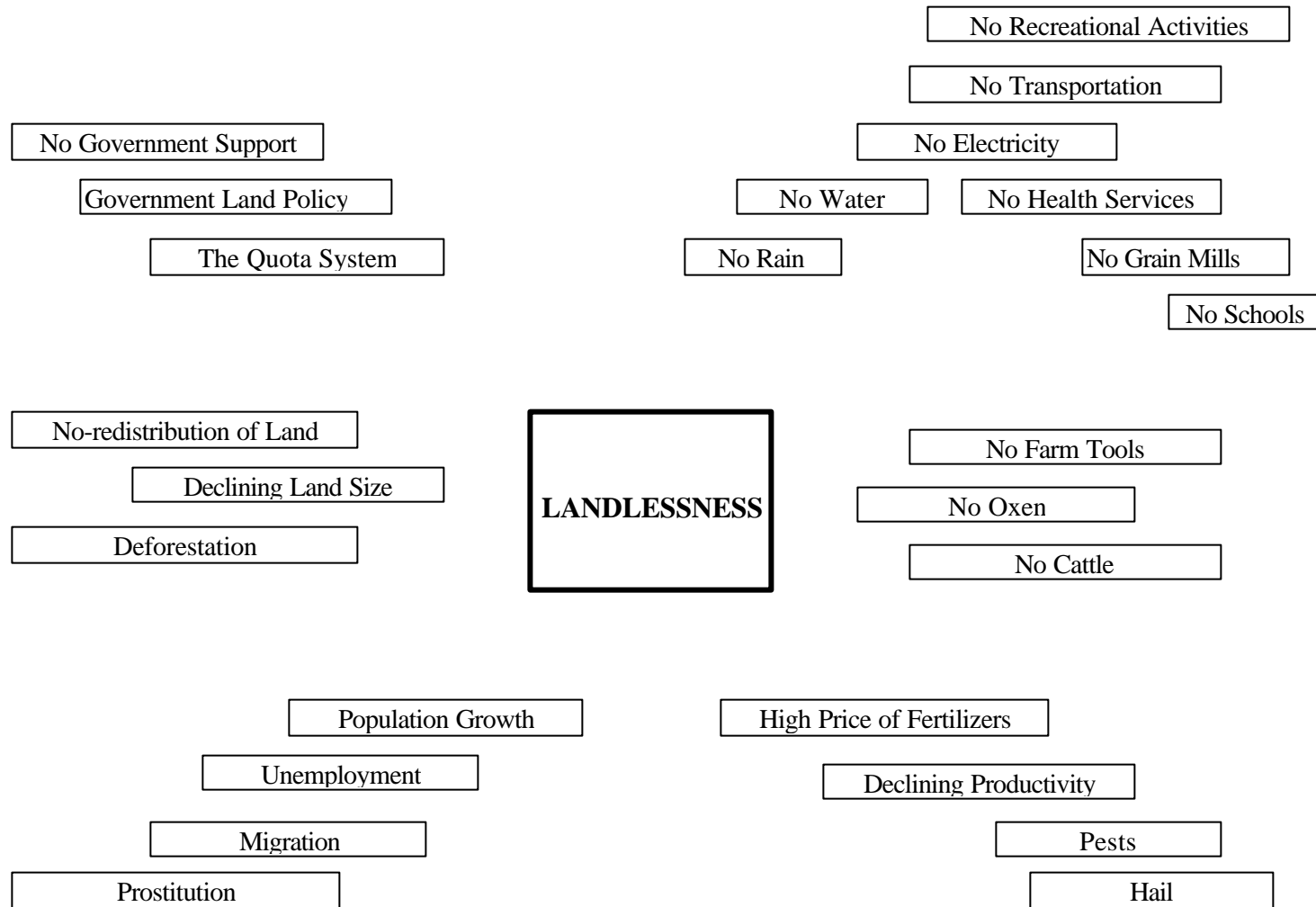


Figure 4
Visual Analysis
Problems and Priorities
(Urban Communities)

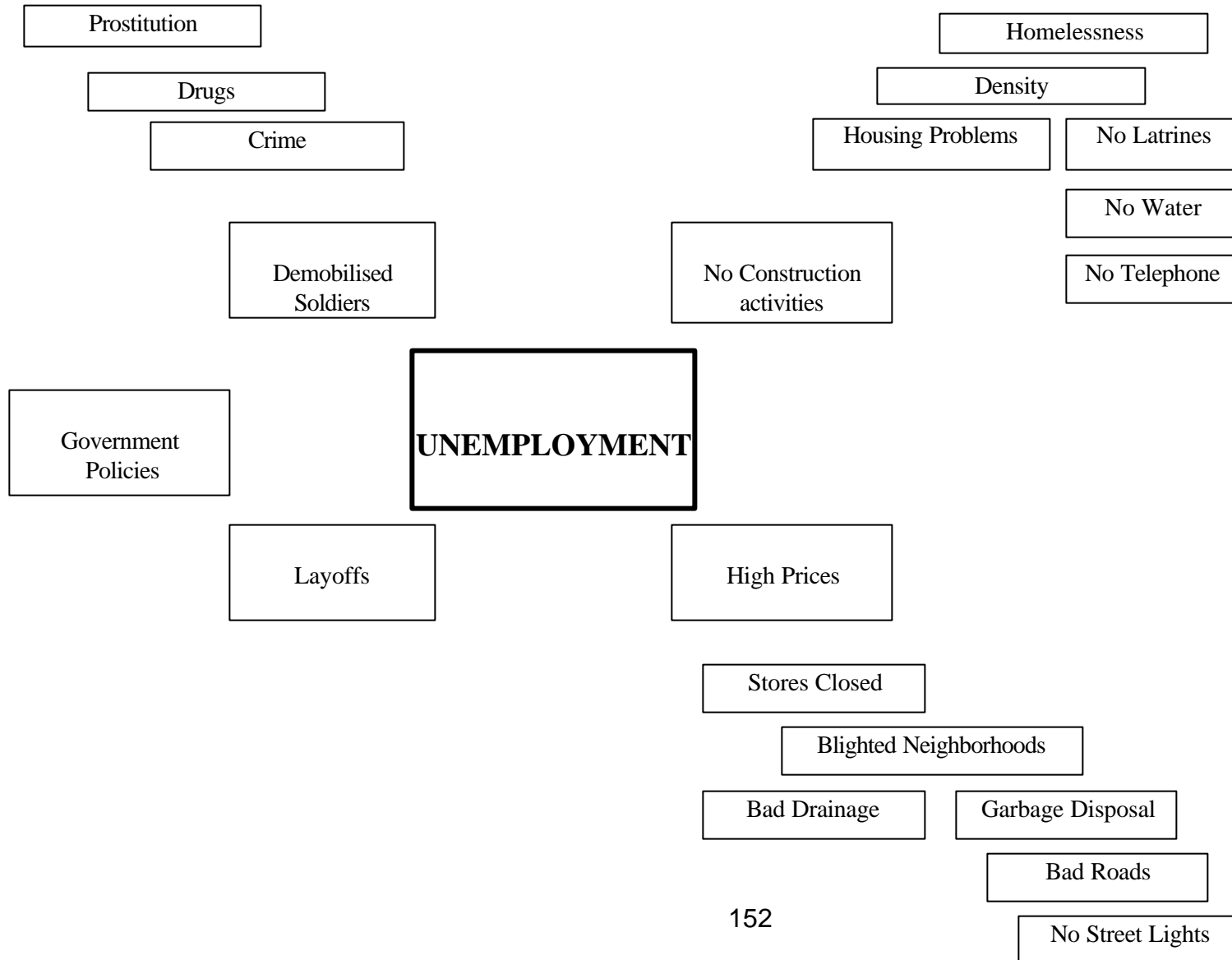


Figure 5
Visual Analysis
Institutions
(Rural Communities)

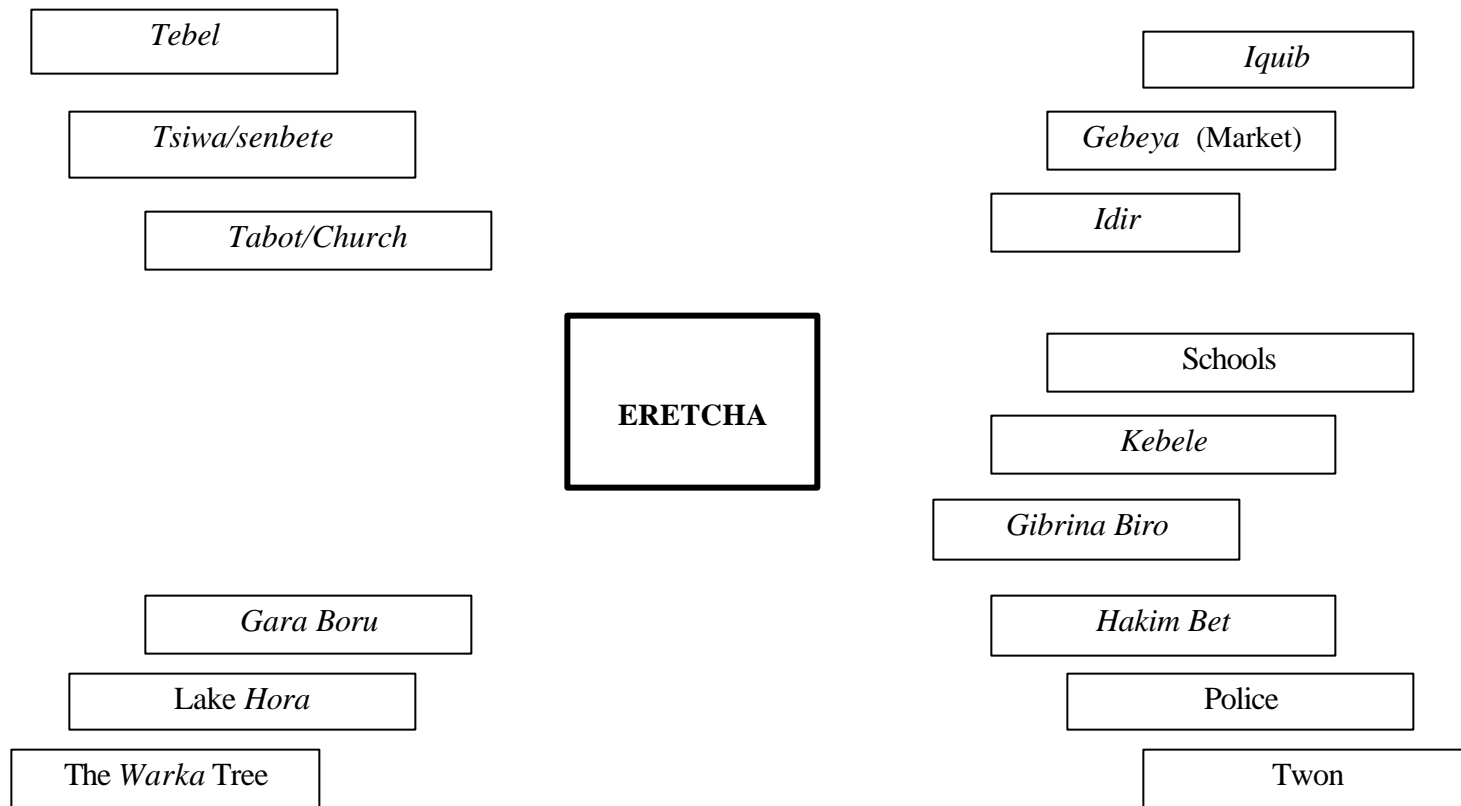
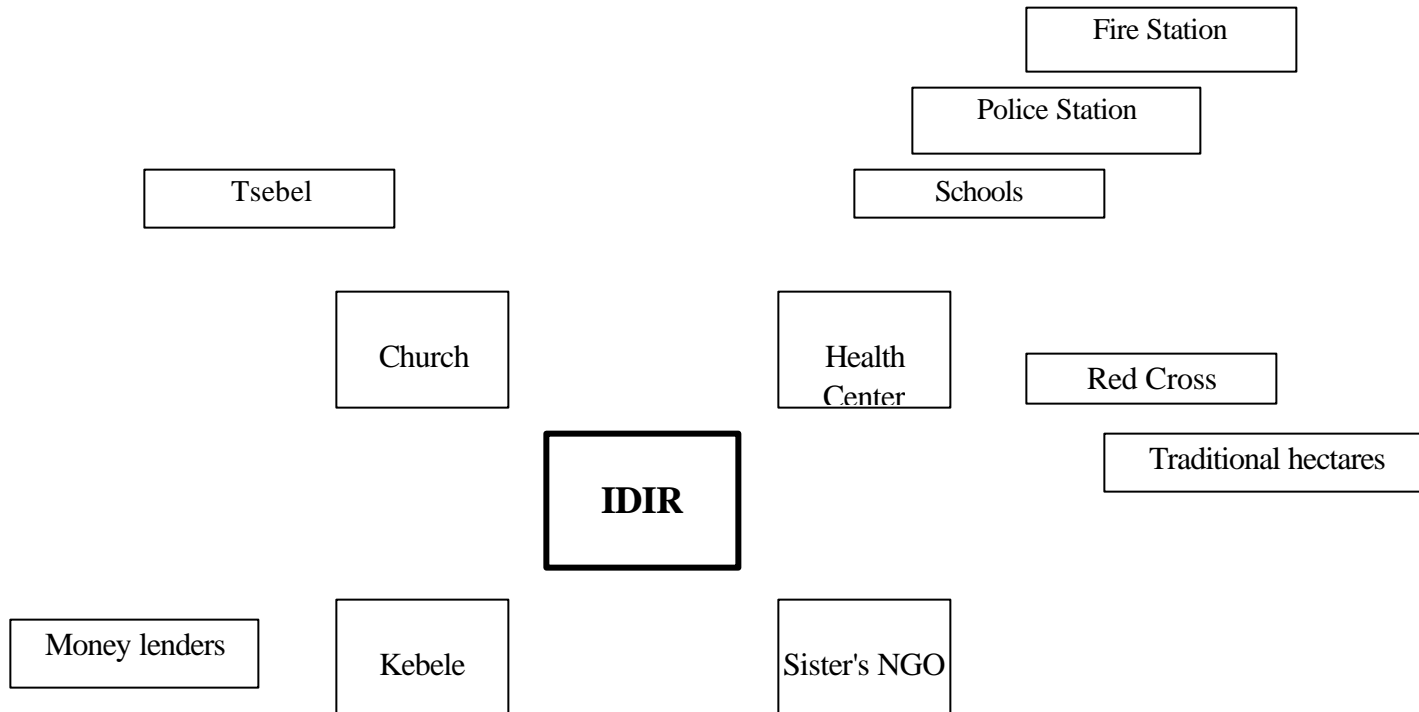


Figure 6
Visual Analysis
Institutions
(Urban Communities)



Elderly

Court

Relatives