Political, Economic and Security Issues of Africa

Ethiopia

Social and Political Issues

Logan Cochrane
Editor

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POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY ISSUES OF AFRICA

ETHIOPIA

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

The chapters in this book were written at a time of significant, rapid change in Ethiopia. Some issues that have emerged during this period of transition – such as mass displacements of people, rising ethnic conflict and a rise in the illegal trade of weapons – are not featured. Keeping track of these developments requires a different form of publishing, which operates on a much shorter timeline (e.g., Cochrane and Zewde, 2019; Cochrane and Mandefro, 2019; Cochrane and Kefale, 2019). We had initially envisioned that this edited volume would include a section on economic issues, but did not receive submissions in that area. Fortunately, Cheru, Cramer and Oqubay (2019) have recently published The Oxford Handbook of the Ethiopian Economy, which readers can refer to for coverage of economic issues.

I vividly remember a conversation I had with Zerihun Mohammed and Asnake Kefale in early 2018. The future of Ethiopia looked bleak. Civil war seemed possible. Around that same time period, I had written that new ways of governance might be unrealistic (Dejene and Cochrane, 2018). The collection of chapters in this book focus on challenges; ones that largely preceded the changes in 2018 and 2019 as well as ones that will continue into the future. It is, however, worth noting the positive changes that have taken place: peace with Eritrea, the release of political prisoners and journalists, the return of opposition parties to the country and to political life,

representative appointments of gender and regions in positions of political power, a clamp down on corruption, a plan for free and fair elections in 2020. Alongside those changes, new challenges have emerged as well. Many of these changes occurred after much of the research presented in this book was undertaken, and as a result these changes are not covered in depth.

This book is presented in four sections, respectively covering issues related to governance, health, gender and land. Several chapters cross multiple thematic areas. Many of these chapters present original research and raise important questions. Not all of the chapters present answers; that was not the objective per se. Many do, however, present potential options and pathways through which the identified issues might be engaged with in the months and years to come. None of the issues are simple, none can be addressed with a top-down technical approach. If anything, this collection highlight the complexity of the challenges being encountered in Ethiopia. Given the uncertainities that exist amidst this period of transition, the people and government of Ethiopia have little room for miscalculation. It is hoped that this collection supports the generation of new ideas, perspectives, and potentially priorities.

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Chapter 1

FREEDOM OF MOBILITY IN AN ETHNIC-BASED FEDERAL STRUCTURE: THE ETHIOPIAN QUANDARY

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ABSTRACT

The Ethiopian experiment with ethnic-based federal system is arguably precipitated by historical grievances that the various ethnic communities had with successive Ethiopian regimes. However, the system that has been put in place to address such historical ills is producing serious impediments for the free mobility of citizens within and across state lines and thereby posing a threat to peaceful coexistence. This chapter is an attempt to provide theoretically and contextually grounded analysis

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attributing the current crisis partly to the constitutional adoption of contradictory conceptions of freedom of mobility and the attendant land ownership rights.

Keywords: freedom of mobility, land ownership, liberalism, ethno-nationalism, securitization, boundary- maintenance, social closure, urban-industrial society, agrarian society

INTRODUCTION

Since the emergence of modern Ethiopia as a nation-state, its political history has been punctuated by conflicts with varying degree of intensity, ranging from passive resistance to violent confrontations. Successive regimes, up until 1991, tried to suppress the unique cultural identities of the country's more than eighty distinct ethno-linguistic groups and at the same time tried to assimilate them into the dominant culture (Keller & Smith 2005). In doing so, these regimes singularly focused on building a highly centralized unitary state and did not see it fit to accommodate the demands of the various ethnic groups for autonomy or self-governance.

Explaining why the regimes in pre-1991 era had turned deaf ear to the notion of autonomy under some form of federalism, Kymlicka (2006) notes that security fears played an important role in the resistance to federalism during these periods. One worry was that the ethnic Somalis were more loyal to Somalia than to Ethiopia, and would collaborate with a possible Somali invasion. Another worry was that Egypt was supporting various minority insurgencies, particularly amongst Islamic minorities, as part of the goal of creating a pan-Arabic and/or pan-Islamic hegemony in the Horn and Red Sea area. More generally, Ethiopia had often seen itself as surrounded by potential enemies, and worried about the extent to which its minorities would be loyal in the event of war with its neighbors. According to Kymlicka (2006), these are almost textbook examples of the 'securitization' of state-minority relations, and history suggests that states almost never accept

multination federalism under these conditions, except as a result of violent insurgency or international pressure.

From the outset, Emperor Haile Selassie and the ruling elite vigorously pursued an assimilatinist nation-building process (that had been initiated by Emperor Menilik) by using the Amharic language and Orthodox Christianity, among others, as an instrument to forge a common Ethiopian identity (Keller 1981; Messay 2019). Regardless, the emperor cultivated both at home and abroad a myth that Ethiopia was a multi-ethnic but unitary nation-state.

However, by the early 1970s, Ethiopia's poverty, gross inequalities, political and economic underdevelopment laid bare the lack of a foundation for such a myth (Keller & Smith 2005). This phenomenon led to protests and violence that ended the reign of the Monarchy and brought about the military dictatorship of Mengistu H/Mariam in early 1970s. But before looking at the era of the military regime, it is important to briefly touch upon the international and geopolitical context of the time and how such a context had shaped the nature of political struggle in Ethiopia.

Due to the changing international environment following the end of the Second World War, the subsequent decolonization movement set in motion in the Third World, and the Cold War ideological divide that structured the world into two contending camps, the political struggle in Ethiopia took on a new dimension. Armed with new theoretical and conceptual tools derived from Marxism and Leninism, the emerging Ethiopian intelligentsia started articulating the nature of Ethiopia's problem. Although the Ethiopian intelligentsia of the time invariably shared the existence of oppression, exploitation and marginalization of the Ethiopian masses, they differed on defining the nature of such oppression, exploitation and marginalization. While some of them wished to articulate the problem in terms of class, some others, such as the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP), were keen to define the problem largely from the national perspective, i.e., taking the "national question" as the primary analytical category. The "national question" was conceived as the existence of national oppression and the need for bringing an end to such oppression by ensuring national self-determination for the various ethnic groups constituting the Ethiopian state.

The disagreements among the Ethiopian intelligentsia on the nature of Ethiopia's problem later proved consequential. Unable to narrow their differences, the cohort turned against each other. The military took advantage of the chaotic situation and seized power. After brutally decimating its rivals, the military junta consolidated its power. Less than two years after the overthrow of the monarchy, the new leaders committed themselves to *scientific socialism* and proceeded to reorganize society to achieve this end. One of the defining features of Ethiopia's brand of *scientific socialism* was the illegitimacy of ethnicity as a political organizing principle (the military regime shared the concerns of the Monarchy's 'securitization' of state-minority relations, i.e., the fear that minorities may not be loyal to the state in case of war with neighboring states). Instead, the ruling regime of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam thought it best to group the public into mass organizations on the basis of their economic or social roles. In doing this, the Mengistu regime failed to effectively address *the national question*. In a final effort to legitimize itself and its programs, the regime created the Worker's Party of Ethiopia (WPE) in 1984, and in 1987 constitutionally established the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE). The new national assembly, attempting to diffuse discontent among regionally- based nationality groups, created twenty-four administrative regions and five autonomous regions (Keller 1995).

The *Derg*, (aka the committee) thus, strived to create a regular Communist *peoples* republic in the name of the *toiling masses*, and aimed at reorganizing the Ethiopian society into a collective and classless socialist utopia. It carried out land reform, uprooted the landed aristocracy, nationalized all land and private property, created a state economy, allied with the Soviet camp, ruled with brute military force, and denied political freedoms or an independent civil society. It instituted a discourse of ethno-regional rights for minorities (*nationalities* in Stalinist vein) but accorded them little autonomy. The economy soon faltered, agricultural policies were a disaster, democratic practices non-existent, and armed resistance movements were a plague until the demise of the *Derg* in May 1991 (Abbink 2009).

In the aftermath of the military overthrow of the Mengistu regime, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) - a coalition of four ethno-nationalist fronts- assumed control of power, marking the beginning of a new political dispensation that has radically reorganized the Ethiopian state. Since the armed struggle had ostensibly been waged on the grounds that despite the fact that Ethiopia was constituted by diverse ethno-linguistic communities, the Ethiopian state, instead of reflecting such diversity, had for long subjected these communities to oppression and had forced them to endure the life of deprivation and indignity (Aregawi 2008). In fact, what had traditionally been billed as the Ethiopian state was nothing more than a state that had effectively been captured by and been the mirror-image of a particularistic group, namely the Amhara ruling class. In other words, the argument was that the existing Ethiopia was not hospitable to the various ethno-linguistic groups that constituted it. Thus, with some variations, the objective of the struggle was to dismantle the system that had legitimized the domination of a particularistic group over the various ethno-linguistic groups and thereby build a new Ethiopia where all the constituent ethnic groups would enjoy equal treatment and respect; to put it differently, it could be said that the armed struggle was arguably aimed at giving birth to a new *Ethiopia* that would be suitable for ethnic diversity.

As Horowitz (1985) argues, among power-sharing options available to the leaders of deeply divided societies, some form of federalism is believed to reduce conflict between and among culturally defined groups since it provides for the exercise of both self-rule and shared rule. In order to address the hitherto sense of domination, marginalization and exclusion felt by the various ethno-linguistic communities constituting the Ethiopian state, the new EPRDF government devised a federal system that is structured along ethno-linguistic cleavages. It decided, in less than two years, that the country would be administratively and politically reorganized, creating what are largely (but not exclusively) ethnically based national/regional governments or states (Keller & Smith 2005). It was the belief that providing Ethiopia's ethnic groups the right to self-determination would lead to peace and provide a new basis for the unity of the country that served as the main reason behind the federal restructuring of the country since 1991.

Ethnic communities were promised that they could exercise their right to self-determination up to secession in the *New* Ethiopia. To this end, the 1994 constitution placed sovereignty in '*nations, nationalities and peoples*' of Ethiopia rather than '*we, the people*' that is common in other democratic constitutions. The constitution has also provided for the adoption of democratic form of governance through which ethnic self-determination and self-development would be mediated. In the new dispensation, each titular group or a group of titular groups was empowered to control a regional state. In this manner, the new constitution recognized the centrality of ethnic cleavages in regulating access to power and resources. The assumption was that if ethnic groups were to exercise self-rule in their respective federal sub-units and participate, via their representatives, in the federal government, it would engender the sense of inclusion on the part of constituent ethnic communities and thereby create a fertile ground not only for better inter-group relations but also for the emergence of one strong politico-economic community. However, when one interrogates as to how the new system has practically been faring vis-à-vis its lofty promises, one cannot help but feel more perturbed than reassured (ICG 2009, 2019; Abbink 2009).

It is true that as is the case with any federal system, the Ethiopian federal arrangement empowers the constituent groups to exercise both shared rule and self-rule. Despite all the imperfections one could legitimately cite in the way these rights have been exercised, there is no denying the fact that the participation of ethnic groups in the federal, regional and local governance, i.e., in both shared rule and self-rule, has become a reality in the new political dispensation. The new order has created opportunities for the hitherto marginalized ethnic groups to gain recognition and to develop confidence in their language and culture, and to exercise a modicum of self-governance. The new federal arrangement has also improved access to resources and power for the hitherto neglected communities. What is more, it has provided ethnic communities with better access to public services, such as healthcare, educational opportunities, civil service jobs, justice system, etc.

In spite of the positive developments noted above, however, the new federal arrangement has also produced and continued to produce its own serious deleterious effects. It has, for example, intensified and elevated

conflicts, especially at the state and lower levels, between various ethnic groups across a vast swathe of the country. The new federal arrangement has also contributed to the emergence of fierce ethno-political competition, exclusionist discriminatory practices, and conflicts over territory, resources, power and budgets (Keller and Smith 2005; Assefa 2006; Vaughan 2006). As Abbink (2009, 13-14) notes, "indeed, in looking at the number of local-level communal clashes – many violent –… it can be said that a conflict-generating dynamic was perpetuated. New conflicts appeared between groups previously not known for having problems." However, these conflicts had largely been confined within the regional subunits and remained local as to be able to pose a serious threat to the central government.

As is well known, the new political structure instituted by the EPRDF was the outcome of an armed struggle rather than a democratic political mobilization. As such, it was from the very beginning beset by asymmetrical power relations. As the armed struggle had been spearheaded by the TPLF, the political organizations that constituted the new governing coalition were themselves creatures which the TPLF brought into existence in anticipation of its impending military victory. In other words, the governing front (EPRDF) was constituted from the start by a coalition of *unequals* (Abdissa 2016). In fact, it could be argued that there were three hierarchical levels in the EPRDF power structure: the nucleus party (TPLF), the three parties in the governing coalition (ANDM, OPDO & SEPDM) and the allied parties that would ostensibly control the five peripheral regional states. Since both the parties in the governing coalition and in the 'allied' category owed their very existence to the nucleus party, their continued access to power and resources was predicated more on their loyalty and deference to the nucleus party than their loyalty to the constituencies they purportedly represented (Abdissa 2016).

Following the sudden death of Prime Minister Melese in 2012 and the subsequent appointment of Hailemariam Desalegn to the post, power struggle intensified between the parties that constituted the ruling coalition. With the 'strong man' gone, especially ANDM and OPDO who had covertly been resentful of the dominance of the TPLF in the governing coalition were

now emboldened to assert themselves and challenge the status quo. On the other hand, the TPLF was determined to maintain its overwhelming dominance in the political, economic, military, and security domains as usual. Locked in such bitter power struggle, the governing coalition lost unity of purpose and thereby undermined the authority and effectiveness of Prime Minister Hailemariam's government. The paralysis and perceived incompetence of the government in addressing the growing economic hardships, corruption, mismanagement and abuse of power shattered public confidence in the legitimacy of the system and triggered an outcry.

Specially in the last four years, intense public protest, initially spearheaded by the 'Qeeroo' (youth) due to a real or perceived sense of economic and political marginalization of ethnic Oromos, has quickly spread across Oromia, the Amhara region and other areas and rocked the nation, eventually forcing the resignation of Prime Minister Hailemariam on February 15, 2018 and the appointment of Dr. Abiy Ahmed as the new Prime Minister on April 2, 2018. Since taking power, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed has taken series of important reforms at a rapid pace (ICG 2019; Andreas and Samuel 2019). But in spite of and/or because of these reforms, ethnic conflict has intensified more in many parts of the country, including in the urban areas (ICG 2019; Tewele & Kursha 2019). The rule of law has been seriously tested with mob justice being carried out not infrequently, and with gun-toting vigilante groups mushrooming in various corners of the country, jeopardizing the security of citizens.

According to the report by the Geneva-based group, Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, IDMC, the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia deteriorated significantly in the first half of 2018, resulting in a total of 1.4 million internally displaced persons. That number has reached 2.4 million in early 2019, making Ethiopia a country with the world's biggest internally displaced population (Tewele & Kursha 2019). It is safe to say that after more than a quarter of a century long experiment with the new federal system, Ethiopia's problems have increasingly become intractable, prompting one to wonder why a system that was ostensibly meant to effectively redress historical ills has produced such pathological signs. How does one account for such state of affairs?

On various occasions in the past, studies have attempted to address problems associated with the new federal system from different perspectives. For example, some studies (Assefa 2006) attributed the problem to the mismatch between constitutionally proclaimed principles and political practice. Some others (Merrera 2006) linked the problem to the contradictory interpretations of Ethiopian history by elites, which have made difficult the creation of national consensus on the modality of democratic governance and the political rules of the game. Still some others (ICG 2009) attributed the problem to a lack of commitment on the part of the governing elite to institutionalize a genuinely democratic system of governance. These studies tend to take the constitution as a given and see the problem as emanating from implementation rather than from the constitution itself. However, this author contends that neither the institutionalization of a genuinely democratic governance nor the achieving of congruity between constitutional principles and practices could effectively address freedom of mobility problems citizens are facing in today's Ethiopia unless one starts to see the constitution as the locus of the problem. In fact, it is the contention of the author that under the current condition, the remedies these studies proposed would potentially lead to further institutionalization of ethnic cleavages and the aggravation of the problem of citizens' displacement and the resulting curtailment of free movement of citizens within and across state lines.

The problem associated with freedom of mobility of citizens in today's Ethiopia can better be explained by explicating the contradictory conceptions of mobility and land ownership by liberals and ethno-nationalists, and by articulating how such contradictory conceptions were encoded in the constitution. As is well known, "…land is of supreme social, economic and even political significance in Ethiopia. Land ownership or access to land has traditionally meant social and economic security. For some it has also meant power and privilege. The land question was perhaps the most critical underlying factor contributing to the revolution of 1974" Keller (1981, 534). As an agrarian society, the livelihoods of more than eighty percent of the Ethiopian population depend, directly or indirectly, on land. And freedom of mobility of citizens is closely related to ownership

rights, particularly that of land. Hence, addressing problems associated with freedom of mobility involves the explication of the contradictory conceptions of ownership of land by liberals (pan-Ethiopianists who espouse individual right) and ethno-nationalists (those who espouse group right). Finally, tackling freedom of mobility problems would also involve examining how the Ethiopian constitution addresses such contradictory conceptions with regards to both mobility and land ownership. And this chapter is an attempt to provide theoretically and contextually grounded analysis linking the current crisis in relation to freedom of mobility of citizens and the attendant land ownership issue to such contradictory conceptions, and the way the constitution mediates these conceptions. To this end, the chapter addresses the following specific research questions:

- How do actors with liberal views and ethno-nationalist views conceive freedom of mobility and land ownership?
- How does the Ethiopian constitution address freedom of mobility and land ownership issue?
- How does the provision of the Ethiopian constitution with respect to freedom of mobility and land ownership, directly or indirectly, shape the behavior of the political actors?

METHODS

In order to address these research questions, different strands of methodological approaches were employed. First, secondary sources, such as extant literature on freedom of mobility and land ownership, were extensively consulted in order to establish solid theoretical grounds on how these key concepts were conceptualized from liberal and ethno-nationalist theoretical viewpoints. Second, upon a close reading of the Ethiopian constitution, textual analysis was carried out so as to shed some light on how the constitution addresses freedom of mobility and land ownership issues. Third, insights from author's personal observations of Ethiopian politics over an extended period of time were also used to inform the study. The

author is a regular follower of Ethiopian politics, has on various occasions, exchanged views with various political actors as well as civil society members on Ethiopia's pressing political challenges, and has been writing political commentaries for the last four years. The insights gained from such engagements were used as valuable inputs in the study.

The chapter proceeds as follows: the first section discusses the conception of freedom of mobility from liberal and ethno-nationalist perspectives. The second section focuses on the liberal and ethno-nationalist conceptions of land ownership. The third section examines the Ethiopian context through the theoretical lenses discussed in section one and two. The last section summarizes the discussions and suggests the way forward.

CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM OF MOBILITY

Liberal Conception

According to Walzer (1990), there are four types of mobility: geographic, social, marital, and political mobility. As is known, the concept of freedom of mobility or freedom of movement is associated primarily with liberal thought. In the liberal view, the four mobilities noted above represent the enactment of liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (Walzer 1990). According to Mau (2010), liberal states are best understood as states organized around liberal principles, such as freedom of choice for individuals, individual liberties, a distinction between public and private, the rule of law and individual rights, and a market economy.

Liberal states are by their very nature bound to principles which put constraints on the way they can enforce social closure. In liberal states, individuals are endowed with rights vis-a-vis the state, and states cannot act like despotic regimes which seek full control of their citizens and of all types of inward and outward mobility (Mau 2010). Liberalism is, most simply, the theoretical endorsement and justification of free movement (Walzer 1990). Thus, in liberal societies, freedom of movement within a state's territory is a socially and politically well-entrenched standard (Mau 2010).

Liberals view the free movement of people as beneficial to individual freedom and the pursuit of individual life projects: The right to go where you want can be considered an important individual freedom. In other words, they believe that freedom of movement has an intrinsic value alongside other values, such as freedom of thought, speech, and association. They argue that freedom of movement presents what Baubock (2009, 7) calls a ‘‘core value of what it means to be free.”

As articulated in Rawls’ (1971) *Theory of Justice*, the first principle of justice states that each person has to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties. And the freedom of movement is listed among other basic liberties, such as freedom of occupation, the right to personal property, freedom of association, and rights to political participation. Freedom of movement is also a precondition for the exercise of other liberal values, such as equality of opportunity, which Rawls (1971) calls the second principle of justice. From liberals point of view, life prospects and opportunities ought to be roughly equal across states and should not depend on the particular political jurisdiction in which someone is living. According to Mau (2010, 342), liberals believe that fair and equal access should allow everyone to attain desirable social positions on the basis of merit and qualification and all should have a reasonable opportunity to acquire these skills. Mau (2010, 342) goes on to argue that geographical access is directly linked to equality of opportunity, as individual life chances, and opportunities ultimately depend on whether people are restricted to certain geographical spaces. Here,

> social mobility can be understood as akin to geographical mobility, because movement in space allows people to leave uncomfortable social situations and positions and to pursue alternative life projects (whether successful or not). Denying exit and access would deprive people of fundamental opportunities and undermine their freedom of choice. Indeed…freedom of movement would enable people to move to places where they can improve, or at least change, their living conditions.

Ethno-Nationalist Conception

In contrast to the liberal conception of freedom of mobility or freedom of movement, the ethno-nationalists' view of mobility or movement is constraining or limiting, owing to ethnicity's proclivity for boundary-maintenance and social closure as opposed to the penchant for openness. This can best be explained by looking at the most important features that characterize ethnicity. According to Kaufmann (2000), there are four important features of ethnic community which seem to conflict with liberalism. These are symbolic boundary-maintenance; exclusive, inflexible and thick ethnic mythomoteurs; the use of ancestry and race as group boundary markers; and the desire among national groups to revive or maintain their ethnicity. Arguing further, Kaufmann (2000) notes how the task of boundary-maintenance is central to ethnicity. From Kaufmann's (2000, 1092) perspective, "Without the entry barriers and assimilation pressures which boundary-maintenance entails, members of an ethnic group would not possess markers by which to identify one another. Boundary symbols also serve the ontological function of providing meaning and existential security to ethnic individuals." In this regard, Kaufmann is in sync with Walzer on the importance of boundaries to the ethnic process, since Walzer (1983, 39) notes that "The distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure and, without it, cannot be conceived as a stable feature of human life. If this distinctiveness is a value, as most people ... seem to believe, then closure must be permitted somewhere."

As Kaufmann (2000) argues, the mythomoteur of an ethnic group includes not only the group's symbolic boundary criteria, but all the elements of its Weberian 'ideal type.' Similarly, in mythic terms, ethnic groups are wedded to particular ethno-histories (oral or written), which tell stories about the group's origin, travails and golden age, just as its 'ethnic maps' outline the group's homeland in all its poetic contours (Smith 1986). Over time, particular stories and figures come to be welded together into a single *gestalt*. In this sense, ethnicity manifests a drive towards selection, particularity and differentiation (Kaufmann 2000). What is clear in the preceding discussion is that while liberals, with their full embrace of

freedom of mobility, oppose social closure, ethno-nationalists see boundary-maintenance and social closure as sacrosanct. Thus, there exists observable tension between liberalism and its conception of freedom of mobility, on one hand and ethno-nationalists quest for self-determination and security of their ethnic community, on the other.

CONCEPTIONS OF OWNERSHIP WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO LAND

Another area that is closely connected to freedom of mobility and where there seems to be tension between liberals and ethno-nationalists is the conception of ownership, particularly with reference to land. In the following sub-section, the discussion of the nationalist and liberal conceptions of land and of its ownership is in order (in this chapter, the terms 'nationalist' and 'ethno-nationalist' are used interchangeably).

Nationalist Conception of Land

A political theorist Levy (2000) contends that contemporary normative theorists of nationalism and ethnicity typically conceptualize nationhood and ethnicity as primarily cultural. That is, they have to do with ways of life, with languages spoken and tales told and values embodied and worth recognized. According to Levy (2000), from the perspective of such normative theories, nationhood and ethnicity are not understood as political matters; nor are they thought to concern material goods in any important way. In contrast to such normative conceptualizations of nationalism and ethnicity, Levy (2000, 197) advances the following argument:

> …nationalism and indigenous ethnic politics cannot be well understood without reference to at least one material good: land. Nationalist and indigenous movements conflict… with liberal societies about the control and possession of land but also about its social meaning,

> the kind of good that it is. Culturalist accounts of ethnicity may be more easily reconcilable with liberalism…; but a liberal political theory which is concerned to mitigate or minimize ethnic conflicts must develop a framework for thinking about disputes over land.

According to him, many ethnic conflicts, nationalist movements, and claims made by indigenous minorities are centrally about land. This is not to deny that they are also about language, religion, a sense of identity, or a way of life; but they are often about how those things relate to possession of, or power over, particular pieces of land. Levy (2000) adds that nationalism celebrates a people's history and culture, but it also celebrates their land. Moreover, it celebrates the link between the two. What is more, Levy (2000, 204) further contends that:

> Nationalism thinks about…homeland in certain recurrent ways. It elides [ignores] the distinction between sovereignty and ownership; all of the land belongs to *this* people, from whom it cannot be taken away. Nationalism typically conceptualizes land as place, not property. *This* piece of land is part of the patrimony of *this* nation. Perhaps it is of particular historical or religious importance. Perhaps the beauty of this spot is a cause for national pride, or perhaps this kind of terrain is taken to embody something about the nation…. Even when the particular piece of land has no such distinctiveness, however, it remains national soil. A people is in some way particularly well-suited to this piece of land. It is where one's ancestors are buried, an important and recurring image.

The political movements of ethnic groups and/or indigenous peoples are about land more than any other issue- about the right to prevent or at least benefit from development on their traditional lands, about the restoration of lands from which they have been dispossessed, and about securing against future losses (Levy 2000).

Liberal Conception of Land

According to Levy (2000, 206-207),

> Liberalism has a very different image of what land is. Land is, in general, fungible [or exchangeable] with other goods. It is alienable- it can be bought, sold, used as collateral for credit, leased, rented, and so on. It is divisible, both in space and in the rights that accrue to it; a plot of land might be divided in half, or its subsurface mineral rights might be owned separately from the surface, and so on. It circulates, as money and other goods circulate; sometimes it is held by one person, sometimes by another. Sometimes it is put to one use, sometimes to another. A piece of land can generally be exchanged for another piece, if not necessarily one of the same size, or exchanged for cash. Moreover, there is no necessary tie between particular persons and particular places…. Land, in short, is property, not place.

And such decoupling of people and land makes mobility an unproblematic exercise in liberal societies.

As discussed earlier, Walzer (1990) has characterized liberal society as importantly marked by four mobilities. These are geographic, social, marital and political. Of these, the first two- geographic and social- are closely related to the flexibility of land. The ability to sell the piece of land on which one currently lives and go elsewhere and buy a new one has always been tightly related to geographic mobility in liberal societies. Since by social mobility Walzer (1990) means not only changes in income but also changes in the way income is earned from one generation to the next, the fungibility of land with other goods has made a tremendous difference here as well (Levy 2000). Thus, a free, democratic, commercial society is thought of as more than simply a state that respected rights of various kinds. It is a society of a particular kind, one characterized by mobility, the rise and fall of elites based on achievement, and certain fluidity (Levy 2000). Thus, the liberal and nationalist/indigenous conceptions of land have conflicted in a number of ways over the years, and as a result, liberals and nationalists often tend to talk past each other on the issue of land (Levy 2000).

MAKING SENSE OF THE ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT THROUGH THESE THEORETICAL LENSES

It seems that there exists tension in the Ethiopian constitution between the liberal and nationalist conceptions of freedom of mobility and the issue of land owernership. With reference to citizens' freedom of movement, the 1994 Ethiopian constitution under Article 32, sub-article 1, for example, states the following: "Any Ethiopian or foreign national lawfully in Ethiopia has, within the national territory, the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence, as well as the freedom to leave the country at any time he wishes to." In connection to the right to property, Article 40, sub-article 1, provides the following: "Every Ethiopian citizen has the right to the ownership of private property. Unless prescribed otherwise by law on account of public interest, this right shall include the right to acquire, to use and, in a manner compatible with the rights of other citizens, to dispose of such property by sale or bequest or to transfer it otherwise." Thus, with respect to freedom of mobility and property ownership, these two constitutional provisions could be said to be consonant with the liberal conception of freedom of movement and the right to property. At least at a theoretical level, these provisions seem to legitimize the freedom of mobility of citizens across regional state lines and their right to make decisions as to where they should live, exercise their right to own property, make a living, and etc.

On the other hand, Article 40, sub-article 3, states that "The right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as of all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the State and in the peoples of Ethiopia. Land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or to other means of exchange." Under the 'Rights of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' codified in Article 39, sub-article 1 provides the following: "Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession." These provisions seem to reflect the ethno-nationalist view of ownership right and of the freedom of movement, albeit in an indirect way

in the latter's case. If land is a common property of 'nations, nationalities, and peoples'- a code name for ethnic collectives- and is not subject to sale or to other means of exchange, citizens cannot exercise their rights enshrined under Article 32, sub-article 1 and under Article 40, Sub-article 1.

As discussed earlier, the task of boundary-maintenance is central to ethnicity, as it plays an important role in establishing markers by which to identify one another. What is more, boundary symbols serve the ontological function of providing meaning and existential security to ethnic individuals. As Walzer (1983, 39) notes, "The distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure and, without it, cannot be conceived as a stable feature of human life." And boundary-maintenance and social closure is the antithesis of freedom of mobility. In order for ethnic collectives to exercise their constitutionally given "an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession," there is no question that they would have to focus on strengthening boundary-maintenance and social closure. The more they do this, the more it constrains citizens' right to freedom of mobility and to property ownership (especially the ownership of land). Because the constitution fuses into one two contradictory conceptions of freedom of mobility and ownership rights, it has given political actors the opportunity to exploit these contradictory conceptions to serve their particularistic interests. In such a manner, it has contributed to the progressive deterioration of situations as the continued evictions, expulsions and displacements of citizens in various parts of the country indicate. As is often the case, the evictions, expulsions and displacements of citizens from regional states are carried out on the grounds that they (the victims) do not belong to the titular groups that ostensibly 'own' these regional states, and by doing so, ensure ethnic boundary-maintenance and social closure.

In order to address these contradictory conceptions with respect to freedom of mobility and the issue of ownership, it is important to start with the examination of the realities on the ground in today's Ethiopia. As is well known, the liberal conception of mobility and its attendant ownership issue is largely predicated on a predominantly urban-based industrial society's context. Such a society is composed of laborers, professionals, business people, industrialists, etc., whose livelihood does not depend on land. In an

environment of competition, they freely move from one place to another in search of a better opportunity. They go wherever life takes them and in their new destination, they can own property, they can rent it, they can buy and sell it, they can pass it onto a third party, and so on, as long as they have the means, Thus, in an urban-based industrial society, citizens and land are significantly decoupled. On the other hand, in a rural-based agrarian society like Ethiopia where more than eighty percent of the population lives in the countryside, the overwhelming majority of citizens' livelihoods depend on land. What defines them is not mobility; it is holding onto their land. For them, mobility is a luxury as they lack requisite skills, training, knowledge, etc., that are marketable. As a result, many of them often live and die without traveling beyond thirty to forty kilometers radius from their abode. With the ever increasing population growth, soil fertility challenge and the conditions of climate change, and the self-serving nature of the political elites, there is an increasing tendency in ethnic hinterlands to jealously guard the rural land against perceived "encroachers" who happen to be ethnic "Others" who have moved to these areas on different historical periods and settled there for a long time.

Here focus is made on the rural context because if one carefully examines mobility-associated problems in urban and rural contexts, he/she would easily notice significant differences. Most of the evictions, expulsions and displacements carried out in different regional states since 1991 (unless in an exceptional situation) are, for example, based in rural areas as could be seen from Ethiopian Human Rights Council's (HRCO) Annual reports published since 1991. However, with all its constraints (such as holding a political office), citizens' mobility in urban areas, i.e., cities across regional states is relatively healthy. In other words, the evictions, expulsions and displacements of citizens based on ethnic identity is almost a rare occurrence in cities across the regional states. Citizens could still own property, engage in business activities, earn wages for their labor, take professional jobs (regulated by supply and demand) and make a living (*save the experiences in the last couple of years where such evictions and displacements have become common in urban areas as well, due to the overall deterioration of the political environment*). Relatively speaking, there is a decoupling of

people and land in the urban context, as boundary-maintenance and social closure is much weaker. Here, we can see the applicability, albeit with a qualification, of the liberal concept of freedom of mobility and of ownership of land. In the rural context, however, the phenomenon appears to be quite different. Here, boundary-maintenance and social closure is intense; the desire to secure 'ethnic homeland' and maintain the ethnic character of one's territory is more acute. As a result, the liberal view of freedom of mobility and of ownership of land does not seem to hold much ground in the rural context; instead, it is the nationalist view that appears to have a field day here.

This phenomenon appears in sync with the analysis of a German sociologist, Ferdinand Tonnies, with reference to the earlier forms of European social organization and European society as it existed in the late nineteenth century. In his analysis, Tonnies (1887, as cited in Baran & Davis 2015) proposed a simple dichotomy- *gemeinschaft*, or folk/traditional community, and *gestellschaft*, or modern industrial society. According to Tonnies (1887, as cited in Baran & Davis 2015), in *gestellschaft*– modern industrial society- people are bound together by relatively weak social institutions based on rational choices rather than tradition. *Gestellschaft* represents "the framework of laws and other formal regulations that characterized large, urban industrial societies. Social relationships were more formalized and impersonal; individuals did not depend on one another for support---and were therefore much less morally obligated to one another" (Fukuyama 1999, 57-58).

On the other hand, in *gemeinschaft*, or folk/traditional communities, people were bound together by strong ties of family, kinship, tradition, and rigid social roles, as basic social institutions were very powerful (Tonnies 1887, as cited in Baran & Davis 2015). As Fukuyama (1999, 57) argues, *gemeinschaft* "consisted of a dense network of personal relationships based heavily on kinship and the direct, face-to-face contact that occurs in a small, closed village. Norms were largely unwritten, and individuals were bound to one another in a web of mutual interdependence that touched all aspects of life." Although the Ethiopian society taken at large can be characterized as a rural-based agrarian society, there is a distinction to be made along

urban-rural divide. Historically, modernity has not been uniformly experienced among the Ethiopian society as development has often had urban-bias (e.g., almost all the industries built in Ethiopia are concentrated in a few urban areas). As a result, the rural society in today's Ethiopia mainly resembles the preindustrial European society, which Tonnies has described as '*gemeinschaft*;' whereas the urban society of today's Ethiopia, more or less, shares the features of the modern industrial society of the late nineteenth century Europe, which Tonnies described as '*gestellschaft*.' Hence, it is hardly surprising that with respect to freedom of mobility and ownership of land, the liberal view seems to prevail in the urban areas, whereas the ethno-nationalist view appears to resonate in the rural context.

CONCLUSION

The Ethiopian experiment with ethnic-based federal system is arguably precipitated by historical grievances that the various ethnic communities had with successive Ethiopian regimes. The constitution, which has codified the terms of coexistence among constituent social groups in a view to effectively addressing such historical ills has unfortunately produced some serious impediments for peaceful coexistence. This phenomenon is partly attributable to the constitutional adoption of contradictory conceptions of freedom of mobility and of the attendant ownership rights in general and land ownership rights in particular.

It is not uncommon to hear, on public and private media outlets, the victims of ethnic-based evictions and expulsions appealing to the liberal aspect of the constitution by accusing the ethnic perpetrators (ethnic majorities that ostensibly own the region or district) of flagrantly violating their constitutional rights to the freedom of movement within the Ethiopian territory and their rights to ownership of property including land. On the other hand, the ethnic perpetrators (through their actions, if not through their public pronouncements) equally appeal to the ethno-nationalist conception of freedom of movement and of the issue of ownership codified in the same constitution to legitimatize their actions. In order to address this problem, it

is imperative that political elites should first recognize the existence of such contradictory conceptions in the current constitution and take concerted effort to find a way to reconcile or at least to narrow down the contradictions in a manner that would promote peaceful coexistence. In order to do this, there should be elite consensus on the need to revisit the constitution and make the necessary amendments.

Secondly, it is also important to recognize the fact that in order to fully translate the liberal view of freedom of mobility and of the attendant issue of ownership, with particular reference to land, priority should be given to bringing about industrial transformation and urbanization, and the creation of an urban-industrial society where citizens' livelihoods do not depend on land. However, this does not happen overnight regardless of how much one desires it. This means that as Ethiopia strives to industrialize as speedy as humanly possible, it should be recognized that it will still continue to be a largely rural-based agrarian society for some time to come. Similarly, it is crucial to recognize that in a rapidly modernizing Ethiopia, clinging to a rigid form of boundary-maintenance and social closure is untenable and counterproductive. Thus, Ethiopians need to find a way to contain the deleterious effects of the nationalist's view of mobility and land ownership, on one hand, and to acknowledge the limits of the liberal conception of free mobility and ownership rights in a predominantly rural-based agrarian society of today's Ethiopia, on the other.

This means that there should be concessions to be made on both sides of the isle, i.e., between the pan-Ethiopianists or liberals camp and ethno-nationalists' camp. With a long term view and broader national interest in sight, elites drawn from a cross-section of society should enter a grand bargain in a give-and-take process and create a win-win situation that would eventually promote peaceful coexistence as a society. And failure to commit oneself to making such concessions in time by both camps would likely exacerbate the already precarious political situation and thereby put the integrity of the Ethiopian state at serious risk.

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Chapter 2

LANGUAGE USE IN MULTILINGUAL ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF SOUTHERN NATIONS NATIONALITIES AND PEOPLE'S REGIONAL STATE

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a descriptive account of language use in Ethiopia by focusing on language use patterns in education, media and administration in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS). Key informants from the regional media, education bureau, Hawassa University and the Council of Nationalities of the SNNPRS provide unique insight into the layers of complexity related to language use. The findings show linguistic rights granted to the ethno-linguistic groups enabled several languages to be codified; it enabled ethno-linguistic groups to use their language in all walks of life; it helped

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some groups to reconstruct their intra-group identity. The linguistic rights, however, have brought no changes for some ethno-linguistic groups as their languages still remains oral and not used institutionally. The lack of language policy and planning has created irregular language use and development patterns in institutions. Languages have also been used as a means for ethnic groups to claim administrative independence. This has been a source of conflict among different dialect speakers of similar languages. Some dialect speakers claim that their language variety is different, and that they do not understand the other dialects of the language. Some dialect speakers decline from using any of the other dialects institutionally lest its use may cause a challenge to intergroup identify. This study suggests language use policy and language planning actions in Ethiopia.

Keywords: diversity, Ethiopia, multilingualism, policy, rights

ABBREVIATIONS

CPD	Continuous Professional Development;
EPDRF	Ethiopian People Democratic Republic Front;
EPA	Ethiopian Phonetic Alphabet;
KI	Key Informant;
KII	Key Informant Interview;
L1	MT;
L2	Second Language;
MoE	Ministry of Education;
MoCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism;
MT	Mother Tongue;
MTE	Mother Tongue based Education;
SNNPRS	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State;
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education Training.

INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to provide an overview of language use patterns in education, media and administration of the Southern Nation, Nationalities

and Peoples' Regional state.The study is significant in that it uncovers the irregularities in language use with implied inequality of languages and the language users. These in turn have effects in education quality, socio-economic development and maintaining basic human rights.

The paper is meant for diverse readers as it is less technical, and uses less profession jargons. Because it covers wider topics: education, media and administration in relation to language use, transdisciplinary researchers and readers may find it worth reading. The findings will cross-sectionally help language planners, educators, administrators, human rights activists and politicians as language use is important to all these agents.

Background

Ethiopia is a mosaic of languages and cultures (Awoke 2007) with diverse ethnic groups living adjacent or interspersed. The exact number of languages and ethnic groups is debated and dynamic ranging from 75 to 98 (Wedekind 2002; Yonattan 2014; Záhořík and Teshome 2009). The language use situations and ethnic grouping of the country is not static, being influenced by a range; the very number ethnic groups is dynamic and varying due to number of factors such as migration, urbanization and education. Not all ethnic groups in the country align with the languages they speak. Hudson (2012; 1999) identified the dynamic nature of ethnicity and language by comparing the 1994 and 2007 Ethiopian census and reported that the "2007 census reported 85 Ethiopian ethnic groups vs. 80 of the 1994 census, and the 2007 census reported 87 Ethiopian mother tongues vs. 77 of the 1994 census" (Hudson 2012, 204). The complexity can be attributed to differnt factors, such as language death (Ex: Masmas and Ethiopian Murle/Alangach) which cause the existence of ethnic groups without language; problem of differentiating language and dialects, which is affected by politics and attitude (Hudson 2004); ethno-linguistic group that were considered one may be divided; thus, become different groups as it was experienced by the Silte, which was considered Gurage (Fekede 2015, 6).

Similar to debate on the number of languages and ethnic groups, there is no consensus on the classification of Ethiopian languages particularily with internal sub-classifications, it is ever changing. The languages spoken in Ethiopia belong to two super families: Afro-asiatic and Nilo-Saharn. Afro-asitic consists of six sub-families; of which, Semitic, Cushitic and Omotic are spoken in Ethiopia.The Omotic language was initially considered part of Cushitic until it is considered separate sub-family of Afro-asiatic. The Omotic language showed several linguistic features different from cushitic including tone. It is also spoken only in Ethiopia unlike the other language families spoken in the country. Of the Nilo-saharan super family, some of them are spoken in Ethiopia. All the three sub-families of Afro-asiatic and a few languages of Nilo-saharan are sopken in the SNNPRS where this study focuses.

Regarding linguistic rights in Ethiopia, it is worth highlighting the issue in three Ethiopian constitutions; namely, the 1955 constitution of Ethiopia, which was revised in the 1931 (www.Chilot.me), the 1987 constitution of People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Negarit Gazetta 1987), and the 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (www.wipo).

According to the 1955 constitution, the "official language of the Empire [Ethiopia] was Amharic" (Article 125). The Ethiopian constitution in the Dergue regime (1974-1991), which was redrafted in 1987, stated that the "People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia shall ensure the equality, development and respectability of the languages of the nationalities" (Article 2(5)) and that "Ethiopians are guaranteed freedom of speech, press, assembly, peaceful demonstration and association" (Article 47). It specified the official language in Article 116, as: "Without prejudice to article 2 sub article 5, of this constitution, in the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia the working language of the state shall be Amharic". The 1995 constitution of the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Republic Front (EPDRF) made no significant changes with regard to linguistic rights granted in 1987. The main linguistic issues stated in the 1995 constitution, in Article 5, include:

1. "All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition.
2. Amharic shall be the working language of the Federal Government.
3. Members of the Federation may by law determine their respective working languages".

In Article 29(2), it adds: "Everyone has the right to freedom of expression without any interference. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice".

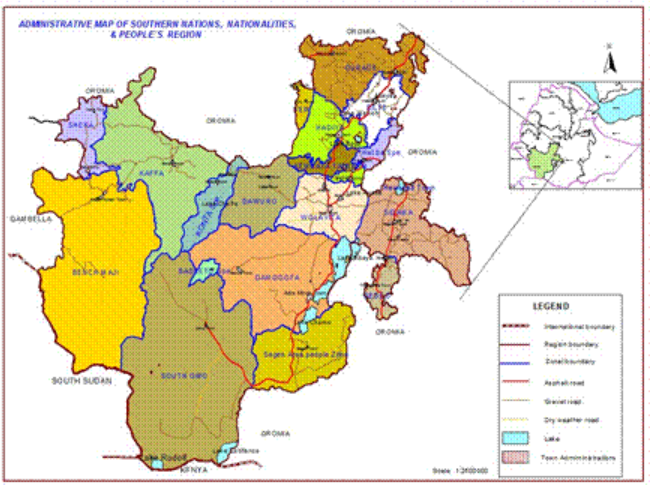

Figure 1. Administrative map of SNNPRS (Source: SNNPRS Finance).

The linguistic rights given to everyone in Article 29(2) is restated as a group right in Article 39 as "every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history".

Regional states of the federation have been organized based on settlement, language, identity claim and consent as stated in Article 46: "States shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the peoples concerned". The SNNPRS has been different in this regard since it has 56 ethnic groups and languages. Thus, the

delimitation of this state does not satisfy the linguistic, identity and consent criteria, and in fact after two decades, some of the ethno-linguistic groups have recently claimed separate regions, zone administrations, etc, based on group identity and language. Figure 1 shows the administrative map of SNNPRS.

Methods

The scope of the article is limited geographically to the SNNPRS where 56 languages of Semitic, Cushitic, Omotic and Nilo-Saharan sub-families are spoken, and temporally to the period from 1994 to the 2018.

The research follows cross-sectional descriptive design and qualitative methodology. It draws upon key informant interviews and document analysis, including policy documents and available data in the education bureau and in the media. Three KIs from each of the four institutes; namely, Council of Nationalities of the SNNPRS, South Television and Radio, Bureau of Tourism and Culture, and Hawassa University were selected purposefully based on their knowledge of the region as well as institutional language use. The KIs were largely used to verify and triangulate the data from different sources, collected documents and available statistics in the regional bureaus.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

There are about 56 nationalities[1] and 19 Cushitic, 25 Omotic, 10 Nilo-Saharan and 2 Semitic languages[2] in SNNPRS. In fact, a few of the

[1]A nationality is used in the sense used by the Council of Nationalities of the SNNPRS. It may refer to ethnic group or 'nation' though the very existence of a 'nation' in the country can be questioned.

[2]The two Semitic languages, Silte and Guragina, were considered one at least politically until the Silte group claimed Separate identity and was considered a separate group. The so called Guragina language also consists of 11 dialect clusters with different levels mutual and/or unidirectional intelligibility.

nationalities speak more than one language and/or dialect; some others have lost their language, and shifted to another language. Therefore, the number of languages spoken in the region does not necessarily correspond to the number of ethnic groups.

Language Use in Education

Language use in Ethiopian education since 1994 has been one of the most contested policy issues (cf. Seidel and Moritz 2009; Daniel and Abebayehu 2006). Based on the 1994 Ethiopian constitution, the Ministry of Education ratified an Education and Training Policy (ETP) in which language use in education is a part. The core issues stated about language use in the ETP education are expounded as follows:

> "Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages. Making the necessary preparation, nations and nationalities can either learn in their own language or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution. The language of teacher training for kindergarten and primary education will be the nationality language used in the area. Amharic shall be taught as a language of countrywide communication. English will be the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education. Students can choose and learn at least one nationality language and one foreign language for cultural and international relations. English will be taught as a subject starting from grade one. The necessary steps will be taken to strengthen language teaching at all levels" (MoE, 1994, 23-24).

Of the 56 languages recognized constitutionally in the SNNPRS, 29 languages (53.7%)[3]in the SNNPRS are used as a medium and/or taught as subject; the rest 26 languages (46.3%) are not yet in school use for several

[3] At country level, 46 languages are used as a medium, a subject or both.

reasons, such as dialect variation, lack of educated persons to teach the language, major languages dominating the minor languages use, etc. Amharic is used as medium in most of the schools where mother tongues are not used as a medium, such as Gurage. Some languages use their neighboring dominant language, such as Mao people using Kafenoono. English is taught as a subject in all grade levels, and it becomes a medium of instruction from grade 5 to the university. That is, bi(tri)-medium is used in schools in the region. The number of languages used in education in the region since 1994 has been ever increasing; the bar graph in Figure 2 shows the number of languages since 1994-2018, based on their genetic relationships:

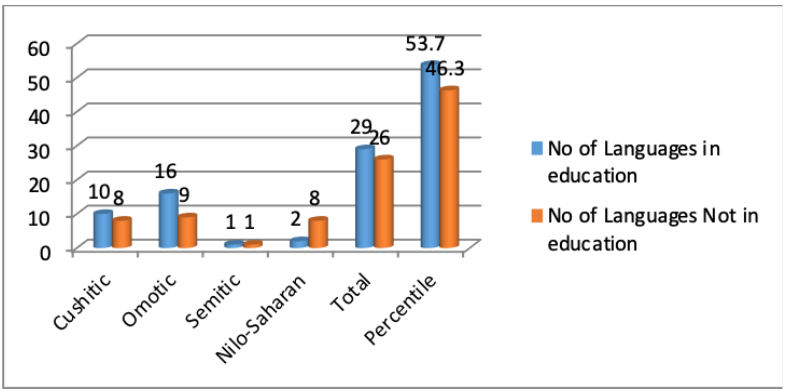

Figure 2. Mother tongues in & outside school system in the SNNPRS.

The numbers of languages used in education (29) are only slightly higher than those that are not used (26). This may be an issue regarding equity and fairness.

Associated with language use in education are (i) script choice (ii) language use pattern in the bi(tri)lingual model and (iii) quality of education, discussed in what follows.

Script Choice

Since there is nothing stated in either the constitution or education policy about script choice, ethno-linguistic groups began using different scripts to

write their language, mainly Latin or Ethiopic. This made Ethiopia not only multilingual, but also a multi-script user. Prior to 1994, the script for most Ethiopian languages, if they were written for any purpose, used Ethiopic script though this has not been constitutionally restricted. Figure 3 shows the current script use pattern:

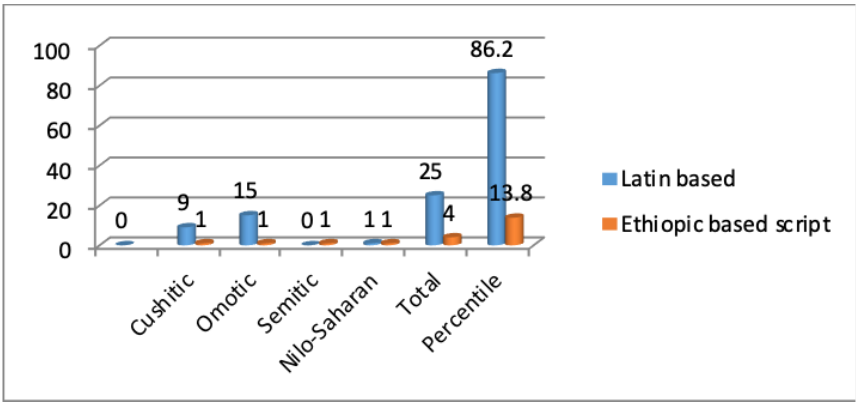

Figure 3. Script choices in the SNNPRS.

Of the 29 languages used in mother tongue education in the SNNPRS, only 4 (13.8%) languages (Silte, Qabena, Basketo and Surma) use Ethiopic script. The rest, 25 (86.2%) languages use Latin script. Thus, script choice to a large extent is tending to Latin. Latin based orthography preference by the majority, according to KIs, is because Ethiopic script does not handle length, gemination and a few unique symbols. What is more, as to the KIs, there was a negative attitude towards Amharic language, which was considered the language of the rulers who dominated other ethnic groups. The attitude towards Amhara people was associated to the Amharic language and at the same time to the Ethiopic script with which Amharic is written.

According to the KIs, there have been complaints on the Latin-based script, which was chosen in favor of Ethiopic, elsewhere in the region. One of the challenges is that students confuse some sounds of the mother tongues with English, which is also in the school system. For instance, the letter ‘c’ is pronounced either as a/k/ as in the word ***cat*** or /s/ as in the word **city**, but

in most of the mother tongues in the SNNPRS, /c/ represents /ʧ'/, an alveo-palatal ejective sound. Similarly, the English sound /x/ represents an alveolar ejective /t'/ as in Sidaama. It is confusing because /x/ represents /z/ or clusters of /ks/ as in the initial and the final /x/ in Xerox in English, respectively. A second challenge is that Latin script use has created an intergeneration gap: adults cannot read the languages written with Latin script though some can read and understand when the language is written in Ethiopic. KIs also reported that the Latin-based script is difficult for second language learners who would like to study mother tongues written in Latin if they come from non-Latin based script use tradition.

Language Use Pattern in Education

Since the language use policy with regard to development direction of mother tongues is not specified, the pattern in which mother tongues are used in the school system in SNNPRS is not uniform.

There are different bilingual education models (Hornberger 1996; Fekede 2008; Benson 2004). Five of the most commonly recognized language use models are: (a) *submersion* which mainstreams non-native speaking students into regular L_2 classrooms with the aim to assimilate the L_1 learner to L_2 which may result in subtraction of the L_1. (b)*transitional* bilingual education model that teaches content area with the mother tongue language but teaching the student another L_2 and/or L_3. The objective of this program is assimilation and L_1 reduction like the submersion model. (c) *maintenance* bilingual education in which learners are transitioned into $L_{2(3)}$ content classes, & continue receiving content in L_1, that is, they become literate in both languages; the main aim of this type of education is to promote bilingualism and biliteracy with aspired result of linguistic pluralism or an additive bilingualism. (d)enrichment or developmental bilingual model in which $L_{2(3)}$ and L_1 content classes may be separated initially, but the goal is to have the students of both language background studying content classes in both languages; the goal is development of biliterate and bilingual individuals with expected result of pluralism or additive bilingualism. (e)immersion is the case where majority language speakers learning an L_2 with large numbers of minority language(s) speaking

children, such as Oromo language speakers learning Amharic with all other Ethiopian language speakers; the aim of this model is pluralist with expected result of additive bilingualism.

Generally, based on their goal, the bilingual education models assume either *assimilation or additive bilingualism*. In the assimilation goal to L_2 or pluralism, L_1 and L_2 function together with the results in subtraction of L_1; *submersion* and *transition* models serve this purpose. The pluralist goal results in *additive bilingualism* because both L_1 and L_2 are maintained and/or developed, the *maintenance*, *enrichment*, and *immersion* models have these roles.

Now, based on these classifications of bilingual education model, let us look into the trends of bilingual education in Ethiopia in general and in the SNNPRS in particular.

The bilingual education in Ethiopia falls into two categories. This is demonstrated with languages in the SNNPRS to be more focused. Most of the languages, 18 (62.06%), including Dizi, Zayse, Konso, Benchenon, Meenit, Shekinono, Oyda, Qabena, Libdo, Gidicho, Basketo, Yemsa, Koorete, Dashitte, Halaba, Tenbaro, Surma, Aari tend to follow *transitional bilingual education model*. So far, they are used as a medium and/or taught as subject in grades 1-4. From grade five to a university, the medium is English, which is also taught as a subject; Amharic which is taught as a subject from grades 1-4 continues until it may be dropped by students in grade 10. The goal and outcome seem *assimilation and subtractive*, respectively. However, since the students learn English as a foreign language, and there is no native like control of the language, the students cannot assimilate to English. There is some tendency for some students to be assimilated to Amharic without subtraction of the students' mother tongue due to the classroom language use.

The other 11 languages, (37.93%), can be grouped into the maintenance bilingual education (MBE) model as L_1 is used as a medium in grades 1-4, and students are shifted to English medium in grade five to the university levels, and at the same times the L_1 is taught as a subject from grades 1-10 (Kamabata and Konta), from 1-12 (Silte, Kafinono, Dawro, and Gedeofa),

and in the university in Diploma and BA programs (Sidamuafo, Wolayta, Hadiyyisa, Gamo and Gofa and in 2018 Kambata and Dawro).

The general trend, however, seems for most languages to go for the MBE model. The languages that already moved into the MBE are the one that have begun MT education earlier, and have already developed capacity of human and material resources that are required for MT education. The languages in the transitional bilingual education model are the one that began MT education more recently, yet they are attempting to increase the grade level in which their L_1 is taught as a subject. It seems, it is a matter of time, finance, and other material and human resource for all the languages in the SNNPRS to follow the MBE model, unless and otherwise there is revision in language use policy of Ethiopia. In fact, the education road map of 2018, which is in progress, proposes a flexible language use policy in education while proposing MT use in grades 1-6, Amharic as language of wider communication is to be taught from grade 1-12, and English to be taught as a subject from grade one, and to be used as a medium of instruction from grade seven to the university level.

Quality of Education

The main purpose of using mother tongues in education is to improve education quality by making language use easy. It has been voiced by UNESCO that mother tongue or native language is *natural instrument of thought* and *communication* (UNESCO, 1953). In fact, there are other sociological reasons for introducing MTs to school systems, such as maintaining group identity, language maintenance and political independence discussed in section 2.4.

Despite the aspired goal of making education easier, thereby improving its quality, it was found that quality of MTE is at risk due to a number of factors. Methodologically, the way mother tongues were taught needs improvement. A survey report of early grade reading assessments (Smith et al. 2012) showed that students in the SNNPRS performed low in reading in their mother tongue. This has been attributed to the curriculum materials and teaching methods used. Recently, a new curriculum was developed to tackle the problem in seven mother tongues across Ethiopia. Three languages:

Wolayta, Hadiyya, and Sidama in the SNNPRS were parts of the pilot program. Materials were prepared and trainers were trained in these three languages. The curriculum was piloted since 2014. If effective, this will be transferred to the other mother tongue teaching programs in the region.

It was reported by the KIs from the Bureau of Education in the region that the government has been working hard to train teachers in in-service and at regular programs. Most teachers having certificates from teachers training institute have been upgraded to diploma level and those who had diploma to the first-degree level. There is a continuous professional development (CPD) as well.

Despite these efforts, KIs reported, there are complaints that teachers recruited for trainings for due teaching of mother tongues are the last resort (recruited after the high scorers have joined preparatory schools and the Technical, Vocational Education Training (TVET) program). According to the KIs, this has two main problems:

i) Trainees with poor education background complete with poor teaching skills and knowledge thereby creating vicious circle in education quality.
ii) As government has to re-train to upgrade the skills of poorly trained mother tongue teachers, it incurs more expense.

Another problem mentioned by KIs is that the education bureaus in different zones do not clearly and timely report the progress of curriculum in mother tongues, which are often developed in the respective zones. On the other hand, the Education Bureau of the SNNPRS is not well informed when some MT education programs are launched, so there are a few ways of making follow ups.

Another missing link mentioned by the KIs is that orthography development takes place by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Education Bureau on the other hand recognizes the MT languages only when they are used as a medium or a subject in schools. Thus, there are no ways for the two stakeholders to work together beginning from the orthography development and syllabus design to the use of the medium. It was reported

that in some cases, ethno-linguistic groups develop their language orthography by themselves without the knowledge of MoCT and MoE; and then they begin the mother tongue education program for subsequent negotiation with Education Bureau of the Region for recognition and license. Mareqo mother tongue education program in the Gurage Zone is one of the cases in point.

The participants of the study further reported that students could not use English as a medium after they have learnt it for four years (grades 1-4) as a subject. Thus, using English as a medium in grade 5 seems implausible (Birhanu 2009; Fekede and Hailu forthcoming).

Due to all the factors outlined here, the envisaged improved quality education is not well achieved in the region; implying that MTE implementation strategies need revisiting and strict follow ups.

Language Use in Media

The 1994 Ethiopian constitutional linguistic right and the follow up language use in different media has brought significant changes in language use patterns. Several government-owned media, community radio and televion, and private owned radio and television, which were not allowed prior to this period, came into use. In the SNNPRS alone, 47 of the officially recognized 54 languages are used in media at different levels and varied distributon of air time.[4] What is more, some of the ethno-linguistic groups whose language is not used institutionally as in media and schools, such as Gurage, use the airtime assigned for them to broadcast information about their localities, but they use Amharic. With regard to Gurage, it was reported that Amharic is used as an option because a particular Gurage dialect choice and use for institutional settings is found to be a problem.

[4] At country level, 55 MTs are used in community radio, 25 in FM radio, 5 in national and foreign radio broadcast, 5 in TV entertainments, 8 in News casting, and 9 in relegates (Alemayehu, 2016).

Table 1. Languages in Media in the SNNPRS

Cluster	Area set	Area coverage
1	Wolkite	Hadiyya, Halaba, Gurage, silte and Yem
2	Waka	Dawro,Wolayta, Konta, Kembata, and Tembaro
3	Arbaminch	Gamo, Gofa, Oyda, Gidicho, Zayse, Darashe, Konso, Ale, Basketo, Mashole, Mossiye, and Kosome
4	Jinka	Dasenech, Ari, Maale, Dime, Bana, Tsamay, Hamer, Nyangatom, Dasenech, Arbore, Kara and Bodi
5	Fisha Genet	Gedeo, Kore, and Burji
6	Mizan	Bench, Sheko, Dizi, Me'enit
7	Bonga	Kefa, Sheka, Na'o, chara, and Majangir
8	Sidama	Sidama only

The access for media is made possible through clusters of stations and substations connected in the form of relay (shown in Table 1). The ethnolinguistic groups are enjoying listening to information in their own language. It was found by KIs that media in their own language is particularly useful for those who do not understand language of wider communication, such as Amharic. They add, it also helps to maintain languages and cultures by providing institutional support. Several setbacks in the programs have also been mentioned. because the air time given for some ethnolinguistic groups is too short, an hour or two, they have to transmit just developmental issues such as agriculture and health only; hence, entertainment in their language is marginalized. Some ethnic groups suffered from script challenges; they have airtime for media use yet the language is not codified and has no orthography. They had to write news in Amharic and transliterate it with a latin-based script, which is less consistent, to suit their personal news casting.

Another importance of mother tongues in media is that some of the local languages, 29 of the 49, are also used in education. Some of the languages used in media to transmit education include: Hadiyyissa, Kambatissa, Gedeoffa, Kontatswa, Qabena, Dawro, Wolayta, Sidamuafo, Siltigna, Mareqo, Gamo and Gofa.

A few of the major problems in media use mentioned by the KIs include:journalists leaving job for better pay and place of work; short area

coverage, and lack of journalists for some languages which are not yet in use institutionally. It was reported that expansion works were done in Hossana, Sawla and Sheka to solve area coverage problems.

Language Use in Administration

The most common function of language is its use in administration and communication of different domains: media, home, market, churches and mosques. Administration is a domain in which language is used to govern as in parliament, court and other political affairs. Language of administration is chosen largely based on political decision at national, regional and zonal levels.

Language use in administration since the 1994 declaration of linguistic rights in the SNNPR has been shaped and reshaped based on linguistic needs on one hand and sociological factors, such as ethno-linguistic identity and language maintenance on the other (cf. Cochrane and Yeshtila 2018). We shall consider some of these changes in language use patterns in administration.

To begin with, the language of administration in the SNNPRS was Amharic. On the other hand, the administrative language of Sidama Zone, whose administrative capital is also Hawassa like that of the SNNPRS, was Sidaamuafo. The different administrative language use within the same town, Hawassa, has been both an opportunity and challenge. It was an opportunity for Sidama native speakers as they could understand their language, institutionalize it, maintain it and use it as means of expression of self-identity. It has, however, been challenging for non-native speakers of Sidama and those who do not speak Sidaamuafo as a second language. This meant having to hire translators even to write an application in Sidaamuafo. All site maps for Hawassa town were issued with Sidaamuafo, education in elementary school had to be offered in Sidaamuafo and non-Sidaamuafo speakers had to learn without a choice of the language. The situation has created burden on non-native children in school and non-native adults in all administrative positions. Due to these challenges, the language use in

Hawassa has been reversed to Amharic language use. Now students have an option to choose either Amharic or Sidaamuafo as a medium of education, particularly in towns, such as Hawassa and Yirgalem.

Following Sidama, other linguistic groups such as Wolayta, Kembata, Hadiyya and Gedeo became languages of administration. Since these languages are dominantly spoken in their respective zones, and the zones are largely inhabited by native speakers, the challenges that were observed in the Sidama Zone were less.

Non-native speakers had the rights for translation only in courts; and in other administrative situations they had to pay a cost in all the zones where MTs are used for administration. According to the KIs, language use in administration has particularly been helpful in the court where many customers understand only the local languages, and in providing health education in hospitals and clinics. Judges, however, found the local languages partly problematic for two reasons. First, some judges do not understand the local language. Second, court decisions in most cases have to be translated to Amharic, particularly when the case has to be reported to the higher court.

Despite the associated drawbacks, language use in administration has been preferred by native speakers for two main reasons: linguistic and in-group identity and language maintenance. For instance, the KIs asserted that their language is part of their identity and that they have to use it in administration, education and media. In fact scholars affirm that language expresses social identities (Fought 2006, 21-23), "is a profound indicator of identity, more potent by far than cultural artifacts such as dress, food choices, and table manners" (Wardhaugh2006, 6),and "is among the most salient dimensions of group identity" (Sachdev 1995, 42).

A few of the participants also emphasized that using their language in administration is a constitutional right and that they want to exercise it.

Despite the language use rights in administration, only 10 out of 56 ethno-linguistic groups have managed to use their language in administration. KIs provided several reasons for this. Some ethnolinguistic groups preferred Amharic as language of administration because it is all inclusive and accommodative. Some zones, such as Gurage had more than

one ethnic group; hence, it is impossible for them to use all their languages and had better use Amharic.

The language use status in the SNNPRS in the three domains; MTE, media and administration is summarized in Table 2:

Table 2. Language use status in the SNNPRS

Domains of Use	No of Languages	Percentile
Mother Tongue Education	29	53.7%
Media	49	90%
Administration	10	18.5%

The summary table shows that 90% of ethno-linguistic groups had air time assigned for them for broadcasting though some of them are not using their mother tongue. More than half, 53% of the languages are used in education at different levels. The least, 18.5%, of the languages are used in administration.

Language and Politics

Language in politics is a kind of interface in that all language use is associated with political power. All decisions of language use, including national official language, language of wider communication (lingua franca), and language uses in different domains and geographical areas are the result of political orientations. In this section, our focus is on language used as marker of identity, specifically for the sake of political independence of different administrative levels. Several ethno-linguistic groups have made requests for administrative autonomy, such as a separate ethnic based regional government (e.g., Sidama), or a different ethnic based administrative zone (e.g., Konso), and separate ethnic based district (e.g., Dent'a and Kucha) in the SNNPRS, and only a few of them have managed to achieve their goal. Table 3 presents some of the independence requests

made by ethno-linguistic groups, the language claimed as a mark of identity, and the result obtained:

Table 3. Language and independence request

SN	'Ethnic group'	Language	Result
1	Silte	Siltigna	Became independent
2	Wolane	Wolenigna	No
3	Dent'a	Kizigna	No
4	Donga	Kizigna	No
5	K'ucha	K'uchigna	No
6	Dorze	Dorzign	No
7	Gezo	Gezogna	No
8	Menja	_____	No

The 'ethnic' groups in Table 3 requested the Council of Nationalities of the SNNPRS. Some of them went to the Federal State's Council of Nationalities when their case was declined. The context the ethnic groups that made the requests are as follow.

Silte has been part of the Gurage Zone, and after fierce struggle to be 'Silte' by reconstructing a separate identity, it was recognized as a different group and became an independent zone. Language was the main criteria used for being different, though there were other factors, such as being a Muslim, claimed to have originated from Harar, and other political factors. Wolane is a district in the Gurage Zone, and the people speak one of Guragina varieties, Wolane. Wolane still claims that its language is different, and deserves a different identity with aspirations of administrative independence.

Dent'a is a group that lives in Hadiyya Zone. It used to consider itself Hadiyya, but it recently has claimed a different identity, Dent'a Dubamo. The people claim that they originated from Amhara region and their forefather was Dubale, which became Dubamo in Hadiyya. They claim that they originally spoke Amharic, but over time they developed their own language, Kizigna, a mix of Kambata and Hadiyya.

The SNNPRS council of nationality studied their language and found that it was not different from the language of Hadiyya. Dissatisfied with the decision, the Dent'a group went to the Federal State's Council of Nationalities for reconsideration of the decision made by the council of nationalities of the SNNPRS. The Federal Council of Nationalities made a study on the languages of Dent'a. It was found that 'Dent'a language' shared much lexicon with Kembata than with Hadiyya, yet the similarity among the three was (70%). The claimed Dent'a identity and administrative autonomy was denied by the Council of Nationalities of the Federal Government as well.

Donga are group of people living in Kembata-Tenbaro Zone and speak Kembattisa, the language of Kembata. The people claimed a different identity, having Amhara origin, and requested independent recognition. Like Dent'a, they claimed that they had a language Kizigna, which is no longer spoken. It is not clear whether Dent'a and Donga have a similar origin, as they both claim Amhara origin, a similar language named Kizigna. Though Donga is recognized as a different group in identity, administrative independence was not granted.

K'ucha, Dorze, and Gezo belong to Ometo language clusters of Omotic languages. All the three argued that their language variety is different and claimed separate administrative and ethnic autonomy. None of them were granted the claimed ethnic identity and the administrative autonomy.

Of all the groups who requested independence, Menja was the only one that does not have its own language to claim. It speaks the Keffa language, Kafenono, which is spoken by Keffa people. The Menja are despised minorities who are largely excluded from the majority due to their food habits. As these groups do not have their language which identify them as different linguistic unit on one hand, and the dominant power of the majority Keffa on the other, the Menja were not recognized as independent groups administratively.

In short, language has been used as a political weapon to claim in-group identity and administrative independence though the result in most cases was not positive. Currently, most Ethno-linguistic groups of the SNNPRS are requesting separate linguistic based *regional identity*. So far, Sidama,

Gurage, Hadiyya, Wolayta and Keffa have officially requested a separate regional autonomy.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The Ethiopian constitution grants each nationality the right to develop and use its language. This is a great opportunity because there are countries that limit language use rights to one or a few major languages. Now, ethno-linguistic groups have developed self-confidence to use their language. However, the open-ended language use grant has been questioned by several authors particularly with regard to official language choice and use (cf. Midega 2014).

In the Ethiopian context, once a mother tongue is in the education system, the Ministry of Education at the national or regional level supports the efforts, such as in teachers training and material development.

Bringing 29 languages in 25 years of time into school use is a great success. These languages now have orthographies, textbooks, dictionaries of different sorts, and primers for some of them. These partly guarantee language development, thereby keeping the languages from endangerment. There were several problems to mother tongue use in education. It was expected that mother tongue use improves education quality; however, this has not been achieved (cf. Smith et al. 2012). Language use patterns in education have been irregular. Script choices have been based on political motivations rather than pedagogical advantages; it largely attempted to use a Latin-based script, and tried to avoid Ethiopic, which was associated with politically dominant groups. It was reported that Ethiopic cannot handle gemination, length and some sounds unique to particular languages in the country. Teachers recruited for mother tongue education training were those who could not join other programs, such as technical and vocational education and nursing.

Language use in media was relatively a success story though there is no equity in air time assigned, and that some ethnic groups could not use their mother tongue but a lingua franca.

Language use in administration was limited to a few languages, and it has been evaluated both positively and negatively. On positive side, it has partly solved the problem of local languages speakers who do not understand the lingua franca of the country, Amharic. The setback is that local languages and/or dialects have been used with political motives with unintended consequences of ethnic conflicts (cf. Inglehart and Woodward 1972 and Fishman 1972 for misuse of languages).

Recommendations

Based on the finding, we recommend the following:

- Based on the Ethiopian constitution's linguistic right, a clear language use policy that include language status and language use patterns in all domains should be made available.
- For intergroup communication, national unity, and inter-regional mobility, there should be a national official language.
- There should be language use implementation strategy at national, regional and zonal levels.
- The direction of mother tongue use and development patterns need to be fixed, and teachers' recruitment and trainings should be improved.
- Ethiopian linguistics should develop Ethiopian Phonetic Alphabet (EPA) and orthographic convention to solve the existing problems in using Ethiopic.
- Bureaus of Tourism & Cultures, Education, and Information & Communication should support nationalities whose languages are not used institutionally to guaranty equity, access and fairness.

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Chapter 3

CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FORMAL SOCIAL PROTECTION IN ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

We analyze capacity of the Government of Ethiopia to implement the formal social protection system in Ethiopia. We draw on data from federal, regional and community levels, the latter two drawing upon a case study from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The findings suggest that the formal social protection system in Ethiopia faces several challenges, which range from ideological barriers to limitations in capacity of financing as well as incoherence and a lack of coordination. Overcoming these challenges requires a concerted effort that extends beyond technical interventions.

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Keywords: institutional capacity, dependency syndrome, institutional inconsistency, formal social protection, Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Ethiopia faces serious challenges in meeting the basic needs of all its residents. Of these challenges are the scale of the need and the financing of them. However, less discussed is the ability of the agencies at different levels of government to design, manage and implement effective programs. This chapter looks specifically at institutional capacity within the context of the formal social protection system in Ethiopia. Our conception of institutions is based on Hollingworth's (2000, 602) approach, which views institutions broadly as, "norms, rules, habits, conventions and values both reflect and shape the preference of actors." Hollingworth's definition captures both formal and informal institutions, however we focus only on the formal social protection system.

Formal social protection is not new to Ethiopia. One of the first examples of a formal social protection institution could be traced to 1963, with the introduction of the social security system for public servants and the military by the Imperial government (MoLSA 2012). There is a deeper history of formal and informal mechanisms that could be considered as 'social protection', but our focus here is the contemporary manifestation and evolution of institutions and initiatives (see Teshome 2013 for examples of informal social protection systems among some of the cultural groups in Ethiopia). In the current institutional arrangement, social protection is not implemented solely by one ministry, albeit the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) has taken the lead in the development of both the social protection policy and strategy. However, it is the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources that is one of the key implementing agencies of social protection, including the largest social protection program, the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP). MoLSA considered health and education as components of social protection, and therefore the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education are key actors as well. Examples of their

programming include that the Ministry of Health is implementing the National Nutrition Program (NNP), the Community Based Health Insurance and the Ministry of Education is implementing the School Feeding Program. As a result, 'institution' here is not singular, but multiple.

CONTEXT

Social protection takes many forms, but of its most basic is ensuring basic needs are met for the most vulnerable. In Ethiopia, with a population largely reliant upon rain-fed agriculture and livestock livelihoods, droughts have been a major cause of vulnerability (Pankhurst 1985, 1964, Woldemariam 1984, Driba 1995, Kiros 2005). However, until recently the country lacked a capable formal social protection system that could have at least minimized the impact of recurrent droughts. This section covers the history of the development of social protection in this area to provide an example of how these institutions have manifested over time.

The revised Imperial constitution of 1955, in Article 36, stipulated that: "The Emperor as sovereign has the duty to take all measures that may be necessary to ensure, at all times, the defense and integrity of the Empire; the safety and welfare of its inhabitants, including their enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental liberties recognized in the present Constitution…" (Empire of Ethiopia 1955). The regime, however, was criticized for its failure to ensure the welfare of the people (see Adhana 1988, 1996; Woldemariam 1984). The establishment of the 'food shortage committee' (FSC), under the then Ministry of National Community Development and Social Affairs, was not based on a decree or directive of some kind; it rather was by the 'direct order' of the Emperor with a letter signed by the then Prime Minister (see Seifu [2005 E.C] 2013, 41). Seifu ([2005 E.C] 2013), who was employed at the Ministry at the time and who was the secretary of the FSC, observed that the committee was a collection of few dignitaries struggling to deal with a formidable nation-wide problem, which required a strong institution with sufficient financial and human capacity. That, however, was not the case. The FSC was overwhelmed by reports of food

shortages and consequent deaths from famine and epidemics. The FSC proposed a tax exemption for famine-hit areas, however, that was not accepted as a suitable solution amidst deaths due to hunger (Seifu [2005 E.C] 2013, 48; Woldemariam 1984). This first institution was under resourced, under staffed and encountered bureaucratic barriers to conducting their work (Seifu [2005 E.C] 2013, 50).

The Imperial regime was blamed for its unresponsive behavior in addressing the emergency crises during the Tigray (1958) and Wollo (1973) famines. Many lives and livestock were lost due to those famines and the lack of emergency response (Zewde 2002, Kiros 2005, Pankhurst 1985, Woldemariam 1984). It was near its demise when the Imperial regime established the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, in 1974, which Dawit Woldegiorgis (1989) claimed to be the last decree signed by the Emperor before the politics of famine, coupled with other governance problems, resulted in his downfall (Adugna 2006 E.C. [2014], Dejene, Semela and Haug forthcoming). The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission was a weak institution of 'a seven man work force' struggling with transportation and other infrastructural hurdles during its inception (Adugna 2006 E.C. [2014], 272).

The military regime (known as the 'Derg'; 1974-1991) exploited the famine politics, including Dimbleby's documentary exposé of the Wollo famine (Adugna 2006 E.C. [2014]), in its rise to power. However, it was not proactive, or effectively reactive, in addressing drought and famine crises. This regime encountered one of the greatest famine events in modern history, in 1984. Diriba (1995) argues that the Derg was occupied with a protracted civil war and was reluctant to devote limited resources to tackle poverty. This inaction led some commentators to label it "obstructionist" in prioritizing war efforts over famine relief (Perry 2008 cited in Lautze Raven-Roberts and Erikneh 2009, 7).

However, new initiatives emerged during the military government that would provide the basis for the future shape of social protection related to the vulnerabilities of drought. The institutions that would later manage them also developed significantly under the Derg. Examples of this included the provision of emergency relief and establishment of food-for work programs

(Holt 1983; Humphrey 1999), resettlement initiatives (Rahmato 1989; Pankhurst 1990) and villagization programs (Lirenso 1990), which were managed by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC 1985). The latter two of these large-scale interventions ended up in crises, mainly due to a lack of proper planning and a lack of consent by the people involved, contributing directly to tens of thousands of lost lives (Adugna 2006 E.C. [2014], Seifu 2005 E.C. [2013], Pankhurst 1990, Rahmato 1989, Lirenso 1990). The military government was hesitant to receive support from international donors (Woldegiorgis 1989, Pankhurst 1990), with the exception of military support, as some "feared that the West would use the crisis as an opportunity for Western penetration of Ethiopia" amidst the Cold War era (Lautze, Raven-Roberts and Erikneh 2009, 7). This fear turned out to be accurate, as some international donors opted to funnel emergency aid through rebel held territory, rather than through the sovereign government (Cochrane 2017). Although significant efforts were undertaken, the military government made little progress in alleviating the vulnerabilities related to drought.

The incumbent Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF, 1991-Present) government was sensitive to the 'fear of aid dependency' (Humphrey 1999). This ideological grounding would inform much of its efforts. For example, in its disaster prevention policy, which came into effect in 1993, the new government sanctioned that 'any able-bodied person' should not be entitled to aid (Humphrey 1999, Dejene Semela and Haug forthcoming). This position became increasingly problematic as Ethiopia encountered several drought-induced catastrophes that left millions of people food insecure and in need of emergency food aid (Kiros 2005). The undertones of this ideological stance remain to this day, as the main modality of largest social protection program operates in the form of a food-for-work initiative. Despite the launching of Africa's second largest safety net program in 2005, recent droughts in 2015, 2016 and 2017 have resulted in millions of people in need of emergency food aid. This highlights the scale and complexity of social protection, despite running what is considered an effective safety net program (Hoddinot et al. 2013, Berhane et al. 2013). The recurrence of drought-induced hunger to the level

of needing a wide-scale emergency relief in areas, including PSNP *woredas* after a decade of running the PSNP has suggested the program may have not not been as effective as hoped (e.g., Rahmato 2013, Dejene and Cochrane 2019).

The EPRDF government developed the country's first 'social protection' policy (although it did not use that language). The Developmental Welfare Policy, launched in 1996 (see MoLSA 1996), was in place until 2014. A new Social Protection Policy was approved in 2014, followed by a Social Protection Strategy in 2016, which provided new direction to the expanding social protection initiatives. The national Social Protection Policy has five areas of foci. These are: 1) Promoting Development Safety Net 2) Promoting Employment Opportunities and Improving Living Conditions 3) Promoting Social Insurance, 4) Promoting the Fair Enjoyment of Basic Services and 5) Providing Legal Protection and Support for Citizens Exposed to Violence and Oppression.

Social protection initiatives related to the vulnerability of drought developed by the EPRDF include the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) which covers nearly 8 million people in food insecure woredas (Rahmato 2013), the Urban Productive Safety Net Program (UPSNP), which was launched in 2016 and operational in almost all regional capitals, the National Nutrition Program (NNP), the School Feeding Program which aimed to reach nearly 19 million school children (GoE 2013), Pilot Social Cash Transfer Program (which is being piloted in some regions like Tigray and SNNPR), the Pilot Agriculture Insurance initiative, and Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI), which has been expanded to many areas including the capital Addis Ababa and in some parts of the Regional States.

Due to its severity and potential for large losses of life in Ethiopia (estimated at 100,000 in 1958, 250,000 in 1966, 300,000 in 1973, 800,000 in 1984 and 100,000 in1999/2000) (de Waal 1999, Devereux, 2009, Dorosh and Rashid 2012, Gill 2010, Sen and Dreze 1999, Wolde Giorgis 1989 cited in Cochrane 2017), famine attracted much attention. These needs tend to be seasonal or temporary. However, there are large populations within Ethiopia that are in need of sustained support that have received little attention and little to no support. For example, the elderly aged 65 and above (estimated

at 4.7% of the entire population) (see MoLSA 2012) who are not covered by either the public servant or private organizations pension modalities, people with disabilities are estimated as between 1% and 14% of the population (see MoLSA 2012, Tirussew 2005, WHO 2011), and orphaned children estimated at nearly 4% of the population (MoLSA 2012). To provide some context, is estimated that 95% of people with disabilities in Ethiopia live in conditions of poverty (Tadele 2008 E.C. [2016]). While this section highlighted progress of initiatives related to drought prevention and famine relief, very little has been done regarding these populations.

METHODS

We employed a qualitative research design for this study. We used document analysis, interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) as methods. Based on a cascading approach, the study pooled data both from federal, regional state and community levels. The community level data was drawn from communities in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State. We interviewed policy makers and held FGDs with Community Food Security Task Force Members both at *woreda* and *kebele* levels. We also held FGDs within communities. The individual interviews included a Member of Parliament, who was the chair of the Social Affairs Standing Committee from the House of People's Representatives (HPR) and high-level officials from Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) (including the Director of Social Security Development Directorate and an advisor to the Minister). These policy makers were selected because they were involved in crafting the present Social Protection Policy, which came in effect in 2014. Community FGDs aimed to substantiate issues expressed by PSNP clients. The researchers also bring an experience of over two years of research in these communities as background to the data collection. Data for this study was collected in two rounds, the first from May to September in 2017 and second round in July 2018. We analyzed the data from both the FGDs and the interviews using thematic categorization of issues (Maxwell 2013).

ASSESSING CAPACITY

In this chapter we argue that a multitude of factors have contributed to the weakness of institutional capacity with regard to designing and implementing the formal social protection system in Ethiopia. A factor that has garnered some attention results from a dependence on uncertain and unpredictable donor funding (e.g., Swedlund 2017). However, there are also compounding challenges of planning, coordination, capacity and domestic financing. There are layers of administrative inconsistencies at horizontal and vertical levels within the governance systems. In addition, there are ideological assumptions, including the government's apprehension of dependency and its assumption that informal (community) systems are inclusive and act as broad-based support mechanisms.

Fear of Dependency and the Formal Social Protection System in Ethiopia

One of the challenges of establishing a strong social protection system in Ethiopia has been a lack of priority setting, and specifically a fear of dependency. The fear of dependency emanated from Ethiopian authorities' view of establishing an institutionalized system as "institutionalized beggary" (see Lautze, Raven-Roberts and Erikneh 2009, 8). This concern has deep ideological roots. Empirical records both from the Derg (Pankhurst 1990; Woldegiorgis 1989; Lautze Raven-Roberts and Erikneh 2009) and the incumbent EPRDF (Humphrey 1999, Lautze, Raven-Roberts and Erikneh 2009) regimes indicate that the respective governments held this fear, which negatively affected the establishment of strong formal social protection institutions. As a result, rather than addressing issues systematically, the government has relied upon periodic emergency assistance during times of crises, which has been ad hoc, costly and unpredictable. Paradoxically, given its fear of individual dependency, this has fostered federal dependency for funding social protection programs as emergency programming was largely funded by international donors. The international community may have even

done too much, creating 'fungibility' issues, where the government does not feel the need to finance social protection.

Our data does not support the fear of 'dependency syndrome' by the government. In the case of the safety net, one participant argued that the 'dependency' logic could not work, because the daily transfer rate by the PSNP was on average 20% less than any daily labor payment in their community. In his own words: "For example, the PSNP daily rate is around ETB 39.5, but the minimum rate for any daily labor activity in our area is ETB 50." Another participant, a Kebele Food Security Task Force Committee member, opined: "The 'dependency' argument does not make sense. We see the transfers by the PSNP as a short-term solution." He continued: "I do not even believe the PSNP transfers [in the form of Public Works payments] have the capacity for transformational change beyond cushioning temporary shocks [transient poverty]." That said, all the community participants were appreciative of the Public Works component of the PSNP (as a social protection program) because it offers a predictable transfer for 6 months in a year, unlike other emergency supports that happen on ad hoc basis. The low level of payment may be linked to financial capacity, but may also be related to the ideological roots of developing a system that individuals are unlikely to become reliant upon. On the other side of the argument, however, is the idea that since the payments are so low, the government is effectively fostering dependency since no one is actually able to 'graduate' and overcome food insecurity based on their participation in the program.

Before departing from the idea of dependency, we wish to make it clear that the current social protection programs in Ethiopia do not suggest they are creating a negative dependency (i.e., people would be unwilling to work). That, however, ought not to be generalized to programs in the country (e.g., those offered by NGOs) or all donor countries.

Problem of Planning and Design

During the Derg, the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) Constitution, under Article 21, states: "The state and society shall progressively expand health, pension, insurance and other forms of social security services in order to improve the well-being of the people" (PDRE 1987). While it developed many large-scale initiatives (e.g., resettlement and villagization), the ideological grounding of these programs were socialist in nature and assumed that rural communities would become self-sufficient. As a result, national social protection was not something it understood to be needed, nonetheless prioritized. Article 10(2) stated: "The state shall ensure that human settlement patterns correspond to the distribution of natural resources in order to create favorable conditions for development," which resettlement and villagization would enable. The villagization 'motif' was conceived under Article 10(3): "The state shall encourage the scattered rural population to form consolidated communities in order to free rural life from backwardness and enable the people to attain a better social life" (PDRE 1987). The then president Mengistu stated that the nation needed to break away from the shameful "beggary" and instead use its own resources to feed its people (Pankhurst 1990, 121). However, the newly established community institutions did not translate into capable institutions (Rahmato 1989). In these instances, there were planning and design failures throughout; as earlier noted, government resettlement efforts resulted in tens of thousands of lost lives.

The EPRDF government introduced a range of policies and programs pertinent to social protection. Planning and design have significantly improved during this period, and the PSNP is just one example of this. Evaluations of the program suggest that it is well-targeted (Hoddinot et al. 2013, Berhane et al. 2013). Improvements in design and planning, however, have not been equally matched by improvements in implementation, or arguably a feedback and learning system that would enable design and planning to improve based upon implementation. Without such change, implementation appears to be point where challenges emerge. However, as programs like the PSNP have been running for nearly fifteen years, one

cannot only point to implementation. Examples of the implementation challenges relate to the level of support unable to overcome food insecurity, which results in low levels of graduation. They also relate to significant delays of payment, far locations of payment, politicization of selection, amongst others. These will be discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

Capacity and Financing

With respect to financing social protection, the Derg and EPRDF were seen as subscribing to what Goodin (1988) called a 'resourcist' view among the theories of welfare. This 'resourcist' excuse for the respective governments' failure to establish a strong social protection system emanated from the way provisions were articulated in the respective constitutions that Hollingsworth (2000) in his approach to institutional analysis called 'meta rules'. Both the PDRE (1987) and the FDRE (1995) constitutions made the provision of social protection/social security subject to the availability of resources, and their realization to occur in a 'progressive' fashion. Given the limited financial resources available to the government, this provision appears reasonable. However, the unintended consequence is that such initiatives are given low priority or are easier to defund when other priorities emerge. It also creates the potential for exclusion, as not all people have equal rights to social protection and thus the government may selectively implement programming based upon the resourcist justification.

Financing social protection has been a concern for the government in Ethiopia. According to the adviser to the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, given its large population and modest economy, Ethiopia cannot universalize social protection (personal interview September 2017). The Director for Social Security Development Directorate held a similar view. The 2014 Social Protection Policy paved the way to making the government the major responsible entity, but fell short of guaranteeing rights (personal interview September 2017). There are some notable improvements. For example, Ethiopia is heavily dependent on international funding for social

protection and disaster response interventions yet, the government's contribution in funding them has improved in recent years (Dejene and Cochrane 2019). An important move which may boost the government's capacity and financing, as argued by the two policy makers from MoLSA, is the establishment of the national social protection fund (personal interview September 2017). Data from the ILO (socialprotection.org) indicates that most of the nations in Africa could afford to universalize basic social protection coverage, should the political commitment be there. Using ILO's social protection floor and data, Dejene, Semela and Haug (forthcoming) argued that the 'resourcist' excuse does not hold true, and that Ethiopia could establish a basic, working social protection institution by universalizing old age pension, social transfers for those with severe disabilities (labor constrained poor) and orphaned children.

The capacity issue is also of personnel. The Director for Social Security Development Directorate contends, "There is also limitation in availing a cadre of social protection service providers. So, we need to invest in human capital development. We need to identify the "need" (personal interview September 2017). An example of the system limitations is that the system has no social workers that can promote the social protection policy and work towards its proper implementation by concerned stakeholders including the society (Teshome 2013). Staffing at the local level experience high rates of turnover, with little to no institutional learning, resulting in new staff navigating complex issues and often repeating implementation mistakes. Other components of the present social protection policy, such as 'Promoting the Fair Enjoyment of Basic Services' and 'Providing Legal Protection and Support for Citizens Exposed to Violence and Oppression' need continuous community education, engagement and promotion of social justice. However, no such community level personnel exist.

At the local level, staff are often tasked with multiple roles resulting in a system that is stretched beyond its limits. For example, at the community level, the health extension worker, community chairperson as well as the agricultural extension workers, are all supposed to manage the PSNP. In the case of the Food Security Task Force Committee, participants of our focus group discussion pointed out that most of these members are busy with their

own office or commitments, as the safety net work is an additional task for them. Low levels of local capacity are manifested in other forms as well. For example, in order to obtain the public servants' pension, pensioners need to travel to areas where a Commercial Bank operative exists. One of our key informants argued, "until very recently in some regions like Amhara, for example, pensioners have to travel to woreda centers to receive payment as there were no responsible institutions or a system at their respective vicinities. In some areas "pensioners have to pay 50 Birr for transportation, to receive a payment as small as 100 Birr" (personal Interview July 2017). Attempts are being made to address these challenges by using a mobile payment system, M-Birr, but this will not work in all places due to network unavailability. Key informants also concur with this view and suggest that strengthening local level capacity of the Labour and Social Affairs need to be prioritized. The Labor and Social Affairs structure which is supposed to be the focal organization in the implementation of the present social protection policy has not had *woreda* level structure, albeit some developments in some regions towards such (personal interviews September 2017).

Administrative and Institutional Arrangements

Throughout the country, there are inconsistent institutional arrangements for organizing social protection activities. This occurs in multiple forms. One basic form at the federal level is that programs are implemented and coordinated by different sectors, resulting in duplication of efforts and inefficiencies. For example, the PSNP is coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the school-feeding program by the Ministry of Education and the National Nutrition Program by the Ministry of Health. Yet, there is no information management system (see MoLSA 2012), such as a single entry registry system, to track the potential duplication of efforts (Adviser to the Minister, Personal Interview September 2017). There are also inconsistencies related to the temporal dimension, as there have been reshufflings and rearrangements made across

time. For example, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission has been reorganized several times since 1991 resulting in different arrangements at Zonal and Woreda levels (its woreda level structure was organized once as an independent office, another time under the woreda administration council and again under the agriculture sector). A third layer of administrative and institutional inconsistency is that each regional state has its own organization, which do not align across the regional states.

Consider the challenge of regional state inconsistencies when the federal government aims to roll out social protection. One of the Members of Parliament outlines that "some regions organize the Labor and Social Affairs structures as an Agency (e.g., SNNPR), some as Bureau (e.g., Oromia, Amhara, Addis Ababa). Afar recently restructured the Labor and Social Affairs sector from Bureau level to Agency. Gambella upgraded the structure of Labor and Social Affairs to Bureau level. Harari structured it as an office." This is not simply a matter of size or semantic; when the system is organized as a Bureau, the head is an automatic cabinet member in the respective regional government with a direct privilege to set agenda and convince the government better than other level arrangements where the institutions do not have such privilege (personal interview July 2017). As a result, not all regional states have equally able Labor and Social Affairs institutions. The result of these inconsistencies are low levels of coordination across the system.

Government Dilemma on Social Protection

Governments have used the wide range of informal social protection mechanisms among the society as an excuse for their reluctance or delay to establish a capable formal social protection system. For example, in the Developmental Social Welfare Policy (1996-2014) most of the responsibilities were left to the community as in "it calls for empowering communities to use all available personal and institutional capacity in problem-solving efforts at the community level" (MoLSA 1996, 77). Stated or unstated, there is an assumption that informal systems are inclusive.

However, they often replicate existing power structures and marginalize the poorest and most vulnerable. We, however, agree with Devereux and Getu (2013) in their suggestion that informal social protection mechanisms have been given insufficient attention in sub-Saharan Africa, nor are we suggesting that Ethiopia has fully realized the potential of its riches of informal social protection systems. The dilemma for the government is how to empower communities, while it has always maintained strong control of government-funded programs.

Both of the policy makers we interviewed from MoLSA contend that one of the limitations of past social protection activities was that they undermined the role of the state in ensuring the well-being of the society (Personal Interviews, September 2017). The DSWP reflects the government dilemma of conceiving social protection narrowly just as rehabilitative and preventive. Apart from the relief assistance given during disasters, social protection has not been considered as encompassing basic services to be provided to citizens, but as an 'alms' to be given, provided resources permit. However, this misconception is not limited to the government, but also shared by the public, who linguistically consider social protection as charity (እርዳታ) to be provided only in a time of crisis.

The present social protection policy, according to two of the policy makers involved in its crafting, was an attempt to address the limitations of its precedent, the DSWP (Personal Interviews, September 2017). There, however, are instances that suggest the government is still in dilemma about the role and nature of social protection. Some services, such as the universal social protection for the elderly aged 70 and above are not yet realized, albeit promised in the policy document (Dejene and Cochrane 2019). This government dilemma, as suggested earlier, takes its root in the Meta rules, as the constitution suggests a 'progressive' realization of the right to social protection so long as the resources allow (see Dejene, Semela and Haug forthcoming). Weather insurance, urban safety nets and public health insurance are yet to become operational at significant scales, largely limited to pilots.

The present social protection policy outlined 12 social protection initiatives that are going on at different scale. These are: 1) Social Insurance

Program (pension), 2) The Food Security Program which subsumes the PSNP in it) 3) Provision of Basic Social Services including health and basic education 4) National Nutrition Program 5) Support for Vulnerable Children (that is reported to be done by MoLSA through community care coalitions at kebele levels) 6) Health Insurance that includes the Community Based Health Insurance which has been at pilot stage for long and now being expanded in some areas promoted by the Ministry of health in collaboration with other sectors like Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, 7) Disaster Risk Management which addresses emergency relief issues being administered by National Disaster Response and Preparedness Agency, 8) support to persons with disabilities which includes physical rehabilitation services and rights promotion for people with disability 9) Support for Older Persons which is coordinated by MoLSA 10) Urban Housing (which is administered by Ministry of Urban and Housing) and Grain Subsidies, 11) Employment promotion which is being handled by various sectors and 12) Community based social support which is promoted by MoLSA at pilot stage in some regions like SNNPR. Some of these initiatives have not begun, others are still at pilot stage and the question remains, how long should it take to fulfill those provisions, given that years have passed since the policy came into effect.

CONCLUSION

The Ethiopian formal social protection system is faced with various challenges. The challenges among others emanate from ideological concerns of fear of dependency, of planning and design and related to capacity and financing. The formal social protection system gained constitutional grounding during the Derg, and has expanded in activities under the EPRDF government. Progress has been made in some areas, such as in the safety net, but it remains weak in others, such as serving other populations in society with specific needs and/or challenges. A range of inconsistent arrangements – at the federal, regional state, and temporal levels – foster low levels of

coordination, inefficiencies and duplication of efforts. The different regions, for instance, organized the Labor and Social Affairs (which is theoretically expected to be a focal institution for the implementation of social protection) differently; one as a Bureau, another as an Agency and even as an Office in the case of the Harari Regional State. Such arrangements may seem of minimal significance but in the present federal arrangement, Bureau level structures seem better positioned to set and champion their agenda as their respective heads are members of the regional cabinet. The other structures, on the other hand, need to go and convince the Bureau level structure they are accountable to, so as to relay their agenda. Ethiopia needs to alter the ideological roots that foster a fear of dependency, which has negatively impacted the design and prioritization of its social protection system. Given its rapidly growing economy and growing tax base, the country needs to reconsider the capacity and financing excuses, which have delayed the implementation of a basic social protection system.

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Chapter 4

THE GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM (GERD): AN EVOLVING DYNAMIC OF NILE POLITICS

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and the various benefits and challenges it poses for Ethiopia's development and political power in the East African region. It argues that while the GERD has helped shift the balance of power from downstream riparian countries, it has introduced new political challenges that have considerably raised the stakes of promoting an equitable distribution of resources. The paper adopts two central aims: (1) to analyze the political stakes of the GERD, particularly as they relate to Ethiopia's role in promoting regional stability; and (2) to examine how the GERD has changed the dynamics of regional stability. It concludes that the GERD has

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raised various implications for regional conflict and for meeting other important political challenges.

INTRODUCTION

The ongoing construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) raises many challenges for developing and integrating the political and economic sector of Ethiopia. It is estimated that the GERD will cost 4.8 billion dollars. In having paid nearly three billion dollars for the project, Ethiopia has been able to independently cultivate its own economic ties with other riparian countries via the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) and to facilitate the construction of the GERD (which accounts for nearly five percent of Ethiopia's current Gross Domestic Product (GDP)). As of December 2018, the Dam was at 60 percent capacity, and is expected to reach full capacity at the end of 2022 (Al-Youm 2018). When it is completed, the GERD will become the largest hydroelectric dam in East Africa and the seventh largest in the world.

Thus, the GERD is expected to increase the regional political power of Ethiopia and to fundamentally alter the way that riparian countries benefit from the flow of the Nile waters. Perhaps more importantly, it will help to shape the potential success of the CFA and as such, replace the unfair terms of the colonial agreements that allowed Egypt and Sudan to extract nearly 85 percent of the Nile's flow. In effect, the GERD has become a political game-changer in the region.

This chapter seeks to examine this game-changing event and process. It addresses the following question: How has the GERD allowed Ethiopia to shape the dynamics of regional stability? We argue that while the GERD has helped shift the balance of power from downstream to upstream countries, the shift has introduced new political challenges that have considerably raised the stakes of promoting an equitable distribution of resources. Given this, we shall analyze these challenges of promoting regional cooperation. The GERD, as we shall see, has allowed Ethiopia to assume a leading role in regional politics. But convincing Egypt of this has been difficult and it is

unclear how Ethiopia will continue to deal with the effects of Egypt's continued resistance to the GERD.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ever since the Nile has been the Nile, empires and countries have sought to control the river basin for over 7,000 years. The basin flows through eleven countries—Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The headwaters of the Nile has its origins in Burundi and Rwanda. This tributary is known as the White Nile. The other major tributary, the Blue Nile, originates at Lake Tana in Ethiopia, and is known as the Blue Nile. The Blue Nile contains the majority of the river's water and silt.

When Europeans arrived in force to the region in the 1800s, many of these countries jockeyed for control over the basin. Ultimately, the British would assume the most dominant position, along with many other aspirants—the French, Italians, Germans, Russians, and Belgians. Now, in the twenty-first century, Ethiopia, along with other upstream riparian states, are playing an increasingly more dominant hand.

To understand the current geopolitics of water in Ethiopia and the eastern African region, one needs to go back to when the British colonized the region in the 1890s. After displacing the Mahdi in Sudan, the British consolidated their control in what came to be known as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (Collins 2008). One key event that secured Anglo/Egyptian control over the water resources of the Nile was a 1902 agreement that created a border between Sudan and Ethiopia, prohibiting water projects along the Lake Tana shore, the Blue Nile, and Sobat Rivers in Ethiopia. In 1906 an agreement with the Congo did away with the construction of water projects along the Semliki and Isango Rivers.

Once these agreements were in place, the British crafted the *Nile Water Agreement* of 1929, signed between Britain and Egypt, which granted Egypt the right to inspect any upstream Nile water projects that it thought would compromise the river's flow to Egypt. In addition, the agreement allotted

Egypt nearly 48 billion cubic meters of water of the 83 billion cubic meters of the Nile's total annual flow.

The rationale that was used to justify this nearly absolute control over the Nile's water flow was that Egypt was more dependent on the Nile than other Basin areas and countries, and that these other areas, which receive more rainfall than Egypt, have the potential to tap into other supply alternatives. In addition to these arguments, it must be noted that the British wanted to secure Egyptian supremacy over the Nile, since Britain wanted to retain control over the Suez Canal, which at that time was considered as the gateway to India for the British.

The final major agreement was signed in 1959 after Sudan achieved independence from the British (1956). Under the 1950 Agreement, signed by Egypt and Sudan, Egypt would receive three-quarters of the total water volume, increasing its share of water rights to 55 billion cubic meters and Sudan's to 18.5 billion cubic meters. The increased share meant that virtually 90 percent of the flow was controlled by downstream countries. In time this would generate revenue for Egypt to finance the building of the Aswan Dam in 1971, which would ensure its military prowess in the region, particularly against the other Nile riparian states that had recently gained statehood (Djibouti, Uganda, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania and South Sudan). As such, none of these states held any independent rights or access to the Nile. Ethiopia, for instance, was still gripped by ethnic conflict and was engaged in a violent border dispute with Eritrea. Ethiopia was particularly opposed to the agreement since over 80 percent of the Nile's water flow comes from the Ethiopian Highlands. The overall effect of these agreements was that Egypt controlled all upstream and downstream projects. As we shall see, they have enabled Egypt to engage in divide and conquer strategies as the GERD dam inches towards completion.

To note one example, in January 2018, geopolitical strains between Sudan and Egypt over who owns the Hala'ib Triangle on the Red Sea resurfaced, leading Khartoum to recall its ambassador from Cairo (Dahir 2018). In retaliation, Egypt sent hundreds of its troops to a United Arab

Emirates military base in Eritrea, while Sudan responded by closing its border with Eritrea and sending more troops there (Dahir 2018).

The agreements that were set into place by Britain and Egypt in the early to mid-twentieth century are vestiges of colonial and neo-colonial rule that began passing into history as upstream riparian states started to assert themselves in the 1990s. A new generation of agreements were established, with most of the initiative coming from the upstream riparian states. The first major set of agreements was the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) which was formally established in 1999 and designed to promote an inclusive process for allocating water resources among the upstream riparian countries.

A Regional and Political Game-Changer

The Nile Basin Initiative sought to redefine the concept of water security and promote an equitable distribution of the Nile's waters. The unintended effect of this process has been the rise of Ethiopian power. To be sure, the Nile Initiative marked a seminal shift from lower to upper riparian countries. On the one hand, it allowed Ethiopia to begin asserting a more powerful role in negotiations. On the other hand, it highlighted the dynamic of Egypt's increasingly fragile hegemony: that as soon as one of these upstream states gained relative economic power, they could also threaten Egypt's national security. The first signs of this hegemonic decline surfaced in the 1990s when Ethiopia began to reassert itself after years of famine and ethnic conflict stemming from the fall of the Mengistu regime (1977-1991). In 1991, after the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power, Ethiopia began to adopt strategies for enhancing its water resources management. In time, this would lead Ethiopia to partner with Sudan and Egypt to work through the NBI's Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) and to identify a number of water resource management projects. Egypt's willingness to cooperate also seemed to reflect its confidence that it would use its political hegemony to gain certain benefits, while never having to surrender its power.

Its unwillingness to surrender its hegemony, however, became clear on May 19, 2010 when the CFA became available for signature. Although the CFA stated the need to "promote integrated management, sustainable development, and harmonious utilization of the water resources of the Basin, as well as their conservation and protection for the benefit of present and future generations," Egypt and Sudan announced their formal intention to withdraw from the agreement, arguing that it would result in the loss of their "acquired rights" and increase their vulnerability to changes in the Nile's flow (Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, 2010). Both maintained that the upstream countries could easily find alternative sources of water, such as lakes and other streams. Despite these objections, however, the six upstream riparian states - Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Burundi – all signed the agreement, and insisted that the old agreements allowed Egypt and Sudan to maintain a stronghold over water allocation (CFA 2010). For Ethiopia, Egypt's defiance only seemed to confirm what they had long suspected: that Egypt, which had made its control over the Nile a central feature of its self-determination and national identity, would never surrender control to Ethiopia.

Moreover, when Meles Zenawi, the former Prime Minister of Ethiopia formally announced plans for the construction of the GERD, tensions came to a head (Kimenyl and Mbaku 2015). The announcement came at the time that Egypt was facing its greatest political crisis: the Arab Spring street protests that would force its leader, Hosni Mubarak, out of office and bring about a new democratic system. But Mohamed Morsi, the new president of Egypt, declared that the dam violated Egypt's acquired water rights. He insisted that a more detailed environmental assessment was needed to establish the full impact of the GERD on Egypt's water supply. After Ethiopia refused to comply with the request, Morsi threatened to use military force if Ethiopia did not cease construction of the dam. In the ensuing months, Morsi would drop his threats.

Given these events, the GERD had begun to expose the limitations of Cairo's hegemonic control over the Nile's flow. By refusing to treat the dam as an opportunity to redefine water distribution, Cairo stubbornly clung to its hydo-hegemony, or longstanting monopology over the Nile's flow. In this

way, it treated the GERD as an existential threat to its national security. More importainly, Cairo believed that by threatening Ethiopia with military force, Ethiopia would feel compelled to agree to its demands. But what Cairo failed to realize was that the GERD constituted the basis of a new political reality in which Cairo was no longer the dominant hegemon in the region. The construction of the GERD, in other words, had already shifted power upstream. This should have forced Cairo to redefine its national interests and priorites. But Cairo's refusal to do so would usher in a new and arguably greater challenge of learning to reconcile its national interests with the new conditions of regional security. It was a challenge that required not only trust but also creative ways of leveraging Egypt's influence in the region.

THE POLITICS OF LEVERAGE

In 2015, Egypt began to leverage this trust when it and Ethiopia signed a new Nile Agreement mediated by the President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir. The agreement seemed to mark a shift in Egypt's attitude towards the CFA in 2015. Both Egypt and Sudan subsequently announced that they would end their boycott of the meetings of the NBI. Hassam Mughazi, the minister of water and irrigation, insisted that Egypt would work with the other countries, stating that "Egypt will put forth a new vision for the situation with the aim of reaching a win-win solution (Lawson 2017,136)." But Egypt failed to live up to its own vision. Instead, it chose to reaffirm its opposition to the CFA at the 24th Nile Basin Initiative Council Committees (NBI-COM) held in July 2016. Mohamed Abdel Aty, the minister of water resources for Egypt, called the CFA "unfair" and in need of a "continuous review" (Aman 2016). Meanwhile, Egypt remained concerned about the downstream impacts on its water supply, which led it to seek greater cooperation with Sudan. In the summer of 2015, Sudan and Ethiopia agreed to commission an impact report on the dam and to commit to supporting one another. Sudan made its support of Egypt clear and pledged, as Fred Lawson writes, "Egypt's water supply would not be jeopardized (Lawson 2017, 134)."

Sudan followed through with its commitment by making further pledges of support for the filling up of the reservoir. It should also be noted that Sudan stands to gain more from the GERD than Egypt, primarily because the regulation of the Nile waters would benefit its agricultural plans (Tawik 2016a, 579). Given this incentive, Egypt risks becoming politically isolated and losing the shared economic benefits of the CFA in the areas of tourism and industry. In early August, the Eastern Nile Technical Office (ENTO) put together a study of these expected shared benefits. The director of ENTO, Fekahmed Negash, indicated that Egypt had already lost out on some economic benefits, including securing 2000 megawatts of electricity from Ethiopia. He went on to argue that Cairo'scooperation would generate environmental and economic benefits for the river and beyond.

Cairo's cooperation will also help it to tackle its own water shortage. In fact, the current water shortage in Egypt has less to do with the GERD than its own overconsumption of water. Currently, Egypt consumes 80 billion cubic meters of water, 25 billion cubic meters more that its annual allotment (Khater 2016). Cairo has announced plans to resolve this shortage, which includes recycling water, reducing water allotments, and expanding agricultural space for growing rice as well as building more plastic greenhouses. Still, these plans merely address its current overconsumption, not the expected, reduced allotment under the CFA. To compensate for this reduction, it would need to tap more underground wells and build more energy-intensive plants to increase its recycled sewage water.[1]

Accordingly, these measures would make up for at least some of the expected losses of reduced water flow causef by the GERD. Egypt may have begun to gain political leverage by strengthening its ties with Sudan and taking the initiative to become more water efficient. But these measures seemed only to reinforce its status quo, national security interests. There was little sign that it was willing to genuinely support Addis Ababa's role in promoting regional cooperation. Indeed, by the end of 2016, Cairo still refused to fully cooperate with Addis Ababa. By now, its strategy was to

[1] Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi announced that Egypt planned to build more desalination and water recycling plants to reduce its consumption of waste water.

drive a wedge in the CPA by using, as we shall see, its political leverage at negotiations to delay and block the construction of the GERD.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Potential for Regional Conflict

Egypt's divisive strategy helped set in motion forces that would work against regional cooperation. Growing uncertainty of the GERD's benefits (e.g., increased water for irrigation), for example, forced many of the riparian countries to take positions that have become the source of heightening tensions. As Fred Lawson puts it "…the long-running dispute over the allocation of the Nile River water has precipitated marked realignment of regional relations, which heightens the chances that any future escalation of tensions between Cairo and Addis Ababa will drag surrounding states into the conflict (Lawson 2017, 136). Much of the conflict, as we have seen, is born from Egypt's unwillingness to work with Ethiopia to construct the new reality of upstream power. Nonetheless, Egypt is hoping that its delaying tactics will pressure Ethiopia to relent to some of its demands; it is still counting on its improved ties with countries that have long opposed Ethiopia.

Thus, the central challenge facing Ethiopia and the future of the GERD, is steering through the increasingly complicated politics of cooperation among the riparian countries. Despite taking strides to accommodate Egypt, Ethiopia has also had to defend itself against Egypt. In some cases, it has arguably overreacted in public, such as accusing Egypt of working with Eritrea to back the Oromo Liberation Movement which, in August 2016, mounted wide-scale protests against the government, leading the government to take drastic actions to suppress the movement. Whether or not this is true, the GERD has involved a series of entangled alliances that threaten the peace in the region. "Ethiopia's ongoing efforts," writes Lawson (2017, 141) "to rally upstream countries in support of the Cooperative Framework Agreement, as well as Egypt's concurrent campaign to construct

closer ties with South Sudan, Eritrea and Somali, have had the unintended consequence of reducing the chances that the underlying dispute over the Nile will be resolved." Still, unlike Egypt, Ethiopia has come to see the GERD as a new and highly beneficial gamechanger in the contentious politics of the Nile waters. Certainly, this has made the prospect of war between Egypt and Ethiopia less likely, insofar as destroying the GERD (by bombing it) or polluting its waters could lead to tastrophic floods and a loss of water for both sides.

On the other hand, the issue that this trend raises is whether water insecurity will lead to further instability. As noted above, Lawson has argued that the GERD has led to many conflicting interests and alliances that have destabilized the region and made war seemingly inevitable. But it is far from clear if Ethiopia's main challenge is averting war. Indeed, it could be argued that the GERD will likely deter future conflict by virtue of the evidence that suggests that water security hardly ever leads to wars (at least not yet). As Goitum Gebreluel (2014, 33) argues:

> The strategic equation that Ethiopia and Egypt face is therefore the following: armed confrontation would initiate dynamics that would force both parties to take measures which would have severe, even existential repercussions for all. Consequently, this serves as mutual deterrent to both parties…. that the potential water conflict offers an effective deterrent of mutual destruction.

The challenge thus becomes one of using this deterrent effect to craft some sort of détente or agreement that can ease the rising tensions in the region. Clearly, Ethiopia has gained a significant deterrent potential, but relying on this power will not be enough to develop new norms of regional cooperation. If anything, its unwillingness to be deterred shows how "Ethiopia's determination" writes Tawfik (2016b, 75),

> has changed the rules of the game in Nile politics. By ignoring international norms of prior notification, and even the CFA's principles of undertaking comprehensive assessments of projects with significant

> downstream impacts, Ethiopia has created facts on the ground and defined new terms of upstream water resources development. (Tawfik 2016b)

If this is true, then Ethiopia will likely face the political challenge of projecting its hegemony in a positive manner, meaning that it will need to apply the proper mechanisms for upholding security and peace. In other words, if Ethiopia wishes to sustain its hegemony, then it must use the proper reasons and moral persuasion to exercise its power and influence. As Hala Nasr and Andreas Neef (2016, 977), claim, though, Egypt has long used what they call 'sanctioned hegemony' to restrict the "terms of discussion of heavily restricted by the hegemon". The idea of sanctioned hegemony was this it aligned power with the acquisition of economic and political benefits. But with the CFA, Egypt's sanctioned hegemony has become a structural obstacle in the process of linking power with the acquisition of benefits. For its part, the GERD has fundamentally altered the discourse of the Nile politics by virtually assuring that the only way to link power with benefits acquisition is through face-to-face talks and reasoned persuasion regarding the fair share and utilization of resources. In short, Ethiopia's conflict with Egypt reflects Egypt's failure to adjust to this new discursive reality.

Challenge of Funding of Equitable Distribution

This tension raises the important issue of whether Ethiopia can implement the needed mechanisms for working out its differences with Egypt and further enhancing its relatively amicable ties to Sudan. While Ethiopia continues to receive the support of Sudan, which now stands to benefit significantly from the GERD by expanding its irrigated agriculture, Egypt can still threaten these ties through its relations with Eritrea and South Sudan. The challenge therefore is bringing all three countries together. In recent months, Ethiopia has made considerable strides to meet this challenge. In the summer of 2018, for instance, it managed to bring Egypt and Sudan to Addis Ababa to discuss and sign a new document establishing a tripartite funding mechanism (the document was published by Al-Youm

with the ministers' signatures on them) (Tawfeek 2018). The document called for regular tripartite meetings to be conducted among the three ministers of the countries and the creation of a tripartite fund named the "Tripartite Infrastructure Fund". Moreover, the three countries agreed to jointly establish the National Independent Scientific Research Study Group, which, according to the document, will "discuss means of enhancing the levels of understanding and cooperation among the three countries with regard to the GERD (Ibid)."

Another challenge is ensuring that downstream riparian countries are not disproportionately impacted by the restricted water flow and that there will be fair opportunities for growth to offset any undue impact. Determining how much the GERD will diminish water flows to downstream countries, however, will be difficult, in spite of the detailed assessment report issued by the Panel of Experts (POE) in 2014. Still, one of the first studies conducted of the opportunities for cooperation, was "The Opportunities for Cooperative Water Resources Development on the Eastern Nile: Risks and Rewards." It called attention to the prospects of achieving an efficiency of output that would offset any loses by the GERD (Blackmore and Whittington 2008). It also stipulated the need for effectively addressing climate change given the predictions for drier and hotter conditions, especially in downstream riparian countries. It is expected that climate change will likely lead to increased evaporation rates and require greater distribution of water to minimize this natural impact. By shifting more of the Nile's water upstream, the GERD means storing more water at higher altitude where evaporation rates will be lower compared to Egypt's Aswan Dam. While this suggests that the filling of the lake around the GERD will mean higher flows, it is not clear if this will offset the restricted flow that Egypt expects to incur.

Nonetheless, the GERD is expected to provide nearly 15 GW of energy. Even more importantly, it represents Ethiopia's best efforts to develop its economy without relying on foreign assistance and loans. Ethiopia, in fact, has managed to finance the project on its own, having received only a loan from China to cover some related infrastructure costs. Thus, as Seleshi Bekele, Ethiopia's Minister for Water, Irrigation and Electricity remarked,

the GERD "is not about control of the flow but providing opportunity for us to develop ourselves through energy development (BBC 2018)."

Still, the GERD is not without its domestic drawbacks. In recent months, officials have had to deal with reports of corruption. In November 2018, for instance, Kinfe Dagnew, a Brigadier General in Ethiopia's Army, was arrested for allegedly siphoning off tens of millions of dollars in contracts (Al-Aribiya 2018). It is difficult to determine just how much corruption has negatively impacted the GERD's capacity to generate the expected benefits such as the infrastructure development within the country, a plan that has involved building new roads, bridges, and tunnels to link the cities with the countryside. But one thing is certain: that in meeting many of its economic challenges, Ethiopia will not offset the losses of corruption, but also stoke further national pride that will greatly suppress such corruption.

CONCLUSION

The GERD marks the growing shift from Egyptian and Sudanese hydro hegemony to more equitable distribution of resources regionally. Ethiopia, with a population of over 100 million and a GDP per capita of less than $1,000, has managed to use the GERD to advance its vision of development and eliminate some of the effects of severe poverty, while also helping to sustain the momentum toward implementing an equitable regional arrangement. Because of the GERD, Ethiopia has positioned itself to become the largest supplier of electricity in the region and on the African continent. There is little question, then, that the GERD has become the game-changer in the politics of the East Nile region. What is less certain, though, is how Ethiopia can use its leverage to apply and develop the rules of the CFA.

So far, the results have been mixed. Up to this point, Ethiopia has failed to convince Egypt to not view the construction of the GERD as an existential threat to its identity and existence. Egypt, as we saw, depends on the Nile for 95 percent of its water. Its acute awareness of its vulnerability often renders the leadership to view the GERD's presence as a no-win scenario

for the country. Moreover, Egypt is suffering through a deteriorating fiscal position, which lessens Egypt's ability to leverage itself in the region. If Egypt is to secure its water future, then it must find ways to cooperate with the upstream riparian states. At this juncture, there is little concrete evidence that the upstream riparian states are out to deny Egypt to its rightful share of water, even though Egypt and other Middle Eastern actors might think or feel otherwise. Moreover, due to Egypt's weakened position vis-à-vis its water security, the dam dispute has become part of an intensifying "great game" unfolding across eastern Africa, in which Egypt, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates jockey for influence in the Horn of Africa (Benaim and Hanna 2018).

In sum, rather than stabilizing regional dynamics, the GERD has raised the political stakes of meeting the various political and economic challenges. How it deals with these rising stakes will depend on its ability to hold more talks and high-level meetings with Egypt and Sudan. Only in this way can it finally resolve the lingering effects of hydro hegemony in the region.

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Chapter 5

EQUITY IN MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH: EXPANDING HEALTH SERVICES ONTO RURAL ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, Ethiopia has increased the availability of maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) services in rural areas and witnessed accelerated progress in areas related to Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 (to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health, respectively). These achievements have been largely attributed to transformative health policies and the expansion of health facilities and community health workers (Health Extension Workers) in rural areas. Despite improvements in MNCH nationally, however, the country faces considerable geographical inequities in MNCH services and

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outcomes. According to data from the 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Surveys: urban areas reported more than 30 percentage points higher coverage of women who received antenatal care from a skilled provider than rural areas (90% vs. 58%); and nearly all women in Addis Ababa (97%) gave birth at a health facility, whereas in Affar, Somali and Oromiya Regions, this figure was less than one in five women (15%, 18% and 19%, respectively). The promotion of equity – defined as the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among social, economic, demographic or geographic subgroups – is an implicit part of Ethiopia's commitment to broader initiatives such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the African Union Agenda 2063. Equity is also a strategic objective in the country's Health Sector Transformation Plan and resonates throughout MNCH policies and programs, including the Health Extension Program and the National Strategy for Newborn and Child Survival. This chapter explores how health equity (pertaining to its geographical dimension) has emerged as a priority for MNCH initiatives in Ethiopia and discusses how the country is moving forward to reduce geographical inequities in MNCH.

Keywords: health equity, maternal, newborn and child health, Ethiopia, development agendas, health sector initiatives

INTRODUCTION

For Ethiopia, maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) remains a pivotal health topic for the country's overall development. While the health of women and children in Ethiopia has been improving markedly, even in relation to other sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries (Table 1), there is still more progress to be made. For instance, the 2015 neonatal mortality rate in Ethiopia (28.5 deaths per 1000 live births) is about half of the rate in 1990, and on par with that of SSA countries; it remains, however, higher than the average rate across low-income countries (LICs) globally (27.5 deaths per 1000 live births). The maternal mortality rate in Ethiopia is 353 deaths per 100,000 women; while lower than the rate across SSA countries (547 deaths per 100,000 women) and LICs (479 deaths per 100,000 live births), women in Ethiopia are dying from maternal causes at a rate that is more than eight times higher than the best-performing country in the region (i.e., Cape

Verde, where the maternal mortality rate is 42 deaths per 100,000 live births) and two-and-a-half times as high as South Africa (138 deaths per 100,000 live births) (The World Bank 2018).

Improved access to high-quality, basic preventive life saving measures could alleviate the burden of maternal, newborn and child mortality and morbidity in Ethiopia (Abdella 2010; Mekonnen et al. 2013). Theoretical models have been developed and applied to better understand the factors related to MNCH service use and outcomes in Ethiopia, including the three delays model and ecological models. The three delays model posits that the prevention of maternal mortality can be enhanced by addressing three types of delays in receiving life-saving obstetric care: delays in the decision to seek care; delays in arriving at a health facility; and delays in receiving adequate care at the facility (Thaddeus and Maine 1994). Applying the model to maternal and perinatal mortality, Berhan and Berhan (2014) identified multiple factors that underlie each delay, noting that the first delay emanates largely from health-related norms and beliefs, the second delay reflects distance and transportation issues, and the third delay is mainly linked to health worker shortages (Table 2).

Table 1. Maternal, child and neonatal mortality in Ethiopia, sub-Saharan Africa countries and low-income countries in 1990 and 2015

Indicator	**Ethiopia: 2015**	**SSA: 2015**	**LICs: 2015**	**Ethiopia: 1990**	**SSA: 1990**	**LICs: 1990**
Maternal mortality (deaths per 100,000 live births)	353	547	479	1250	987	954
Under-five mortality (deaths per 1000 live births)	61.3	81.3	76.0	203.2	180.4	188.1
Neonatal mortality (deaths per 1000 live births)	28.5	28.3	27.5	59.7	46.2	49.7

LICs: low-income countries; SSA: sub-Saharan Africa.
Source: The World Bank 2018

Table 2. Factors related to constructs of the three delay model in the Ethiopian context

Delay	Explanatory factors
1. Delay in health care seeking behaviour	Custom of delivering at home Religious beliefs Family influences Negative previous experience at health facility Lack of awareness of pregnancy-related problems
2. Delay in arriving at a health facility	Lack of transportation Far distance to travel Cost of transport Labour started at night Visiting several accessible but non-functioning health facilities
3. Delay in receiving adequate care at the facility	No senior health personnel Poor leadership Demotivated staff Wrong diagnosis Lack of equipment or supplies Lack of/inadequate electricity and water supply Family refusing to donate blood Unable to afford services

Source: Berhan and Berhan 2014

As evident from the three delay model, many of the determinants of MNCH fall outside of the health sector. A broader understanding of these determinants and how they influence individuals, families, local communities and larger population groups, helps to uncover the root causes of poor health and disadvantage. It can also lend insight into mechanisms to improve MNCH. To this end, ecological models can help to contextualize how determinants across different levels of influence affect health. Figure 1 displays social determinants relevant to MNCH.

This chapter provides an overview of Ethiopia's advancement in improving the health of mothers, newborns and children, with a focus on geographical aspects of health (in)equity. The chapter begins with a brief history of MNCH in Ethiopia, demonstrating that, while MNCH has remained on health and development agendas since the 1950s, progress has been repeatedly hampered by various occurrences in the country. The second

section highlights the country's rapid achievements in MNCH during the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) period (1990-2015), and the challenges that arose during that time. In the third section, we introduce the concept of health equity, and discuss how health equity in MNCH emerged as a global priority area towards the end of the MDG period. Using recent data from the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) survey, we demonstrate that MNCH inequity remains a pressing concern in Ethiopia. In the fourth section, we address how, through global and national commitments, stakeholders in Ethiopia are aiming to move forward on health equity. In section five we present two case studies, discussing the equity-orientation of a flagship Ministry of Health policy (the Health Extension Program) and a community-based MNCH initiative (Maternity Waiting Areas). Finally, turning to the future, we conclude by asking the question: how can Ethiopia improve equity in MNCH? Taking stock of the progress to date, we underscore the need for enhanced multi-sectoral collaboration and meaningful partnerships between diverse stakeholders to advance equity in MNCH.

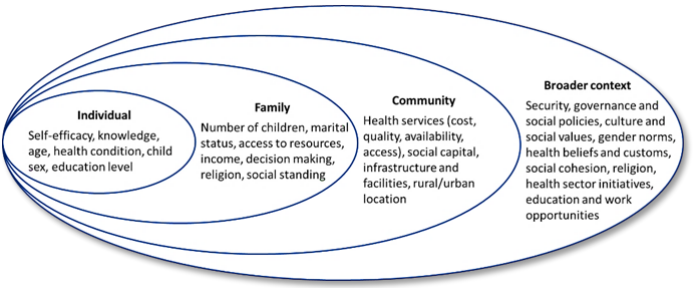

Figure 1. Ecological model showing social determinants of maternal, newborn and child health at individual, family, community and population levels.

A Brief History of MNCH in Ethiopia

The history of MNCH in Ethiopia is entangled with the country's political past, and affected by international development initiatives,

demographic trends, and natural disasters. During the 1950s and 1960s - when the population, under 30 million, totalled less than a third of what it is today (The World Bank 2018) - Ethiopia's first medical schools opened, and the country published its first national policy and strategy for health. This policy, enacted in 1963, envisioned a decentralized network of basic preventive and curative services throughout the country; however, given the short supply of trained health professionals and inadequate funding, the ambitious plan went largely unrealized (Kloos 1998). In the 1970s the Derg political regime came into power and developed a promising comprehensive health policy that emphasized disease prevention and control, expanded access in rural areas, and community involvement. Again, unfortunately, the policy was not achieved, as the survival of the totalitarian political system over its 13-year rule consumed most of the nation's resources ("Health Policy of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia" 1993).

Throughout the 1980s, Ethiopia experienced some of its highest fertility rates of the last half of the century[1], peaking at over 7.4 births per woman (The World Bank 2018). The life expectancy at birth for the Ethiopian population surpassed 45 years in 1986 (The World Bank 2018). Severe and recurring droughts in the 1970s and 1980s claimed the lives of more than 400,000 people and had long-term impacts on population health for generations ("Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters" 2016; United Nations 2014). The first cases of HIV/AIDS were reported in Ethiopia in the late 1980s, escalating into an epidemic that would disproportionally affect populations in small urban areas and market centers, and young, unmarried women (Lester, Ayehunie, and Zewdie 1988; Ethiopia HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control Office (HAPCO) and The Global HIV/AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation Team (GAMET) 2008). Maternal health initiatives such as maternity waiting areas (MWAs) – residential facilities for expectant mothers located near hospital delivery units in rural areas – were spearheaded in the 1970s in some communities (see Case Study 2, below) and the country launched the Expanded Programme on

[1] The World Bank Databank reports fertility rates in Ethiopia from 1960 onwards. In 1960 the fertility rate was 6.9 births per woman and in 2016 the fertility rate was 4.2 births per woman. (The World Bank 2018)

Immunization with the aim of increasing immunization coverage by 10% annually (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2015a).

In the 1990s, alongside fiscal and political decentralization initiatives, the Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) set the course for health sector development by establishing a renewed health policy. The 1993 health policy, implemented through a series of 4-5 year strategic plans, emphasizes the expansion of primary health care and the participation of non-governmental actors (Kloos 1998; "Health Policy of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia" 1993; Wamai 2004). The first of these strategic plans, the Health Sector Development Program, spanned 1997/98 – 2002. Since the early 1990s, the annual number of maternal deaths has declined steadily (from 30,000 in 1993 to 11,000 in 2015), while primary education has increased more than 8-fold (from 1.9 million pupils enrolled in 1993 to 16.2 million in 2015) (The World Bank 2018). The Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict on the norther border of Ethiopia in the late 1990s brought casualties, displacement and instability to many communities, and was a setback to MNCH and other health, education, and economic outcomes in the affected communities (Akresh, Lucchetti, and Thirumurthy 2012). Elsewhere in the country, divisions stemming from cultural and health distinctions between settler-farmers and pastoralists in the south, east and west of Ethiopia hampered progress in MNCH.

In the 2000s, having committed to the United Nations MDGs, Ethiopia redoubled its efforts to improve MNCH. A new era for MNCH in Ethiopia was ushered in with the introduction of the Health Extension Program (HEP) in 2003, which brought basic health services to the kebele level (see Case Study 1, below). Concurrently, the National Child Survival Strategy (2005-2015), strengthened the coordination, partnerships, resources and scale-up of high-impact child health interventions, including: the reduction of malnutrition; the expansion of vaccination services; improved water and sanitation; and increased use of vitamin A supplements, insecticide-treated bed nets and family planning services (Family Health Department, Federal Ministry of Health 2005). The Federal Ministry of Health began to orient towards the adoption of major national reforms of the health information system landscape in the late 2000s to advance the quality and availability of

electronic health data (Kebede, Tegabu, and Wannaw 2017; Asress n.d.). Still, data quality issues call into question the extent to which health information systems are designed and oriented to uphold certain narratives of progress (Ouedraogo et al. 2019). In 2012, three years ahead of schedule, Ethiopia achieved MDG 4 by reducing the 1990 level of under-five mortality by two thirds (Assefa et al. 2017; Central Statistical Agency 2017).

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN MNCH DURING THE MDG PERIOD

By many measures, Ethiopia made substantial progress in MNCH during the MDG implementation period (2000-2015), with gains realized across several MNCH indicators. In addition to the reduction of maternal, under-five and neonatal mortality, as outlined in the chapter introduction, the country achieved impressive increases in MNCH service coverage. For instance, the percentage of women receiving antenatal care from a skilled provider increased from 27% in 2000 to 62% in 2016, and the percentage of women having institutional deliveries increased from 5% in 2000 to 26% in 2016. A smaller percentage of women reported having problems accessing health care in 2016 (70%) than in 2005 (96%) (Central Statistical Agency 2017). These achievements have been attributed to a conflux of factors including increased spending on health (by governments, international development partners, and households), the implementation of multipronged strategies for health sector development, and gains across other development sectors (poverty, education, water and sanitation, peace and security, etc.) (Ruducha et al. 2017; Moucheraud et al. 2016; Assefa et al. 2017).

Despite improvements in MNCH, by the end of the MDG period certain challenges were apparent. MDG critiques have noted that the goals fail to capture certain fundamental aspects of development such as economic growth and human rights, and that the goals do not go far enough in promoting freedom, peace, security and democracy (Vandemoortele 2011). While the MDGs implicitly sought to benefit the worst-off by promoting

development in poor countries, in some regards, their design failed to promote gains in the worst-off. The MDGs specified improvements in terms of overall average, meaning that goals could be achieved through gains in the middle- or best-performing population groups – a scenario that is plausible in the absence of a dedicated focus on the worst-off (Gwatkin 2002). Additionally, MDG targets had a global one-size-fits-all nature, placing an unreasonable burden for improvement on countries with the lowest baseline performance (Vandemoortele 2011).

During the MDG period, progress across SSA countries, including Ethiopia, was inadequate among poor, disabled and marginalized population groups in fragile countries, rural areas, urban slums and conflict zones (Agyepong et al. 2017). The reductive, metric-driven nature of the MDG targets brought attention to what was captured by indicators (namely outcomes and service coverage), while other important aspects of MNCH fell to the wayside (including service delivery, quality and acceptability, as well as politically-charged topics such as abortion and female genital mutilation). In Ethiopia, one major challenge during the MDG period was the shortage of human resources for health, which limited the scale up of health services (Girma et al. 2007; World Health Organization and Global Health Workforce Alliance 2008). For example, the second indicator (births attended by skilled health personnel) for MDG target 5A (to reduce maternal mortality), emphasized establishing competent personnel and enabling environments for delivery, placing large demands on the country for a resource-intensive intervention that was based on weak evidence (Adegoke and van den Broek 2009; Graham, Bell, and Bullough 2001) and, in some cases, conflicted with existing birthing preferences (Shiferaw et al. 2013).

HEALTH INEQUITY: A MOUNTING CONCERN GLOBALLY AND FOR ETHIOPIA

As Ethiopia and other countries experienced rapid national improvements in MNCH, growing global awareness of the uneven

distribution of health gains across national populations brought attention to issues of health inequity. Health inequity is used as a normative term denoting an unequal distribution of health ("inequalities") that is considered morally or ethically problematic (Braveman and Gruskin 2003) (See Box 1). Globally, health inequity was brought to the forefront of global health discussions in the mid-2000s by the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, which advocated for the strengthening of universal primary health care as a means to improve health equity through disease prevention and health promotion (Commission on Social Determinants of Health 2008; Marmot and Commission on Social Determinants of Health 2007). The work of the Commission also substantially advanced the theoretical understandings of health equity (Solar and Irwin 2010). As high-quality and internationally-comparable data about MNCH became increasingly available, global collaborations convened to highlight MNCH inequities and prompt action. Notably, the Countdown to 2015 initiative, established in 2005 and comprised of academic institutions, governments, international agencies, professional organizations, donor organizations and non-governmental organizations, was the first to systematically report within-country inequalities in MNCH topics through biannual reports (Bryce et al. 2006).

At the end of the MDG period Ethiopia reported large inequities in MNCH (Wirth et al. 2008). According to data from the 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Surveys (Central Statistical Agency 2017): urban areas reported more than 30 percentage points higher coverage of women who received antenatal care from a skilled provider than rural areas (90% vs. 58%); nearly all women in Addis Ababa (97%) gave birth at a health facility, whereas in Affar, Somali and Oromiya Regions, this figure was less than one in five women (15%, 18% and 19%, respectively); and care-seeking for children with fever was higher in urban areas (59%) than rural areas (32%).

Inequities were also apparent in other aspects of the health sector. In 2017, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) published a comprehensive assessment of Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) services in Ethiopia, updating the prior 2008 assessment

(Ethiopian Public Health Institute, Federal Ministry of Health Ethiopia, and Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD) 2017). Overall, the assessment revealed general improvements in the national availability, utilization and quality of MNCH services and facilities, with two caveats: although progress was reported, further gains are needed; and in many cases, there was uneven progress between subnational regions. Additionally, the report demonstrated a deficit in the availability and training of certain MNCH professionals such as medical doctors, emergency surgical officers and obstetricians/gynecologists.

Box 1. Three constructs of health equity

Health equity, as a concept, can be broken down into three constructs: health, the distribution of health, and the moral or ethical characterization of that distribution. Defining health can be approached in a multitude of ways. It may focus predominately on subjective (Nordenfelt 1986) or objective (Boorse 1977) assessments of functioning, well-being or status; it might also include health service access, coverage and quality (Whitehead and Dahlgren 2006). Health may be defined for individuals or for groups of individuals. The distribution of health denotes the concept of health inequality (which is sometimes conflated with health inequity). Health distribution can be determined based on the variation of health status across individuals (total inequality) (Murray, Gakidou, and Frenk 1999; Gakidou and King 2002) or, more commonly, on the basis of social groupings (social inequality) (Braveman 2006). In determining social inequality, decisions must be made about how population subgroups are defined (e.g., by wealth status, race, geographical area or sex), and the criteria upon which to base these categorizations (Braveman 2003; World Health Organization 2013). In some cases, multiple dimensions of inequality may be applied simultaneously to capture intersectionality: for example, grouping by place of residence and wealth to capture the urban poor (Hosseinpoor et al. 2018). The third construct considers the values, parameters and assumptions reflected in the equitable distribution of health. Moral and ethical judgements about health distribution are a reflection of societal values, however, these judgements may be highly pluralistic and dynamic (Labonte 2013; Braveman and Gruskin 2003). Social justice theories offer various perspectives on the ideologies regarding social arrangements and the obligations of government and other actors (Labonte, Baum, and Sanders 2015).

ETHIOPIA'S ALIGNMENT WITH HEALTH EQUITY

Through recent global and national commitments, Ethiopia has expressed a continued intention to address equity in health and development. Globally, Ethiopia is a signatory of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (adopted in 2015), where equity is one of the three fundamental principles alongside human rights and sustainability (United Nations General Assembly 2015). The Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), premised on the notion of leaving no one behind, include a health-focused goal (SDG3) to 'ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all life stages.' The 2030 Agenda represents a significant policy window for governments to further initiatives to address development issues.

The African Union Agenda 2063, (The African Union Commission 2015) aims to promote inclusive and sustainable growth in the African continent over a long time horizon. Ethiopia seems well-positioned to achieve the ambitious poverty reduction aspirations of the Agenda 2063, (Turner, Cilliers, and Hughes 2014) though some worry that certain population groups (such as those with low levels of education or those living in remote areas) may be inadvertently excluded from the processes (DeGhetto, Gray, and Kiggundu 2016). The Agenda 2063 has a high degree of convergence with the 2030 Agenda, as it informed the Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which in turn influenced the outputs of the SDG Open Working Group (United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa 2016). The Agenda 2063 stresses the "right to development and equity" and underscores the importance of ensuring "equitable access" to financially sustainable health care systems (The African Union Commission 2015).

In the civil society sphere, Ethiopia hosted the 2012 World Congress on Public Health in Addis Ababa, which issued the Addis Ababa Declaration on Global Health Equity: A Call to Action, urging attention to promote and achieve health equity globally (World Federation of Public Health Associations 2012; Asnake and Bishaw 2012).

Nationally, equity resonates throughout national health sector plans, policies and strategies. The Health Sector Transformation Plan (2015/16-2019/20), the current overarching five-year plan guiding activities of the health sector, aims to improve health by addressing inequities. It specifies quality and equity as key considerations in advancing universal health coverage, stressing the importance of ensuring equal access to essential health services, equal utilization by equal need, and equal quality of care for all (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2015b). The targets of the Health Sector Transformation Plan were determined in alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

The National Strategy for Newborn and Child Survival in Ethiopia (2015/16-2019/20) aims to strengthen aspects of universal health coverage related to MNCH, with the ultimate goal of eliminating all preventable childhood deaths by 2035. The Strategy has provisions for contexts with "specific needs," acknowledging that certain regions and population subgroups (including pastoralist and cross-border communities) require specialized delivery strategies and approaches for MNCH services (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2015c).

CASE STUDIES

The following case studies detail two distinct initiatives aiming to improve MNCH in Ethiopia: the Health Extension Program (HEP), a flagship initiative of the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health; and Maternity Waiting Areas (MWAs), a community-driven strategy to roll out decentralized residences for pregnant women at primary health care units. For each initiative, the history, context and underlying philosophy is described, followed by a critique of how the design and implementation of the initiative addresses health equity.

Case Study 1: The Health Extension Program

The HEP was introduced in 2003 as the country's flagship approach to expanding the health system across rural areas of Ethiopia (Wang et al. 2016). The aim of the HEP is "to improve equitable access to preventive essential health services through community-based health services with a strong focus on sustained preventive health actions and increased health awareness" (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2012). With a focus on improving health outcomes and access and use of services in rural areas, the HEP's most prominent features are: (1) the construction of health posts across kebeles (serving communities of about 5000 people), and (2) the local recruitment and training of government-salaried female Health Extension Workers (HEWs), who are deployed at health posts in their communities.

Initially launched in rural areas, the HEP has been tailored for pastoral settings (in 2006) and urban settings (in 2010) through specialized HEW training streams (Wang et al. 2016; Federal Ministry of Health Ethiopia 2007). The activities of the HEP center around four programmatic areas: disease prevention, family health, environmental hygiene and sanitation, and health education and communication (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2012).

The underlying philosophy of the HEP states that "if the right health knowledge and skill is transferred, households can take responsibility for producing and maintaining their own health" (Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2010). In accordance with this philosophy, the approach of the HEP draws upon diffusion theory, with a focus on mobilizing communities through systematic training of early adopters in each community, and then incrementally reaching out to influence the behaviour of members of the wider community. HEWs from each community work with volunteers who are part of the Health Development Army; members of the Health Development Army help to support "model families" by teaching them about healthy behaviours and encouraging them to model these behaviours in the community (Figure 2). HEWs serve as members of kebele councils alongside elected community members, as well as agricultural development

agents, teachers and others (Banteyerga 2011; Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health 2012).

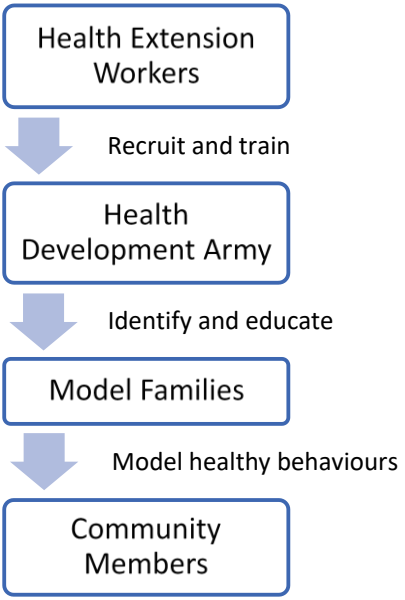

Figure 2. Diffusion of health promoting activities in the HEP.

The rollout and operation of the HEP, which occurred amidst the ongoing decentralization within the Ethiopian government, represents a substantial undertaking for the country (Wang et al., 2016). HEWs, as salaried civil servants, are paid through block grants from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to regions and woredas. The Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of Education, developed training programs, occupational standards and vocational institutions to support the accreditation of HEWs in the provision of health extension services.

Health Equity and the HEP

By design, the HEP is intended to further health equity by addressing certain determinants of health largely concentrated at the individual, family and community levels. These include, for example: enhanced geographical access to health facilities and health workers; community-level education to

encourage health-promoting knowledge, attitudes and practices; and improved self-efficacy for adoption of healthy behaviours through model families. The diffusion of health promoting activities from HEWs to community members strengthens social supports and community networks, which have been reported to be important mechanisms for ensuring health equity. For instance, rural communities in Jimma Zone identified social exclusion as a main reason why some individuals have poorer health; they used collectivist approaches to provide information and support at the community level to reduce inequities (Bergen et al. 2018).

Through its emphasis on disease prevention and health education, the HEP aims to influence personal health practices, health beliefs and customs, knowledge and healthy child development. The HEP has been credited with increasing the use of MNCH services, especially in rural areas, and HEWs are generally well accepted by communities (Negusse, McAuliffe, and MacLachlan 2007; Kok et al. 2015).

Some studies acknowledge that certain benefits of the HEP may not be realized equally by all population groups, or in all aspects of health. Age, education and distance from the nearest health facility were factors that corresponded to coverage by HEP outreach activities (A. M. Karim et al. 2015). And while the HEP appears to be successful in increasing child immunization services, (Admassie, Abebaw, and Woldemichael 2009) the proportion of deliveries attended by skill health professionals has shown less improvement (Karim et al. 2010; Karim et al. 2013; Gebrehiwot et al. 2015). Further, certain issues pertaining to the operation of the HEP are not regularly evaluated or reported. For instance, the extent to which the population size of kebeles exceeds 5000 is unknown, as is whether additional HEWs are assigned to these areas. Details about the contribution of the volunteers in the Health Development Army, thought to be integral to supporting the aims of the HEP, remain largely unexplored, though some studies suggest that this role may be distressing (Maes et al. 2018).

The HEP is positioned to reshape gender norms in the country in part through elevating the income and social status of the women who serve as HEWs. By some accounts, HEWs feel empowered by their position, while other HEWs report feeling overburdened as a result of having to work in

under-resourced conditions, do uncompensated overtime, and maintain household duties in addition to their HEW work (Maes et al. 2015a; Teklehaimanot et al. 2007; Jackson and Kilsby 2015). In other respects, the adoption of a woman-to-woman approach for HEWs to provide information about family health matters reinforces the gendered role of women as caregivers (a position of low societal importance); (Jackson & Kilsby, 2015) this approach also overlooks the opportunity to engage with men, who may hold the decision-making power within families, even in matters directly related to women such as place-of-birth decisions (Warren, 2010).

The integration of HEWs into local governance activities facilitates intersectoral collaboration and encourages increased community capacity and empowerment. HEWs and other community volunteers are aptly positioned to garner community participation in matters of health and related domains (e.g., bringing together communities to build and maintain health posts and latrines), and to promote democratic processes within their local communities (e.g., through kebele councils). The extent to which HEWs have engaged with stakeholders outside of their local communities, however, is more limited. In an ethnographic exploration of the lives of HEWs, Maes (2015a and 2015b) acknowledges their limited ability to self-organize, form collectives, and negotiate with higher levels of government or non-governmental organizations, pursuits that are not viewed favourably within the Ethiopian socio-political environment (Maes et al. 2015a, 2015b). Thus, apart from institutional changes that occurred as a result of employing female HEWs, the HEP has made little progress in challenging existing social, economic and environmental conditions on a societal level.

Case Study 2: Maternity Waiting Areas

Maternity waiting areas (MWAs) are residential structures for pregnant women, located near health centers or hospitals, where women can stay to have easy access to healthcare in their final stages of pregnancy. MWAs are a response to high maternal morbidity and mortality, especially in rural and remote populations, and are part of efforts to replace the continued practice

of giving birth at home with giving birth in health facilities. Using MWAs helps to ensure that women do not need to traverse difficult geographical terrain during labour and promotes timely access to health care should obstetric complications arise. The ideal use of MWAs[2] can be described as follows:

1. During pregnancy, a woman (and her partner/family) receives information about MWAs during early antenatal care visits or meetings and decides whether to use the facility.
2. A few weeks before her estimated delivery date, the woman arrives at the MWA where she receives regular visits from a health worker – monitoring the status of her pregnancy – and where meals and accommodation are provided.
3. When the time comes, the woman is transferred to the adjacent health facility where she gives birth with the assistance of a skilled health worker.

While giving birth at a health facility has been shown to reduce the neonatal mortality rate by nearly one third (Tura et al. 2013), studies have yielded inconclusive evidence that MWA use lowers maternal and neonatal mortality. Kelley et al. (2010), in a study that assessed birth outcomes at a single facility in Ethiopia over 22 years, found that women admitted to the hospital via the MWA had substantially lower maternal mortality and stillbirth rates (Kelly et al. 2010). However, a systematic review assessing the effects of MWAs on maternal and perinatal health yielded "limited insight into their potential benefit" and insufficient evidence upon which to base practice recommendations (van Lonkhuijzen, Stekelenburg, and van Roosmalen 2009).

[2] In some circumstances women may use MWAs in different ways. For example, a woman may present to the health facility with false or early labour, and then be sent to rest at the MWA for a short period.

Table 3. Maternity Waiting Area functionality indicators

	Indicator
	Physical structure with three rooms: one room for midwives and two rooms for mothers
	Kitchen with standard utensils as well as chimney and dishwashing system
	Sufficient sleep area and beds to accommodate 10 women
	Locally-appropriate food and drinks
	Home-like environment (e.g., coffee ceremonies and other traditional elements)
	Follow-up by skilled attendant (using partograph)
	Attendant to prepare food and clean
	Water supply
	Bathing room
	Electricity
	Latrine facilities (separated, for MWA use only)

Note: This list of standardised MWA indicators was used to conduct a quality assessment of 24 MWAs in Jimma Zone, Ethiopia in 2016.

Some of the first MWAs in Ethiopia were built by faith-based organizations in the 1970s near hospital delivery units (Poovan, Kifle, and Kwast 1990; Gaym, Pearson, and Soe 2012). Presently, there is a renewed emphasis on building MWAs at more localized health facilities known as primary health care units (PHCUs) due, in part, to the Federal Ministry of Health's goal for all women to give birth at a health facility that is staffed by skilled personnel. The new 2015 MWA guidelines have a stated purpose to "increase skilled birth attendance at health facilities, and to standardize the maternity waiting homes services where pregnant mothers in areas with difficult transportation will stay as their due date is approaching in order to rapidly access delivery and post natal services and reduce maternal and newborn mortality" (Ministry of Health Ethiopia 2015).

Renewed MWAs are typically initiated through the joint efforts of local governments, who monitor the construction of the MWA and oversee its activities, and communities, who contribute money, supplies and labour. As of 2016, one in five health facilities had a standalone MWA and an additional third of facilities had a room within the health facility where pregnant women could stay and sleep until labour started (Ethiopian Public Health Institute, Federal Ministry of Health Ethiopia, and Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD) 2017). Table 3 displays 11 facility and service criteria to improve and standardize the functionality of MWAs. The list was developed based on the Guideline for the establishment of Standardised Maternity Waiting Homes at Health Centers/Facilities (Ministry of Health Ethiopia 2015) by the Jimma Zonal Health Department for an initial quality assessment of MWAs as part of an ongoing research study in Jimma Zone. According to that assessmentany MWAs fell short of satisfying all criteria (Bergen et al. 2019a).

Health Equity and MWAs

MWAs can be considered an equity-oriented initiative as they explicitly address geographical barriers to accessing health facilities; that is, their intended use enables pregnant women in rural and remote communities to access health services and facilities. The model for MWA construction specifies joint contributions from communities and the government, thereby

promoting a sense of community ownership and obligation to maintain them. The extent to which MWAs are successfully implemented, however, depends on a number of contributing factors (Bergen et al. 2019a; Penn-Kekana et al. 2017; Tiruneh et al. 2016; Vermeiden et al. 2018; Kurji et al. n.d.).

For MWAs to be accepted and used by women in rural and remote communities requires that HEWs, the health development army or other community actors raise awareness about MWAs and promote their use among the potential beneficiaries, including providing referrals. Thus, women and families who have limited contact with the health system (for example, women who do not attend antenatal care visits or pregnant women conferences) are less likely to be aware of or encouraged to use an MWA. A study in Eastern Gurage Zone, Southern Ethiopia, for instance, found that just 7% of women had heard of MWAs, though after learning about the concept 55% were receptive to using the facility (Vermeiden et al. 2018). In this study, the researchers reported a positive correlation between intended MWA use and the education level of the pregnant woman and her partner, suggesting the importance of community mobilization efforts in marginalized populations.

MWA use may also be contingent on the support available through formal and informal community networks, such as members of the Health Development Army, neighbours or extended family members (Bergen et al. 2019a). In Ethiopia, community support networks are powerful influences in maintaining or shifting social norms surrounding MNCH practices (Asfaw et al. 2019). The success of the MWA initiative, particularly in traditional communities, relies heavily on the willingness of the community networks to endorse and enable the adoption of practices such as using MWAs and giving birth at health facilities.

In situations where MWAs are not fully functional (e.g., lacking food or water), community networks may be required to attend to certain needs while the woman is staying at the MWA, such as bringing meals or water. Women who are not used to staying away from their home may turn to community networks for companionship while they are at the MWA. Pregnant women from rural and remote areas whose networks cannot reach

the MWAs may thereby face challenges in staying there. In some cases, it is women who reside closer to the facility whose community networks are more readily able to support their stay at the MWA.

On the home front, pregnant women may face barriers to staying at MWAs, such as obligations to care for other children at home, lack of support from male partners or extended family members, and norms that discourage women from staying outside the home (Tiruneh et al. 2016; Bergen et al. 2019a). Navigating these culturally- and socially-embedded barriers may, again, require active and effective community support networks. Neighbours may be called upon to provide childcare or health workers may be required to advocate the benefits of using an MWA to male partners or extended family members.

CONCLUSION: HOW CAN ETHIOPIA IMPROVE EQUITY IN MNCH?

This chapter has outlined key issues surrounding health equity in MNCH in Ethiopia, including: how MNCH equity emerged as a priority; current global and national policies to address health equity; and case studies of contemporary MNCH initiatives. While MNCH has long been a priority for the health sector in Ethiopia, equity is a relatively new area of focus, emerging during the end of the MDG period when increased availability of MNCH data revealed large geographical and urban-rural divides, particularly in health service availability and use. Accordingly, initiatives such as the HEP and MWA have made commendable strides in making health services closer and more accessible to rural and remote populations. The emergent challenge, however, lies in tackling the broader political, social and economic forces that underpin inequities in MNCH.

The history of MNCH in Ethiopia demonstrates the fragility and complexity surrounding major health reforms. While political, economic and social forces have derailed ambitious health plans in the past, a cautiously optimistic perspective can point to the substantial progress in

MNCH that has already been realized over the past two decades. Importantly, Ethiopia's gains across several MNCH indicators have been noticed and substantiated by various stakeholders, who now reinforce the need for action to reduce health inequities (e.g., through the SDG Agenda and Agenda 2063, as well as national policies and programs). Building on these successes, cultivating meaningful partnerships and shared visions amongst groups of diverse stakeholder groups (i.e., globally, regionally, nationally and subnationally) can serve to fortify current and forthcoming equity-promoting initiatives (Bergen et al. 2019b). Likewise, given the array of non-health factors that play heavily into health equity, multisectoral collaboration and civil society engagement will be key to pursuing equity in MNCH. For example, the involvement of health sector actors, including frontline health workers, in contributing to a Health in All Policies approach can integrate health concerns within diverse policy objectives, and shed light on innovative intersections between health and other public policies and decisions (World Health Organization 2014).

With health equity now enshrined in its national health policies and strategies, Ethiopia is confronted with the opportunity to promote more sustainable and equitable improvements in the area of MNCH – but it also must contend with the challenges. By nature, health inequities are multipronged and deeply rooted, and progress to reduce them is likely to be slow and ongoing. Further, methdologies for studying the reduction of inequities are not straightforward, given that the notion of what is inequitable may shift over time. Encouragingly, however, the importance of addressing broader contextual forces in discussions about health is increasingly acknowledged, (Spicer et al. 2016) recognizing that the political context is far too often overlooked in health research and discourse in Ethiopia (Østebø, Cogburn, and Mandani 2018). Opportunities lie in harnessing more critically-oriented consideration of political factors, governance systems and social constructs to inform the design, evaluation and scale up of Ethiopian health policies and programs.

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Chapter 6

HEALTH EXTENSION WORKERS IN ETHIOPIA: POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVING COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING PRACTICES AND HEALTH OF RURAL CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

In Ethiopia, Health Extension Workers (HEWs) deliver health messages to rural households, including information and skill development related to nutrition. The current study aimed at assessing the knowledge and performance of HEWs to deliver a nutrition education package on using pulses in complementary feeding. A pulse-cereal mix improves nutrition of young children yet is not widely practiced. We did in-depth interviews with purposefully selected HEWs before and after we provided

training in pulse use. Half of the HEWs were trained to deliver the nutrition content and half were in control sites. Based on thematic analysis techniques, we found training improved their knowledge and skills, which then improved their ability to deliver these messages to mothers. They were supportive of the need to provide more information about nutrition, specifically benefits and processing related to using pulses. Engaging the HEWs through nutrition education training can help to improve HEWs nutrition knowledge. This may facilitate positive changes in their attitudes toward nutrition care, and thus in their behavior, therefore resulting in improved skills in management of nutrition-related problems such as child undernutrition.

Keywords: health extension workers, nutrition education, SNNPR, pulses

INTRODUCTION

In the Health Sector Development Program (HSDP) developed in 1996/1997 and launched in 1998 with the preventive, promotive and curative components of health care system established, having assurance of accessibility of health care for all parts of the population; and encouraging participation by private and non-government organizations in health sector. The Health Extension Program, a Community-Based strategy, was launched in 2003 to expand access to basic health promotion, diseases prevention, and selected community curative health services (Alebachew, 2015; Koblinsky, et al., 2010). Under its umbrella, Health Extension Workers were recruited and undergo training for 1 year. HEWs are female high school graduates from the local community who speak the local language. They work as frontline health care staff and receive a monthly salary (Wang et al. 2016; Banteyerga 2011); they are deployed to different health posts in a kebele, covering about 5000 people (Wang et al. 2016a; Banteyerga 2011).

The health care delivery system has many levels. The HSDP IV has a three tier health delivery system. The district health system consists of a primary hospital serving ~100,000 people, a health center serving ~25,000, and satellite health posts that serve up to 5000. These health facilities are connected to each other by a referral system. The health post is the primary

health care unit, providing preventive and curative services for the community, including immunization, outreach services and household visits (Demisse et al. 2017). Other levels include the general hospital for 1-1.5 million people and specialized hospital for 3.5-5 million people (FMoH 2010).

Table 1. Health Extension Workers government training packages

Hygiene & Environmental Sanitation	**Family Health Service**	**Disease Prevention & Control**	**Health Education & Communication**
Healthy home environment	Maternal & child health	HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis prevention and control	
Construction, usage and maintenance of latrines	Adolescent reproductive health	Malaria prevention and control	
Control of insect, rodents and other biting species	Vaccination service	First aid	
Food hygiene and safety	Family Planning		
Personal hygiene			
Solid and liquid waste management	Nutrition		
Water supply safety measures			

Source: Wang et al. (2016a).

Health Extension Workers (HEWs) are selected from local communities to work as frontline health workers to deliver services to underserved and hard-to-reach populations. In the village (kebele) health is delivered by HEWs who work with volunteer Health Development Army (HDAs) women who in turn lead 1-to-5 information sharing networks. This allows for a few HEWs to multiply their effectiveness in the kebele (Manghan-Jefferies et al. 2014). The HEWs also work with nurses, midwives, and other health officers in the kebele. Much of the HEW's working time is allocated to supporting and delivering the health extension program (as described below,

Table 1); however, little is known about the effectiveness and performance of HEWs in delivering new nutrition content. We sought to investigate this by examining the delivery of a specific set of nutrition education messages to households in rural Ethiopia where improvement in complementary feeding is warranted (Henry et al. 2015).

The first 2 years of a child's life is critical as inadequate nutrition is common, leading to high morbidity and mortality rates in childhood particularly in low income countries (Bhutta, et al. 2013). In Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), Ethiopia, unrefined cereals such as maize and wheat are commonly used as complementary food for young children (Gibson et al. 2009). Unfortified cereal-based diets are low in protein and in micronutrients. Further, there is poor bioavailability of minerals due to antinutrients such as phytate, polyphenols and oxalate that decrease their absorption (Hotz & Gibson 2007). We showed that in Sothern Ethiopia, there was low dietary diversity in young children being fed complementary foods (Henry et al. 2015). The average Diet Diversity Score (DDS) ranged 1.2 to 3.1, far below the four or more recommended. There are several reasons for not getting adequate nutrition in young children, such as lack of access for sufficient food, and lack of maternal or caregiver knowledge on proper feeding practices (Penny et al. 2005). Studies suggest that an educational intervention will improve the nutritional status of young children by improving maternal or caregiver's knowledge and practices (Mulualem et al. 2016; Negash, et al. 2014; Lassi et al. 2013). This is assumed to be true of HEWs yet evidence is lacking.

HEWs are responsible for delivering 16 health extension packages categorized into four principal components (Table 1). In recent years, additional services were included namely, services focusing on children and women, such as integrated community-based case management, community-based newborn care, and providing long-acting family planning of preventive and curative (Wang et al. 2016a; Banteyerga 2011). As part of their jobs, HEWs are expected to provide nutrition education for mothers about feeding practices. The nutrition package includes training on Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and HEWs are trained on Growth Monitoring and Promotion (GMP) and management of moderate acute malnutrition. In

addition to the 16 packages delivered, HEWs also engage in other community development initiatives such as the delivery of nutrition program.

The nutrition package (shown in Table 1) covers Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) i.e., women's nutrition; breastfeeding; complementary feeding focused on appropriate quality, frequency, diversity, and consumption of fortified foods; responsive feeding; food hygiene and recommendation for HIV positive children; nutritional care of sick and malnourished children; prevention and control of anemia; prevention and control of vitamin A deficiency; and prevention and control of iodine deficiency. Under Growth Monitoring and Promotion, HEWs are trained on how to take body measurements such as length/height and body weight for nutritional assessment in the community. Management of acute malnutrition training includes identification, admission, and discharge of children with acute malnutrition in the community using mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) and identification of bilateral pitting edema as initial screening method and referral for treatment (Wang et al. 2016a).

Researchers in Ethiopia and internationally recognize that bringing about behaviour change is not a "one-off activity", and that promotion agents (such as HEWs) need to follow-up with repeated visits to households, until desired change is achieved (Behailu, Redaie, Mamo, Dimtse, & Newborne 2010). For nutrition, a study in the Amhara region assessed knowledge of HEWs on key IYCF feeding practices and found poor knowledge of HEWs about key IYCF messages such as minimum duration of continued breastfeeding, minimum diet diversity, and minimum acceptable meal (Abebe et al. 2016). However, no study in Ethiopia has attempted to evaluate the HEWs' knowledge and performance in transferring specific nutrition messages to mothers in a community. Thus, this study aimed to assessing knowledge and performance of HEWs concerning the messages on the benefits of pulses and pulse-cereal mix complementary food and household food processing techniques to mothers in rural communities of Southern Ethiopia, before and after being trained on the messages.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative design with in-depth interview of 24 HEWs who were purposively selected from Boricha and Hawassa Zuria districts, Sidama Zone, SNNPR, Ethiopia. These districts were selected as they were sites for the 'Scaling-up/out innovations of pulses for food and nutrition security in Southern Ethiopia' project (Berhanu et al. 2017), with both having current and potential pulse crop production but with high prevalence of child malnutrition, (Holden 2014), suggesting use of pulses may not be practiced. The Hawassa Zuria district, located 22 km from Hawassa, has 23 kebeles, four government funded health centers and 22 health posts. The Boricha district, located 30 km from Hawassa, has 39 kebeles, 8 health center and 38 health posts.

A qualitative design was used in order to obtain an in-depth insight about what the HEWs knew and believed before training. For those who were then trained, we asked what their experiences in training had been. Training involved three days of lectures and demonstrations about use of pulses in complementary feeding and household food processing. It was given to 12 HEWs who were located in the nutrition education intervention kebeles of the above mentioned study. These HEWs were charged with delivering the nutrition education messages to mothers in the 9-month community-based nutrition education intervention.

Pre-Interview and the Interview Process

Before conducting the interviews, the student researcher (GB) communicated with the district health officer and explained the objective of the study and then all HEWs were informed about the study through the health officer. The researcher explained the objective of the interview to each HEW and informed consent was obtained. Interviews were conducted by the researcher at each kebele health post. All participating HEWs were

informed of their right to refuse to participate in the study or to not answer questions that were not comfortable for them, and to answer without any penalties to themselves or their health posts.

Using an interview guide, the participants were asked a range of questions about their level of education, work experiences as HEW, nutrition education training in which they were involved, knowledge about pulses and household processing techniques, and nature of workload (such as frequency of household visits). They were asked open-ended questions to further probe their knowledge and perception of using pulses for complementary food, household processing techniques for pulses particularly soaking and germination, and their perception towards nutrition education. Interviews took approximately 20-30 minutes and were conducted in Amharic. The interviews were recorded and notes were taken by the researcher. Each interview was later transcribed by a staff member from the School of Nutrition, Food Science and Technology, Hawassa University. To protect the identity, each participant's transcript was identified with a code. A copy of each HEW's transcript was given to each participant for accuracy check and feedback before analysis was carried out.

The Pulse Food Training Intervention

Three days training about use of pulses, household food processing and healthy eating was given to 12 HEWs who were located in the nutrition education intervention kebeles and who were charged with delivering the nutrition education messages to mothers in our study (Berhanu et al. 2017). A Training of Trainer manual on pulse consumption for improved nutrition was developed (Hawassa University, Ethiopia & University of Saskatchewan, Canada, 2015). Two days of theoretical training and a one-day of hands-on training on preparation of healthy dishes from germinated pulses comprised the training. Topics included: understanding the concept of food groups and diet diversification; understanding nutritional and other benefits of pulses; household food processing techniques particularly

soaking and germination; safe food preparation, handling and storage, and basics of Training the Trainer.

Data Analysis

After review of the transcribed interviews, thematic categories emerged. Further reviewing was done by two other members of the research team, who added new themes and sub-themes. A table for each theme was developed for baseline and endline interviews, and frequent phrases raised by the participants were listed, marked and coded. Codes were framed from data to organize themes and summarize key findings (Maguire & Delahunt 2017). The generated themes and sub-themes were categorized manually for report writing. To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, four criteria, i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability were considered (Shenton 2004). Credibility ensured that the study measured the intended indicators (e.g., knowledge, attitudes, and performance) and that cultural considerations were taken into consideration. The researcher was familiar with the study area's cultural and religious beliefs. Transferability described the process of ensuring the applicability of one study to other situations or subjects (Shenton 2004). In this study, the responses of HEWs for most of the questions were consistent, showing dependability (Shenton 2004). Conformability refers to minimizing the researcher's bias on the findings and ensures the findings are a result of participants experience and ideas (Shenton 2004). This was done with the other researchers' participation in challenging assumptions and also triangulating results from the whole project's findings.

RESULTS

A total of 24 HEWs participated in the study at baseline. Eleven HEWs who were subsequently trained participated at the 9-month endline interview, with one missing due to maternity leave. There were 16 HEWs

from Boricha and 8 HEWs from Hawassa Zuria districts. Four main themes emerged from the interview data: 1) HEWs' knowledge about pulses (benefits and processing); 2) HEWs' practices in nutrition education and nutrition counseling; 3) perceived benefits and challenges reported by HEWs about nutrition education; and 4) capacities, skills and resources required to do effective nutrition education. At the end of the intervention, a fifth theme emerged as the HEWs' experiences from participating in the intervention. Each theme was divided into the sub-themes that emerged during the data analysis.

Almost all of HEWs (83.3%) had completed grade 10 and a few grade 12, and trained for at least one year as a Health Extension Worker. Many (70.8%) had work experience in the range of 6-10 years. The majority of the HEWs (83.3%) had received in-service training from non-government or government organizations. Most of them had trained in Essential Nutrition Actions, complementary foods and outpatient treatment for severe and malnourished children.

Baseline Knowledge of Health Extension Workers about Pulses

HEWs had received training about complementary feeding from various organizations, for example, Alive and Thrive, UNICEF, and as it was variable among the 24 participants, we determined the source of their knowledge about complementary foods and their level of knowledge about pulse-incorporated complementary food preparation. We asked whether they could identify different types of pulse crops, knew the health benefits of pulse food as important to complementary feeding, and knew how and why to do soaking and germination of pulses in preparing complementary foods.

Baseline data showed that many knew that pulses are important in the preparation of complementary food, but a few were not familiar with preparing complementary food using pulse food products. In addition, while some could tell the different types of pulses and separate them from cereals,

not everyone could, which could cause confusion in making a pulse-cereal mix.

The health benefit of pulses particularly for the wellbeing of children was known by most of the respondents. Two HEWs mentioned that pulses are rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals and provide energy; one noted that pulses are good for brain development and provide good nutrition and important for healthy growth. However, one of the HEWs from Hawassa Zuria district explained that while she believed that incorporating pulses in the complementary food was important, pulse was not always available to mothers. She said,

> "I think pulses are good for health. Preparing pulse-based food is not difficult. However, finding all kinds of pulses is difficult for the mothers."

In contrast, almost everyone was unfamiliar with benefits of using common household processing techniques for pulses, namely soaking and germination. Two of the HEWs mentioned that soaking followed by germination was not a common practice in their village, and one of the HEWs felt that it is not good practice because it causes diarrhea. Several said that processing destroyed minerals and vitamins. Overall, none of the HEWs had taught the benefits and procedures of these household processing techniques to mothers in the kebeles.

Practices of Health Extension Workers Related to Nutrition

Dietary intake assessment would be a useful tool for HEWs in counseling mothers regarding appropriate feeding practices and identifying problems in feeding. However, none of the HEWs said that they had ever assessed a child's dietary intake using formal dietary assessment methodology. However, most did ask the mother what the child eats and how she prepared food for the child during house-to-house visit and would counsel her accordingly. One of the HEWs from Boricha explained how she does a dietary assessment as follows.

> "During a house-to-house visit I asked the mother what she feeds the child, but we don't have a guideline to do a dietary assessment …properly."

Recipe demonstration would, similarly, be a practical way for HEWs to show groups of mothers how to prepare complementary foods using different food groups and locally available foods. This then would improve mothers' skill in food processing and preparation, with the advantage of developing confidence for preparing different dishes for their children as well as household (FAO 2011). Most of HEWs explained that they had tried to demonstrate to mothers on how to cook different dishes from locally available foods; however, there is no regular program in the 16 packages (Table 1). Some of them have asked mothers to bring different food items from their home so they can demonstrate how to prepare complementary food at health post. An HEW from Boricha said the following:

> "We demonstrate to mothers how to prepare porridge for young children from different foods at the mother's house and sometimes we demonstrate them at health post during vaccination and growth monitoring. Usually we do that once in a month if the mothers are willing to bring food items".

Nutrition Education Concerns

Most of the HEWs perceived maternal nutrition education was beneficial because it helped to improve the meal of the child. They recognized challenges, including a lack of sufficient material for demonstration, mothers' lack of access to some food items, mothers' reluctance to accept new messages, and lack of having regular programming, particularly for demonstration. In addition, HEWs identified that their workload of HEWs was a barrier.

The HEWs identified the capacities, skills, and resources they require to manage nutrition education for mothers in their community. Many wanted additional training on use of pulses for complementary food preparation. In particular some believed that they lacked the requisite skills to teach mothers

about household pulse processing techniques as well as food preparation of different dishes. Then, even if they wanted to demonstrate food preparation to mothers, one of major problems they faced was getting food items for recipe demonstration.

Endline Knowledge and Experiences of HEWs

Endline data were collected following the 9-month nutrition education intervention we conducted for mothers. Eleven of the 12 HEWs from the intervention kebeles/villages were interviewed about their experiences related to the nutrition education intervention. They were also interviewed about the knowledge of pulse-incorporated complementary food and household processing techniques they had gained from being trained. These interview questions were the same used at baseline.

Knowledge of HEWs after Training

Of the HEWs who were trained on pulse use and who subsequently delivered nutrition education messages over 9 months, 11 were interviewed for their experiences. They were familiar with pulses as a good source of iron, zinc, folate and protein. However, only about half believed that soaking and germination improved nutrient content and decreased antinutrients found in pulses. Even fewer mentioned that soaking and germination reduced cooking time and resulted in foods that were soft and easy to feed the child (18.2%) with reduced stomach discomfort and gas. Interestingly, some of the HEWs indicated that they had started feeding processed pulses to their own children as they believed that feeding pulses had made their children become healthy and strong. One of the HEWs from Boricha knew that:

> "pulse has protein and it can replace meat… [and] most mothers cannot get meat."

Experience of HEWs' Involvement in the Nutrition Education

The 11 HEWs had different experiences with providing nutrition education on pulses. They felt that the training given to them was beneficial for themselves because they have started preparing food for their families from pulses. They also noted that mothers who participated in the nutrition education program had started to recognize the health benefits of pulses for their children. Some of the HEWs explained that after teaching the mothers about the benefit of pulses and demonstrating how to process pulses for preparation of complementary food, they noticed that the health of young children in their kebele has improved and the number of malnourished children who were referred for therapeutic feeding had been reduced. They observed that mothers had started using processed pulses in complementary food instead of selling those pulses.

In terms of challenges, one noted the following:

> "The problem I observed is that some mothers missed the demonstration program because they were expecting to get something in-kind and when there was nothing to give them they were de-motivated and stopped coming to demonstration program".

In addition, they noted that some mothers said that they had learned new skills on preparation of complementary food but could not prepare at home because of lack of proper equipment.

HEWs were asked to compare their experiences with recipe demonstration to their traditional role of providing house-to-house counseling in terms of transferring messages to the mothers. Most said that both techniques were useful. Demonstrations in front of mothers were useful for skill development and sharing these experiences among mothers. House-to-house counseling was equally important because the message could reach the whole family, particularly to the fathers.

All of this group of HEWs said that the messages on pulse use and processing should be taught to all mothers in the kebele. However, the 9-month intervention in the project (which consisted of once-a-month

demonstrations) may not have been enough to bring the desired behavior change in the community. It was suggested to use other media such as radio to reach more rural communities.

DISCUSSION

Nutrition education is key to improving mothers' nutrition related knowledge and is an important way of improving the IYCF practices among mothers as well as reducing child undernutrition (Sunguya et al. 2013). However, to be effective, the HEWs' knowledge of nutrition is key. We assessed HEWs' knowledge of pulse benefits and processing techniques prior to employing them to provide messages to mothers, and we used their knowledge gaps to form our training materials. The interview data revealed that HEWs were not aware of all the benefits of pulse crops, nor of pulse incorporated complementary food preparation. The finding is consistent with a study done in West Gojam, Ethiopia, which found that 50% of HEWs had poor knowledge of IYCF feeding practices (Abebe et al. 2016). However, with training, we found marked improvement in knowledge of HEWs. Indeed, a study from India assessed the challenges faced and performance of community health workers and found that improved knowledge subsequently increased their performance. The knowledge of these workers in turn earned them respect from the community, which helped to motivate them to perform better (Sarin & Lunsford 2017).

Some of the challenges revealed in our study were related to having appropriate and sufficient resources. Once HEWs were trained in recipe demonstration, they saw the advantages of this nutrition education technique. However, they voiced that they had limited resources to do regular recipe demonstration for mothers. A study done in Amhara region, Ethiopia to assess the quality of in-service training for HEWs (on breastfeeding, complementary feeding, growth monitoring and promotion, maternal nutrition and community health day), the participants suggested having a poster showing how to prepare complementary foods. The trainers

noted that obtaining raw food items for demonstration purposes was difficult, mirroring the problems HEWs faced (Tessema et al. 2013).

Counseling of mothers at their home is one of HEWs responsibilities. However, those HEWs involved in teaching mothers our nutrition messages indicated that their heavy workload limited them in their ability to provide a regular house-to-house counseling. A study done in Tanzania and South Africa found that time spent in traveling from one household to another household was long, and limited community health workers effectiveness in counseling (Tania et al. 2016; Odendaai & Lewin 2014). However, most of HEWs who were introduced to recipe demonstrations believed that both household visits along with group education sessions were important to improve mothers' knowledge and skills. Further work is needed to determine the best balance of these activities in an HEW's workload.

We did not study the contribution of HDA in improving of maternal knowledge about IYCF as our intervention was structured to have HEWs do all the pulse-based messaging. HDAs support HEWs with advocacy. However, a study done in southern Ethiopia found that some HEWs reported that how the voluntary nature of HDA limited their contribution in supporting HEWs (Kok et al. 2015). We have preliminary evidence that HEWs can successfully train HDAs to deliver messages such as pulse processing. Using well-trained HDA might be one way of reducing the workload of HEWs and reaching all community members, as they are responsible in leading a 1-to-5 network.

On the other hand, the government of Ethiopia remains committed to improving the rural Health Extension Program by accelerating expansion of health facilities and upgrading HEWs from level three to level four. The primary objectives of the upgrading program include improving the knowledge, skills and attitude of HEWs, and to upgrade the career path of HEWs (Wang et al. 2016b). In addition to upgrading the health facilities and HEWs capacity, the government will be working to renovate, expand, and equip the health posts with necessary equipment and institutionalize the Health Development Army platform to strength the community services (MOH n.d). These improvements could help to improve service quality of the HEWs as well as the health posts, increase access for mothers to learn

practical based nutrition education and encourage their participation. The deployment of HEWs is contributing to the improvement of health in the rural community. Rural HEWs have proximity to the community and provide house-to-house visits.

The main strength of this study was to illustrate how determining gaps in knowledge of HEWs can subsequently be remedied with appropriate training. In addition, these interviews explored HEWs experience regarding nutrition education, and was able to identify problems and challenges. This data will help policy-makers consider further nutrition activities by HEWs or HDAs such as recipe demonstrations for mothers in order to improve the health and well-being of mothers and children.

CONCLUSION

In low-income countries, like Ethiopia, where there is a shortage of health workers such as doctors, HEWs play an important role in the prevention of disease and health promotion including nutrition. The program encourages households to be responsible for their own health by promoting knowledge dissemination and the adoption practices such as complementary feeding practices, and appropriate health seeking behaviours. While we found poor knowledge of HEWs on pulse incorporated complementary food preparation initially, after training, the HEWs demonstrated an improvement in their knowledge and skills, and could provide training to the community. HEWs contribute to the improvement of mothers' knowledge and skills, which helps to improve IYCF practice in rural settings. However, nutrition-related training for HEWs should be strengthened and supported with sufficient material for them to conduct nutrition education sessions such as recipe demonstrations.

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Chapter 7

RETHINKING INDIGENOUS COMMUNICATION FOR HIV/AIDS PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF TIGRAY REGION

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ABSTRACT

HIV/AIDS has continued to affect all segments of the population in developing nations. Ethiopia, as one of the most HIV traumatised nations in Sub-Saharan Africa, has made a substantial investment to halt the epidemic. Despite some successes in urban areas, it seems that most of the HIV/AIDS intervention communication strategies have failed to connect rural people to the epidemic prevention campaigns. This shows the discrepancy between the HIV/AIDS intervention communication strategies and the overall context of the intervention environment. This

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paper examined indigenous communication forms Goila (folk songs) and Aa'dar (oral poetry) and their respective roles for the epidemic prevention campaigns in Irob district, eastern Tigray, Ethiopia. A culture-centred approach was used as a theoretical framework and ethnography as a research method. Thus, the findings of the study showed that both the community members and rural health experts in the district believed that these communication forms have the potential for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. One of their qualities is that they have informative and entertainment potential reaching the majority of audiences at a time. Both Goila and Aa'dar are flexible to cover different themes and are highly accepted by rural people. Most importantly, there is no any language barrier to convey HIV/AIDS messages through these communication forms as they are accompanied by the norms and worldviews of rural people, which facilitates the communication flow among participants.

Keywords: indigenous communication, culture-centred approach, ethnography, HIV/AIDS, Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

HIV/AIDS has continued as a development challenge in most of the developing countries. Ethiopia has made a substantial investment in the epidemic prevention campaigns. Despite some successes in raising awareness levels, several large-scale campaigns have proved unsuccessful in achieving the kind of behaviour change required to effectively address the pandemic (Parker 2007; Swanepoel 2005). One of the significant challenges to halt the spread of HIV is that the models and strategies employed in the epidemic intervention communication are not context-specific. The flaws in the application of commonly used "classical" models in health communication are a result of contextual differences in locations where these models are applied (Airhihenbuwa and Obregon 2000, p.5). This paper explores the role of indigenous communication for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in Irob district, eastern Tigray, Ethiopia. Indigenous communication as cultural expression represents the language, norms and values of people in a specific setting. It is a broad concept representing a variety of forms that have differing communicative, entertainment and

educational potential. This paper is confined to Goila (folk songs) and Aa'dar (oral poetry) as specific communication forms rather than the broader spectrum of indigenous communication. The underlying reason to focus on these communication forms is that they are regularly practised among the people and messages through these forms can easily reach many audiences.

Analysis and discussion about the use of indigenous communication for HIV/AIDS prevention campaign in eastern Tigray was based on the 'culture-centred approach' (Dutta 2011). The relevance of the culture-centred approach to this study is that it helps to understand how rural people in eastern Tigray view the current HIV/AIDS prevention programs and the use of their communication forms and social networks in supporting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. Moreover, it enables us to understand the "agency" of the people in the epidemic intervention campaigns. Agency in this part refers to the competency of individuals to sanction their choices and negotiate the structures. The culture-centred approach emphasises on the sociocultural factors that shape community health, particularly in non-Western communities (Singhal 2003, Airhihenbuwa et al. 2014).

HIV/AIDS IN ETHIOPIA

The United Nations estimated that 71% of worldwide HIV infections and 75% of AIDS-related deaths take place in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS 2015). HIV/AIDS is an exceptional disease with a unique capacity to reverse decades of development progress in high HIV prevalence countries (UNAIDS 2005). HIV/AIDS has several effects on the young and old, men and women, including its impact on present and future generations. The consequences include a growing number of orphans, deficiency in generational knowledge sharing, lack of ability to work and raise income, withdrawal of children from schools so they can help to produce income, and youths migrating to city centres (Lie 2008, p. 279). With an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV, Ethiopia has one of the most significant populations of the HIV-infected people in the world (HAPCO 2010). But

the HIV prevalence among the adult population in Ethiopia is lower than many sub-Saharan African countries (HAPCO 2007). In Ethiopia, the primary mode of HIV transmission is heterosexual, which accounts for 87% of infections. Another 10% of infections occur due to mother to child transmission. Also, utilisation of unsafe sharp and skin piercing instruments play a role in HIV transmission in rural areas (HAPCO 2004).

Several factors are contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia. These include poverty, illiteracy, stigma and discrimination of those infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, high rate of unemployment, widespread commercial sex work, gender disparity, population movement including rural to urban migration and harmful cultural and traditional practices (HAPCO 2007). Evidence shows that there is a significant prevalence variation by region, that is, 6.6% in Gambella, 5.0% in Addis Ababa, and 0.7% in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State (HAPCO 2017); whereas the HIV prevalence in Tigray region is 1.2% (CSA 2016). Some of the factors leading to these variations include the presence of mobile seasonal workers, highly urbanised centres, a high concentration of economic activity, connecting roads and large commercial farms among others (Barnabas et al. 2014). Moreover, sex workers, seasonal farm workers and HIV negative partners in discordant couples are those who are taken as being at higher risk (Barnabas et al. 2014). Though HIV prevalence seems to be stabilising in urban areas, there is a steady rise in the HIV infection rate in the rural setting (MOH 2004). Some of the factors leading to the spread of HIV to rural areas include mobile seasonal farm workers, increased number of sex workers, rural to urban movement and adultery among others. A report from Network of HIV Positives in Ethiopia and the Global Network of People Living with HIV (NEP+ and GNP+ 2011) also shows that small towns are becoming hot-spots that can potentially bridge further spread of the epidemic to rural settings. If HIV/AIDS is allowed to spread into rural areas at the rate of the spread of the epidemic in urban areas, the problem will reach unmanageable levels (EPHA 2005). Thus, a context-based intervention communication strategy becomes an essential component in the fight to tackle the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in rural areas.

Communication initiatives have a chance of succeeding only when situated within the cultural context of the target audience (UNAIDS 1999).

HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns in Ethiopia

After the first two AIDS cases reported in 1986 (Mitike et al. 2006); the Ethiopian government has designed HIV/AIDS policies at the national level to halt the epidemic. The National HIV/AIDS policy was ratified in 1998; and in 2001, and the National HIV/AIDS Council declared that HIV is a nationwide emergency (MOH 2002). However, despite some successes in raising awareness and behaviour changes about risky sexual behaviours in urban areas, the country was unable to halt the prevalence of the epidemic. Various factors are affecting the epidemic prevention campaigns in Ethiopia. Firstly, the epidemic prevention campaigns have largely focussed on urban areas with extensive use of media for the epidemic prevention campaigns. Media has played a significant part in informing the public about the epidemic in Ethiopia (Farr et al. 2005). However, the country has shown some of the strongest differences in awareness of AIDS across its regions (Burgoyne and Drummond 2008). There was a striking lack of knowledge in the Somalia, Gambela, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions; the Somalia region had the lowest levels of awareness as only 50% of women, and 64% of men had heard of AIDS - and this lack of knowledge was obvious across all HIV/AIDS knowledge domains (CSA 2006). Therefore, HIV/AIDS programs which broadcast from urban centres, may not only fail to improve the HIV/AIDS knowledge of the rural public but also disadvantage them relative to their urban counterparts (Bekalu and Eggermont 2013). This denotes that "HIV/AIDS is one of those issues that require moving beyond dissemination of information to include interpersonal dialogues on risk factors and prevention strategies with the participation of communities" (Muturi 2007, p.311).

Secondly, the behaviour change communication strategies primarily focussed on individuals as a locus of behaviour changes. This was with the belief that changing risky sexual behaviours of individuals would change

risky sexual behaviours of the majority in their respective settings. These types of behaviour change intervention strategies as Singhal (2003 p. 21) contends "focus on the tree and not enough on the forest of which the tree is a part." As a result, the health communication field has been "missing the message" because it has concentrated on "putting out messages [rather than] fostering an environment where the voices of those most affected…can be heard" (Panos 2003, p.22). In Ethiopia, family attitudes hold a significant part of the community than individual roles (EPHA 2005); that highlights the vital role family can play in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Hence, a health system that is individually referenced to lifestyle risk factors and underpinned by a biomedical model will be doomed to failure as it applies 'one size fits all' policy ignoring cultural differences (Farmer et al. 2012). Limitation of a one size fits all rural health package is that it affects the diversity and choice of experiences that can be offered for all cultural groups (McBain and Veitch 2011; Sypek et al. 2008). Overall, as Singhal and Rogers (2003, p.12) have argued, the "world is making poor use of behaviour change and communication strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention… many communication strategies are culturally inappropriate, so they may offend public sensitivities, which is easy to do with a sensitive topic that involves sex, stigma and death." Airhihenbuwa and Obregon (2006) argue that early HIV and AIDS initiatives failed in the African context as they were created for a Western context, where individualism instead of community orientation was favoured. This is related to Hofstede's (2001) concepts of collectivism and individualism which suggest that while collective decisions are valued in some developing countries; individual-based decisions are appreciated in developed western countries.

Thirdly, the epidemic intervention communication strategies are not context-specific; as there are no clearly stated communication strategies for rural HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. Even if 78.9% of the Ethiopian population resides in rural areas (Worldometers 2019); little has been done to understand the nature of HIV/AIDS in rural areas (MOH 2002). The national HIV/AIDS prevalence was declined to 1.4 in the past years of 2000-2015, but the problem is relapsing to 1.7 starting from the post-2015 in the country (CSA 2016). The HIV/AIDS prevalence in the Tigray region was

above the national HIV prevalence (i.e., 1.81) (EHNRI 2017). Hence, without knowledge of the audience, campaigns to disseminate HIV/AIDS information to local cultures are inevitably unsuccessful. Interpersonal communication plays an influential role in changing health behaviour and must be addressed by campaigns to be successful (Maibach and Parrott 1995, Piotrow et al. 1997, Rice and Atkin 2001). Gould and Marsh (2004, p.16) argued that "positive health behaviours are more likely to be attained and sustained when the people within a cultural setting are involved in a contextual transformation process [And that] effective approaches can only be developed and refined when the framework for each region, nation and locality is locally derived." This point is further reinforced by Airhihenbuwa and Webster (2004), who stated that:

> Culture plays a role in determining the level of health of the individual, the family and the community. This is particularly relevant in the context of Africa where the values of extended family and community significantly influence the behaviour of the individual. The behaviour of the individual in relation to the family and community is one major cultural factor that has implications for sexual behaviour and HIV prevention and control efforts (p. 1).

Given that, it requires gaining an "understanding of the social and cultural contexts of people's lives and identifying needs within, and in terms of, such contexts" (Heggenhougen 1991, p. 21). The context in this part does not mean "a fixed set of surrounding conditions but a wider dynamical process of which the cognition of an individual is only a part" (Hutchins 1995, p. xiii). Situating development programs in a specific context helps to design communication strategies that are congruent to the skills and worldviews of people.

Communication for Development and Public Participation

Communication for development is associated with seeking change at different levels including "listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and

skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change" (Dagron 2009, p.6). It involves more than information dissemination focussing on knowledge sharing, which is aimed at "reaching a consensus for action that considers the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned; it is thus a social process" (Servaes and Malikhao 2007, p.1). Communication for development is also equated with stakeholders' participation in exercising their power in decision-making processes meaningfully (Arnstein 1969, Carpentier 2011, Servaes 1999). Hence, communication and participation are interrelated and mainly "intimately knotted as the strings in a fisherperson's net" (Dagron 2009, p.460). The broader significance of communication for development is that communication is "understood as a two-way relationship that not only acknowledges the right of people to be heard, but includes prioritizing effective listening, and recognizing and respecting alternative forms of knowledge, is needed to achieve this" (Quarry and Ramirez 2009, Servaes 2008, Tacchi 2012a). This promotes dialogue as a "key ingredient in building trust, sharing knowledge and ensuring mutual understanding" (Mefalopulos 2008, p. 8). In Africa, communication for development has much more of ritual respect for the persons involved. To become part of a specific community is to know about singing and dancing, drama, story-telling, good rhetorical speaking, and practical use of proverbs (Robert and White 2009). However, in Africa, the voices of the poor, the rural, and those affected most are not heard; instead, their views are represented by the more educated and affluent community members who might not have similar experiences (Ascroft and Masilela 1994). This suggests that rural people are given limited power to participate in development programs. Participation of cultural members ensures representation, which offers an alternative entry point to the biomedical model that offers a universal approach without attending to the local contexts and understanding of health (Dutta and Basnyat 2008). But the limitation of the commonly applied health communication strategies in most parts of rural Africa is that they lack a context-based intervention approach, which in turn limits people's participation. Therefore, interventions must deal with what is circulating

within the social domain, since social change does not take place at an individual level but in circulated culture and shared beliefs (Lie 2008).

The Culture-Centred Approach to Health Communication

A culture-centred approach in health utilises culture as a lens through which one can gain an in-depth understanding of individual and collective health behaviours, and a means to formulate prevention programs within a specific cultural context. It serves to connect people to health programs by highlighting their voices and by offering community participation as the foundation for developing health communication applications (Dutta and Basu 2007, Ford and Yep 2003). In the culture-centred approach, participation is recognised as central to the articulation of health issues and as a primary step toward initiating change that is meaningful to community members (Guha and Spivak 1988). The utilisation of a culture-centred approach to health communication is a culture-driven process, which engages in meaning-making through dialogue with community members (Dutta and Basnyat 2008). Dialogue points to engagement with community voices that facilitates indigenous constructions of health and the participation of members in articulating health problems and solutions.

Culture-centred approaches to health emphasise sociocultural factors that shape community health, particularly in non-Western communities (Airhihenbuwa et al. 2014, Dutta 2015, Singhal 2003). Health behaviours are rendered meaningful within cultural contexts, being anchored in cultural values and beliefs (Dutta 2008). The key emphasis in the culture-centred approach is the involvement of communities and individuals in defining health problems and developing solutions that are relevant and culturally appropriate (Dutta and Basnyat 2008, Dutta and Basu 2007). Culture-centred approach to rural health communication can be realised through "culture as a method" approach, which focuses on the use of cultural expressions including "song, dance, poetry, idioms, and proverbs to enhance development efforts" (Njoh 2006, p.186). Cultural expressions in this part

represent indigenous communication forms that are congruent to the culture and language of rural people.

Indigenous Communication for Health Prevention Campaigns

Different scholars use different terms to describe indigenous communication. Some of the terms used to designate folk media are: 'Oramedia' (Ugboajah 1985); 'indigenous communication systems,' (Wang and Dissanayake 1984); 'folk media' (Panford et al. 2001); among others. Different scholars have put different definitions for folk media. From the Asian perspective, Wang and Dissanayake (1984), for instance, define indigenous communication systems as interpersonal channels and networks of communication, such as the Indonesian Banjar, the Korean Mother's club, and the Chinese Hui (loaning club). From the African viewpoint, Ugboajah (1985) defines 'Oramedia' as communication forms grounded in indigenous culture produced and consumed by members of a group. Despite various definitions of indigenous communication, the definition by Ansu-Kyeremeh best captures the focus of this study. Ansu-Kyeremeh defines indigenous communication as:

> Any form of the indigenous-communication system, which by virtue of its origin from, any integration into a specific culture, serves as a channel for the message in a way and manner that requires the utilization of the values, symbols, institutions and ethos of the host culture through its unique qualities and attributes (2005, p.16).

The term indigenous is used to distinguish endogenous media (indigenous communication) from exogenous media (modern media) systems. It refers to the specific groups of people defined by ancestral territories, collective cultural formation, and historical locations (Angioni 2003, Dei 2002, Turay 2002). Despite different terminologies and definitions to designate indigenous communication, these communication forms involve similarities across cultures. The centrality of these

communication forms is that they constitute an indigenous communication system determined by interpersonal and social intercourse (Wang and Dissanayake 1982). Folk media thus denote the cultural facets of an indigenous community; standing as living expressions of varied lifestyle and cultures that have evolved over centuries (Melkote and Steeves 2001). They have been in use from the time immemorial to address the sociocultural, economic, political, and religious needs of people in rural areas, indigenous communication forms are rarely documented and are confined to the specific localities. Panford et al. (2001, p.2) argue that the long-lasted existence of folk media in rural areas as: "rural Africa is endowed with rich, popular means of communication, including songs, proverbs, storytelling, drumming and dancing, drama, poetry recital, and arts and crafts." Ugboajah (1985) describes Oramedia as credible and effective communication channels because rural people in Africa consider them to be accessible, interactive, and immediate and user-friendly. They are interactive and participatory promoting dialogue among participants (Hoivik and Lugar 2009, Mushengyezi 2003, Nigussie et al. 2010). Messages using indigenous communication forms are readily intelligible because they employ local idioms, and they are readily accessible. Equally, Panford et al. (2001, p. 4) also noted that "because folk media are an immediately recognisable vehicle for education, they are readily accepted by most Africans. The relevance of indigenous communication for development-related messages is that any development-oriented messages through these media are more likely to involve and motivate most people (Bame 2005, Ugboajah 1985).

The power of folk media in changing behaviours in rural Africa mostly results from the media's originality and the audience's trust in the sources of the messages, which often come from people familiar to their audiences (Panford et al. 2001). Evidence has shown that indigenous communication forms can efficiently be used for health communication. Mundy (1993) citing the experiences of Indonesia, India and other developing countries argues that indigenous communication has successfully been applied to promote family planning and political messages. Other studies have also shown that indigenous communication forms can be successfully applied to health communication (Ebenso et al. 2012, Lubinga 2014, Panford et al.

2001). Therefore, for the dominantly oral cultures such as the Irob people, the viability of indigenous communication forms is that they are an integral part of people's language and culture. They are flexible to cover different themes including HIV/AIDS-related messages. Above all, in the eyes of development practitioners, they are the cheapest forms of communication (Mushengyezi 2003).

In rural Ethiopia, indigenous communication forms are the dominant alternative sphere in the political, economic and social expressions; serving as quicker and more accessible methods for exchanging messages among the public compared to the mainstream media (Fekade 2006). People in eastern Tigray are incredibly reliant on indigenous communication forms in that these communication forms are not considered as alternative modes of communication but are taken as primary forms to disseminate truthful and timely accounts of events. As a result, these communication forms have still been prominent in the lives of rural people. Indigenous communication forms may cover different events of people's daily lives including news on accidents, market news, weddings, conflicts, the well-being of their herds, visitors and newcomers. The potency of indigenous communication thus lies in their credibility and the widespread practice supported by the existing social networks among people. This shows that although rural people are mostly illiterate, they have an established communication system to address their socio-cultural, economic, religious, and political needs.

METHODS

Methodologically, this study employed an ethnographic research design. Campbell and Lassiter (2014, p. 6) take ethnography as "hermeneutic, in that it is entirely and inevitably interpretative affair," helping to understand human behaviour and their actions. The relevance of ethnography to this study is that it is useful to "critically analyse interconnected socio-cultural issues" in a given social context (Sarantakos 2013, p.182). Interconnected socio-cultural issues in this study represent the norms, values and meanings people attach to their lives, and how they can recognise them for HIV/AIDS

prevention campaigns. To understand these interconnected details, ethnography becomes appropriate as it entails the ‘‘description of people’s activities, their interactions with each other, and their verbal behaviour, which should be copious and detailed’’ (Okely 2012, p.142). Ethnography also helps to obtain profound insights into a belief system of communities, and activities that people engage in, by observing their actions and experiences (Angrosino 2007, Gobo 2008, Murchison 2010, Reeves et al. 2008). The ethnographic research employs a blend of techniques to understand a given situation in a complete manner (Daly 2007, Murchison 2010, O’Reilly 2012). This study employed a combination of different data collection techniques such as participant observation, individual interviews, and focus group discussions; to enrich individual research method as each data collection technique has its strengths and weaknesses.

Participants

This study was undertaken in ‘Daya-Alitena’ sub-district in Irob, eastern Tigray. Daya-Alitena is located in the central part of the Irob district. Alitena was the former administrative centre of Irob district. It is a small town, and Daya situated in closer proximity to it. The reason to select this sub-district is that it is a place where a number of people can meet to attend various social and religious events. This helps to understand how people in small town in the district and the nearby village recognise the epidemic and the significance of their communication and social networks in HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. Also, as FHAPCO and GAMET (2008) argued, the HIV epidemic in Ethiopia was heterogeneous with marked regional differences and that HIV programs should not be led by national level statistics but instead targeted at districts or communities thereby requiring that research and data use is conducted at district level. The study participants were people of age groups ranging from 15-49. The underlying reason to select these age groups is that they are sexually active and are the most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS (MOH 2009). HIV adult prevalence (15–49

years) was estimated at 1.5% (1.9% among women versus 1.0% among men; 4.2% urban versus 0.6% rural) (CSA and ICF International 2011).

Besides, district-level health experts and health extension workers in this sub-district were also included. Participants also comprised In School and Out of School Youth groups. Studies have shown that the youth are among the population at risk of contracting the virus as they engage in unsafe sex practices (Plautz and Meekers 2007, Lydie et al. 2004). Purposive sampling was used to select these participants. Interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation was used as data collection techniques. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with community members were held using the Saho language. However, those with the health experts and the health extension workers were held using the Tigrigna language. Participant observation was undertaken through participation in socio-cultural events such as cultural weddings, and religious festivities of the community, which are accompanied by Goila and Aa'dar. As a member of the community who understands their culture and language, I have participated in these events and recorded issues addressed in Goila and Aa'dar. Data were analysed qualitatively using constructivist and interpretive techniques. O'Reilly (2012, p.180) argues that ethnographic research is "iterative-inductive" in nature in that data collection, analysis and writing up processes are inextricably linked. This implies that ethnographic data analysis is characterised by a detailed description and interpretation of issues under inquiry. Denzin (2001) refers to this as "thick description that gives rigour to qualitative analysis" and "presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another" (p. 83).

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The Role of Indigenous Communication for HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns

In most parts of rural Ethiopia such as the Irob district, open discussion about sexuality is taken as a taboo, which has limited people's

responsiveness about reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. Also, there exist high levels of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. This shows that the commonly employed communication strategies such as public meetings are not effectively communicating HIV/AIDS messages to raise the awareness of people. Utilising indigenous communication can help people to openly discuss HIV/AIDS and sexuality-related issues and identify solutions collectively. Collective actions people can undertake are supported by interpersonal relationships and contacts in persuading people to accept or reject innovations (Rogers 2003). Indigenous messages originate from sources familiar to the broader audience, which promotes the credibility and acceptance of messages. In support of this view, a community member in Daya village states that "in our areas, we all know each other that make the communication easier. People can tell you what they have heard and seen. As we know each other, we accept information coming from our fellow members." This is consistent with the findings of Obijiofor (1998), who argues that rural communication is attached more to the source of the message rather than the content of the message. This implies that familiarity with the source in rural areas determines the acceptance of messages that in turn defines the way people react to issues of common concern such as the HIV/AIDS. Familiarity among rural people is related to correlations through kinship, social networks, religion, and marriage. Those who belong to one or more of these connections closely communicate better than those who do not belong to any of these correlations. This shows that the effectiveness of communication depends on the degree people become homophilous. Homophily refers to the extent to which pair of individuals who communicate with each other become "similar in certain attributes like beliefs, education, and socioeconomic status" (Rogers 2003, p. 305).

Thus, there are compelling reasons for the relevance of indigenous communication for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in the Irob district. First, these communication forms are associated with the language and culture of the people. As UNFPA (2002, p. 25) asserts, "messages adapted to people's language, intellectual systems and ways of life, as well as their teaching and learning and communication methods, can communicate

information and influence behavioural changes." Secondly, messages through these communication forms are attractive and entertaining helping people to adopt new ideas related to family planning, health, and environmental education among others. Thirdly, indigenous communication forms do not involve any language barrier as they employ the idioms and expressions of people, in that messages become easily comprehensible to the majority. Fourthly, they are taken as acceptable and participatory often characterised by immediate feedback. Lastly, the existence of social networks and relationships in rural areas facilitates the exchange of information among social networks and beyond. The next section discusses the roles of Aa'dar and Goila for the HIV/AIDS prevention campaign in Irob district, eastern Tigray.

Aa'dar (Oral Poetry)

Aa'dar is an elaborate oral poetry tradition used to praise, emphasise, or criticise someone or something. It is composed in public gatherings such as in sociocultural, political and religious events where several participants attend. People who compose Aa'dar are locally called 'Aa'darens' (oral poets). It is not clear how much time individual Aa'daren may require composing a single Aa'dar. Mostly, it is observed that Aa'darens compose it on the spot in social events and verse it immediately. One of the roles of Aa'dar is that it narrates events and histories from the past and relates them to contemporary thinking. About the essence of Aa'dar, a male respondent in Alitena village points out that:

> …Aa'dar is everything to the Irob people. It reflects our culture and history. For individuals in the community, oral poets verse Aa'dar as a sign of respect and approval for what he or she has done for our people or to our country. …Aa'dar is also composed to comment on the actions of an individual, a system or an event. It has great potential to communicate various messages.

Equally, an Out of School Youth in Daya village adds that:

> To the Irob people, Aa'dar is highly valued, and I prefer Aa'dar to other forms of indigenous communication….it has all the qualities to express our culture, criticise wrongdoings and, reconcile and unite people. This is, therefore, one of the reasons why we mostly respect our Aa'darens who have the skill to tell our stories.

The above views suggest that every community member irrespective of gender and social status cherishes Aa'dar as it is associated with the culture, language and history of the people. Hence, communicating HIV/AIDS messages through Aa'dar can raise the awareness of people about the epidemic due to the following reasons. First, as Aa'dar is composed in public gatherings such as cultural weddings, religious and cultural festivals, and messages can easily reach many participants at a time. Secondly, the language and idioms used in Aa'dar are congruent with the knowledge and worldviews of rural people that make the communication intelligible. Thirdly, in Irob district, Aa'darens (oral poets) are highly respected, and rural people recite their oral poetry, which lasts in the minds of the people. Thus, the popularity of Aa'dar in Irob district is that the messages remain persistent in the minds of the public in that people are observed to narrate Aa'dars versed many years back. As a result, Aa'dar is serving as the library of the people to trace their past. Despite this, rural health experts are not utilising Aa'dar as a medium for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. The only available evidence is that the Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretarial (ADCS), a local NGO from the Catholic Church had organised a 'Training of Trainers'[1] about the role of Aa'dar for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in the district.

[1] Aa'darens in Irob district received training to convey HIV/AIDS related messages through Aa'dar. Some of the Aa'dars composed about the epidemic were highly informative. However, there were no follow-ups and their impact was not measured.

Goila (Folk Songs)

Goila in eastern Tigray is a form of singing and dancing performed in public gatherings often involving several participants from rural villages irrespective of their age, gender and social status. Songs accompany any essential social event taking place in rural villages. Results show that there are various social events distinguished by rural people serving as a venue where a variety of songs are composed. Nicholls (1997) argues that "…songs serve some purposes, such as disseminating traditional wisdom, commenting on local news, relaying history, instilling pride and solidarity, as well as teaching, testing, and storing information" (p.54). Equally, Reed (2005) contends that poetry as an expression inspires social change by clarifying cultural rules and making arguments. Fieldwork observations in Irob district also confirm that Goila is widely performed across different villages in the district. Observation results further showed that rural people spend many hours during nights playing Goila including different participants across diverse segments of the population. These events include cultural weddings, religious, and cultural festivals. Songs are either composed on the spot or individuals might have shared them from other villages or neighbouring districts. Individuals compose Goila based on what they observe and encounter and sing them in different social and community events. About Goila in rural areas, a male youth from Daya village states that:

> Goila is everything to us. We enjoy every moment when we practice it. Everyone from the community gathers in one village to make Goila. Sometimes, people from other villages join us, and we spend long hours of singing and dancing.

Another youth in Alitena village also adds that:

> …Goila in our district is an opportunity for people to gather in a specific location where we spend long hours singing songs and dance. Sometimes, we get people coming from distant villages which share their

songs with us. This makes Goila a popular form of entertainment and a source of information.

The role of Goila for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns is that it is the reflection of the emotions of people originating from the realities they experience. It is regularly practised among rural people regardless of their age and social status. Results show that youths most cherish Goila. Thus, communicating HIV/AIDS messages through Goila can easily reach these sexually active group to change risky sexual behaviours. Equally, due to its poetic nature, messages through Goila are entertaining and attractive in that people can quickly adopt new ideas. Goila follows social events where a large number of people attend, and communicating HIV/AIDS messages through Goila can help to reach most audiences easily. Given that, messages composed in one village or sub-district can efficiently disseminate into the next as people in rural areas such as the Irob district are in close proximity and regular contact with each other. Based on the above attributes, communicating HIV/AIDS messages through Goila can play a vital role in the HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

CONCLUSION

HIV/AIDS has continued as a global development challenge affecting all segments of the population in developing nations. Despite successes in raising the awareness of people mainly in urban areas in Ethiopia, the epidemic is transmitting to rural settings in an escalating rate. One of the significant challenges to halt the spread of HIV is that most of the intervention programs are not context specific. HIV/AIDS is more than a health problem that requires a holistic response addressing the sociocultural, economic, political, and religious factors in a given setting. Gender inequality, discrimination, poverty and marginalisation, for instance, are the fundamental factors missed while communicating about the HIV/AIDS prevention strategies to the target population (Panos 2003). However, most of the HIV/AIDS intervention models and strategies are designed by experts

and scholars outside of the intervention environment, which rarely recognises the relevance of these factors. Subsequently, most of the intervention strategies fail to raise the awareness of people about risky sexual behaviours. Moreover, due to the lack of awareness about the epidemic, still there exists a high level of stigma and discrimination for people living with HIV/AIDS. This study examined the use of indigenous communication in the HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in the Irob district. Indigenous communication epitomises reflections of the language and culture of people as it originates from familiar sources; often holding high credibility. Messages are readily disseminated among people due to social networks. Unlike other forms of communication, messages through indigenous communication forms are supported by immediate feedback, which promotes dialogue and participation of people.

Goila and Aa'dar hold the highest educational and communicative potential. The popularity of both communication forms in Irob is related to the following points. First, both Aa'dar and Goila are the most extensively practised forms of indigenous communication in that messages communicated through these forms become largely respected and accepted by the people. Secondly, as Aa'dar and Goila are performed in social events, messages through these communication forms can easily reach a large audience. Thirdly, Aa'dar and Goila are poetic, which can last in the minds of listeners and instigate them for collective action. Both communication forms are highly respected often involving many participants during the performance. Employing these communication forms, therefore, not only helps to effectively communicate HIV/AIDS messages but also promotes community participation. Above all, it stimulates the sense of ownership of the community towards the epidemic prevention campaigns. Mefalopulos (2008) calls for a new communication paradigm suggesting the vital function of participatory communication in a broader strategic communication mix of channels. Having this, he contends that "the new communication paradigm does not call for a replacement of the basic communication functions associated with information dissemination, but rather it broadens boundaries to include more interactive ways of communicating" (p.71). Evidence has shown that indigenous

communication forms can be successfully applied to health communication in different parts of developing countries (Bastien 2009, Bekalu and Eggermont 2015, Lubinga 2014, Mundy 1993, Riley 2005, Wenje et al. 2011). Notwithstanding, they have been mostly overlooked (Wilson 2005); and "minimal efforts have gone into understanding the capacity of indigenous communication systems for various applications" (Ansu-Kyeremeh 2005, p. 24). Thus, policymakers and rural health experts in Tigray are required to realise the prominence of employing indigenous communication for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

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Chapter 8

ETHIOPIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Significant gender inequality is pervasive in the agricultural sector in Ethiopia. Women have limited access to land and education, are constrained by sometimes rigid gender norms, and are less present within the government bodies that work to support the agricultural sector than men. Further, data surrounding the actual situation for women in agriculture is inconsistent if existing at all. This all has resulted in lowered productivity for women in the agricultural sector, affecting country-wide poverty levels and development goals. A context-driven and locally nuanced response to this gender divide must address the underlying norms and power inequities for gender equality to prevail.

Keywords: gender, agriculture, women, Ethiopia, disparity, reform

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INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia has made remarkable progress in reducing poverty rates since the year 2000, with a 33% reduction in the proportion of the population living in poverty in 2011 (World Bank 2016). However, this progress has been uneven for women and men. Women and girls in Ethiopia are disadvantaged in several areas including literacy, health, livelihoods, economic opportunities and employment. This chapter focuses on the agriculture sector and argues that women's disadvantaged position pervades the society, is reinforced by social norms and institutions, and even manifests in the manner agricultural data is collected.

There are many reasons to reverse women's disadvantaged position in Ethiopia:

- *Rights:* Article 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) states that "women have equal rights with men in all economic, social and political activities."
- *Productivity*: women holders produce 23.4 percent less per hectare than male-managed plots (Aguilar et al. 2014).
- *International commitment:* The Sustainable Development Goals signed by Ethiopia commit to inclusiveness and reducing gender inequality, among other goals.
- *National policy:* The national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II aims to "promote women and youth empowerment, ensure their participation in the development process and enable them to equitably benefit from the outcomes of development;" and Proclamation (No. 916/2015) directs GoE ministries to address women's and youth affairs when preparing policies, laws and development programs and projects (FDRE 2015).

- *Economic growth:* discrimination in the agriculture sector costs the nation 1.1 billion USD, or 1.4 percent of total GDP.[1]
- *Regional comparison:* Ethiopia ranks 115th out of 144 countries on The Global Gender Gap Report 2017 which is lower than other nearby African countries (Table 1).

Hence, there are more reasons to address inequality, than to maintain the status quo.

Table 1. Selected countries of the 2017 Global Gender Gap Report

Country	**Rank**
Ethiopia	115
Rwanda	4
Kenya	76
Cameroon	87

Source: WEF (2017).

Fortunately, things are changing rapidly in Ethiopia. As of October 16th 2018, 50% of Ethiopia's cabinet will be female. The reform-minded prime minister, Abiy Ahmed Ali, considers gender equality to be a key agenda. Yet, more effort is required to improve gender equality, particularly in the agriculture sector.

Agriculture is important to the nation. It employs 80% of Ethiopia's 99.4 million people (World Bank 2016). Agriculture's contribution to GDP[2] is declining, from 46% in 2006 to 37% in 2016 (Statista 2018). This loss is attributed to harsh climatic challenges and the rising importance of other sectors. Nevertheless, agriculture still plays a major role in feeding the nation and helping it achieve growth. Consequently, addressing women's

[1] World Bank (2019) What are the Costs of Gender Gaps in Ethiopia. Retrieved from: documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/245781553488459640/What-Are-the-Economic-Costs-of-Gender-Gaps-in-Ethiopia

[2] According to the World Bank, gross domestic product (GDP) is defined as the measure of the total output of goods and services for final use occurring within the domestic territory of a given country, regardless of the allocation to domestic and foreign claims.

disadvantage in the agriculture sector is imperative for the growth of the nation.

In development discourse, the phrase 'promote gender equality and empower women' is used when a country has large gender gaps. Gender is about social relationships and constructs that define masculine and feminine attributes and norms of behavior. Gender is also an intersectional analytical category. This means there can be various and compounding causes of women's subordinate status. For example, age, ethnic membership, religion, location, status and so on, can all create additional forms of inequality. Consequently, women (and men) do not have a homogenous identity. Reducing gender inequality depends on the context because of the unique way norms of behavior operate.

This chapter will outline what contributes to women's subordination in the agriculture sector and what can be done to improve the benefits women receive from agriculture. The first section briefly discusses the methodology followed by an overview of the situation of women in agriculture, which sets out how women are disadvantaged in the agriculture sector compared to men. Next is a discussion on data gaps, access to land, the role of gender norms (informal institutions) on maintaining the gender gap, and how these norms permeate formal institutions. The chapter concludes that gender equality is a key social, economic and political challenge to address, but most initiatives only address the symptoms of gender inequality and not the underlying causes.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter draws upon a range of research outputs from the project titled *Understanding gender in wheat-based livelihoods for enhanced WHEAT R4D impact in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Ethiopia* implemented by the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT). These research outputs include: policy analysis, scoping studies, literature reviews, stakeholder analysis, qualitative research on gender norms, data mining and

a meta-analysis of project evaluations. The methodologies can be found in the individual reports published on CIMMYT's repository.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Agriculture is important to women in Ethiopia, yet women face more constraints than men when trying to earn an income from it. An estimated 46% of all working women (aged 15-49) were engaged in agricultural occupations in 2011, and this figure increases to 57% in rural areas (CSA and ICF 2012). This section explores how women are disadvantaged in the agriculture sector compared to men.

Women's participation in the agricultural sector resembles their participation in the general labor market. In both cases, it is characterized by low wages (or no wages) and insecurity. According to the 2011 Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey (EDHS), more than half of women (56%) engaged in the agricultural sector were unpaid workers, and 65% of women were working for a family member, compared with 22% of women working for a family member in the non-agricultural sector (CSA and ICF 2012). In the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, the average monthly payment for women was 561 ETB (US$20), while for men it was 733 ETB (US$27) (*Hill and Tsehaye 2014). Further*, in 2011-2012, women had a 7.4 percentage-point lower likelihood of working on rented fields than men (Hill and *Tsehaye* 2014). Women's employment in agriculture is under-valued, more insecure and more dependent on their kin-based relationships, than men's employment.

Rural women work between thirteen and seventeen hours a day (more than twice that of men) (*Hill and Tsehaye 2014)*. Most of women's unpaid labor is spent on household activities such as fetching firewood, collecting water or preparing food (Hill and *Tsehaye* 2014). Consequently, women often predominate in the cultivation of crops, especially vegetables, which are commonly grown on small plots of land within (or close to) the house compound (WB and IFPRI 2010). Women also tend to livestock for the same

reasons, they reside close to the home. Women's drudgery has many knock on disadvantages.

Women's unpaid labor burden also dictates the gendered division of agriculture labor, and consequently, who has control of benefits (Palacios-Lopez, Christiaensen, and Kilic 2017). Women tend to concentrate their efforts on the production of staple and other food crops (38% of women's share of agricultural labor is devoted to fruit, vegetables and permanent crops) that can be consumed or easily sold (Palacios-Lopez, Christiaensen, and Kilic 2017, 57). In contrast, men tend to concentrate on cash crops such as coffee, teff, and khat and trade larger livestock (Ibid). The gendered division of labor in agriculture serves to deny women access to larger markets, resources and commercial networks.

When women work so much, it is hard for them to find time to learn new agriculture knowledge and techniques that would increase their productivity. Government extension workers pass technical information to farmers about the most effective way to grow crops. Using data from 2009 to 2012, one study found that 68% of female-headed households (FHH) reported not having contact with an extension officer in the past 12 months (Buehren et al. 2017). Meanwhile, a more comparative study in 2010, found that 11% of women compared with 28% of men, had accessed technical advice through community meetings organized by agriculture extension officers (World Bank and IFPRI 2010). Women living in male headed households (MHHs) have limited opportunities to get involved in extension services and technical programs because their husbands usually attend (Frank 1999).

There is also a gender gap in cooperative membership. Cooperatives are usually run by the government and supply inputs like fertilizers to farmers. Female participation in cooperatives and farmer associations is low: 23% of FHHs reported their participation in a cooperative whereas 37% of MHHs reported that at least one household member (usually the male household head) participated in a cooperative (Warner, Kieran and McMullan 2015, 8, 23 and 29). Moreover, men are five times more likely than women to hold a leadership position within a cooperative (Mogues et al. 2009). Women's involvement in cooperatives is crucial to increasing their agriculture

productivity. Yet, with such a big workload, it is hard for women to find the time to participate in cooperative meetings.

When/if women are widowed or divorced, their lack of access to knowledge when married inhibits their productivity when single. Female farm managers produce less per hectare than male farm managers and pay more for inputs. Drucza (2018a) found that women paid 20ETB more per liter of herbicide than men. Aguilar et al. (2014) found that women who manage farms produce 23.4% less than male farm managers. However, intersectional categories converge to create intractable problems for certain categories of women - married female managers are not significantly less productive than male managers, but non-married female managers are 30.2% less productive than male managers, and single and widowed females face the most disadvantages (Aguilar et al. 2014). Women are excluded when married and when divorced or abandoned they face more disadvantages than men, single or otherwise. It is important to reach women with agriculture information when married to ensure they are able to support their families adequately if widowed.

Currently, Ethiopian women earn more money from non-farm income and migration than from agriculture. Notable improvements are needed for women to be more agriculturally productive.

DATA GAPS

Gender is about relationships between men and women and is an intersectional category. Thus, in order to understand gender inequality in the agriculture sector, it is important to collect data on different categories of women and men. For instance, the previous section revealed that women's marital status affected their productivity. Thus, data on women living in MHH and whether FHH are widowed, abandoned or never married, is required to understand women's roles in agriculture.

The economic status of FHHs in Ethiopia has been poorly investigated, albeit better than women living in MHH (Meehan 2004). Nationally 26.1% of the households are headed by females and 25.4% in rural areas, which is

higher than many other countries (CSA and ICF 2016). However, it is expected to be even higher because many FHHs are not reported in national statistics due to the shame of abandonment, and flexible living arrangements whereby one man may have children with a few partners whom he visits semi-regularly and supports only minimally.

Ethiopia is a data-poor country. There is a lack of sex-disaggregated data, and the majority of studies/policies focus on FHHs as the only analytical category, leaving all other categories of women such as women living in MHH and intra-household dynamics and women's contributions within the household almost unaddressed (O'Brien et al. 2016). Women of different ages and those living in monogamous and polygamous households require different forms of assistance (Warner et al. 2015). Moreover, vulnerable groups of women such as the disabled and abandoned are invisible to legislators and policymakers.

The data that does exist on FHH is contradictory: some studies argue that FHHs in rural areas face 8.9% higher probability of being poor, compared to MHHs (Bigsten et al. 2002) and yet, other studies find that poverty is reducing faster for FHHs than for MHHs (Jayamohan and Kitesa 2014). Even in the best data sets on women there are significant gaps in knowledge and unreliable data. Decision makers need an accurate representation of what is going on within households, in order to develop policies to solve gender inequality.

How data is recorded and captured matters to women's visibility and value (Nelson 2013, 52-55). Some studies place single women as poor and vulnerable and others as contributors to national poverty reduction (Milazzo and Van De Walle 2015). This highlights the role of the researcher in the analysis and presentation of the data. Meanwhile, Nelson (2013) writes about another kind of bias affecting how women are conceived of an unimportant in agriculture – women fetch the water that is used for mixing fertilizer, and yet, this contribution from women is not captured in national agriculture statistics. The household head usually answers agriculture surveys and based upon the framing of the question, and the man replies that he does the fertilizing. Thus, the way surveys are designed and the sex of the respondent also matters to data accuracy on women's role in agriculture.

It is also said that women do not plough and are thus not "farmers". This argument is frequently used for why women are overlooked in extension activities and new technology transfer opportunities. However, authors explain that some women do plough, especially widows, or those without access to male labor (Alesina, Guiliano and Nunn 2013, 469-530; Gella and Tadele 2014; Pankhurst 1992, 75-101). With more accurate data, some of the constraints that different kinds of women face that are associated with their lack of visibility as farmers would be addressed. The data gaps affect the capacity of policies to address women's needs and rights (MoANR 2016).

In agricultural policies and practice, 'women' are frequently conceived of as homogenous. This leads to the assumption that to solve gender inequality, 'women' have to be brought into the development process. The way this argument obscures the very power inequalities that need to change will be discussed in the section on gender norms.

LAND AND CONTRADICTION

Women own less land than men, but does this account for their lower productivity? MHH inherit more land (average 0.42 ha) compared to FHH (0.36 ha) and spouses in MHH (0.07 ha). Data from the 1997, 2004 and 2009 surveys of the Ethiopian Rural Household Surveys (ERHS), found 48% of MHH had received gifts or inherited assets from their parents, compared with only 33% of FHH and only seven percent of spouses in MHH (Kumar and Quisumbing 2011, 18).

Noting the limited data available on women, there is a tendency to parcel women's smaller land sizes with their lower productivity. Aguilar et al. (2014) includes small land sizes as one of a few reasons women farm mangers produce less than male farm managers.[3] While it is true that women

[3] 57% of the 23.4% productivity gap is explained by differences in the returns women receive from the use of the same quantity of the same inputs, and stems from disadvantages such as unequal access to extension services, distance of field from house, *smaller land size*, lack of product diversification and fewer years of schooling (Aguilar et al. 2014).

own less land than men - in 2011-2012, women held on average 41% fewer hectares of land than men (Hill and *Tsehaye* 2014) – recent scholarship suggests smaller farms are more productive. For instance, Paul and Gĩthĩnji (2018) found an inverse relationship between farm size and yield, and a positive association between yield and land fragmentation. Therefore, the smaller landholdings of women may be a correlation but not a causation of women's lower productivity.

Nevertheless, land ownership has many other benefits to women, even if the link with productivity is weak. Women's bargaining power and household decision-making increases with asset ownership (Muchomba 2017). Ample evidence shows that women who bring more assets into the household have more say in farming decisions (Fafchamps and Quisumbing, 2002; Holden and Bezu 2013; Holden, Deininger and Ghebru 2011). This means women need to be able to inherit land, in order to gain decision making power within a household.

The Government of Ethiopia is enforcing joint land-holding certification: 11.11 million women, of which 2 million are female heads and 9.11 million are married women had been issued land-holding certificates by 2016 (CEDAW 2016). Joint land ownership brings many knock-on benefits to households as well as women. Households with joint titling spent more resources on healthcare, and increase the consumption of healthier home-grown food, than households with single land title (Muchomba 2017). Consequently, when women advance, so does the nation.

While this is a notable improvement, land-policy reforms by themselves are not enough to ensure gender equality in land tenure (Lavers 2017, 203). Women's control over assets depends in practice on how laws are interpreted and implemented at the local level. For instance, regarding property rights, the wider the gap between a new law and traditional norms, the longer it takes for the law to be implemented at the grassroots level (Holden and Bezu 2013). This means that even if women can legally own land, at the local level women may have little say over the land because local norms trump the formal legal system.

The next section explores informal institutions such as gender norms because women are greatly constrained by cultural and gender norms that

cannot be solved by increasing women's land title (Warner et al. 2015,8, 23, 29).

GENDER NORMS – INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS

The previous section explained the way socio-cultural context, such as gender norms and the underlying power relations within the communities, can block women's advancement, even when there is a favorable policy and legislative environment (Lavers 2017, 203). This section explains what gender norms are, how they work, and why they are crucial to understanding gender inequality.

Informal institutions can lead to discrimination and unconscious biases that culminate in women's lower productivity. Informal institutions usually set the 'rules of the game,' that is how fair the playing field and who is, and is not, included. Patriarchy is an informal institution that lies behind formal rules and institutions and dictates the way men control power and why women are dependent on men. Normative behavior is rarely questioned as it is accepted as the way things have always been done.

Patriarchy and gender norms are an informal, yet powerful, institution. Traditional gender norms link women to the reproductive sphere and the household, and link men to farms and income earning. This cultural perception remains strong, even though numerous agricultural tasks such as weeding, harvesting, storage, etc. are deemed "women's work" (EEA and EEPRI 2006). The gendered division of labor and cultural taboos, such as that preventing women from ploughing their land, has negative effects on household food security and women's advancement (Kumar and Quisumbing 2015). Moreover, gender norms explain why women work many hours each day.

Men can punish women if women travel around without seeking their male kin's permission. For example, more than one-third of married women (35%) reported that they had experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence from their husband or partner at some point (CSA and ICF 2016). Many of these incidences of violence stem from gender norms that allow

men to police women's behavior. Even though benefits to the family accrue when women attend cooperative meetings and extension-related training, women need permission from their husbands to attend. Some husbands restrict their wife's mobility in order to be in control. Households are not always homogenous in their needs or decision-making.

Social/gender norms can weigh more than economic benefits. Men can feel equally constrained by community structures that pressurize them to make certain choices or act in certain ways. Due to patriarchal norms, women have limited agency within a household because the male household head makes the ultimate decision over resource use. This can put a great deal of pressure on the man assuming the sole breadwinner status. When men try to step out of these roles and embrace a more egalitarian household, men can be subjected to criticism (Tsegaye, Drucza and Springer 2018,111). Gender norms constrain both men's and women's agency.

Gender norms represent perspectives on what gender relations "should" be like and how individuals of particular genders "should" behave (Marcus 2014). These norms of behavior are policed by other family members through punishment and sanctions and by community gossip and are thus internalized by some as the 'correct' way to be in the world. Consequently, the poor find it very hard to escape their poverty and women find it very hard to access the opportunities and embrace the attributes necessary to advance.

Communities are small places and changing the way things have always been done is a herculean task, especially when the structures of power are what keep you poor and restrict your agency.[4] Lavers (2008) found that the primary motivating factor driving people's decision making in Ethiopia was the fulfilment of norms and expectations which were a source of happiness and status. Consequently, "individual and community goals are deeply rooted in the cultural values of the community and will often reflect existing power relations based on gender, race and age" (2008, 129-47). Thus, many community members uphold gender norms.

[4] Agency is the capacity of a person to act.

Policies tend to tackle the symptoms of gender inequality and not the causes. Policies, such as the national development plan, the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II argue that if women's participation in extension services, credit-related groups, organized women's associations, capacity-building sessions, agricultural activities and other forms of employment are increased, then women will develop on par with men. Yet, the gender norms and social practices that hinder women's control over assets and limit their powers of decision-making and mobility will remain with such an approach. By only focusing on increasing women's participation, women's workloads will increase and the power inequalities that need to change will remain intact, or worsen.

Despite the strictness with which norms are enforced, some citizens are able to break with what is usually associated with tradition. Norms are not always negative - they can be a positive force for change. However, careful programming is needed to ensure norms are considered in a manner that does not create more inequality. Programs and policies that consider gender norms are more successful and deliver more sustainable and equitable results (Springer and Drucza 2018). Many agriculture policies blame gender norms for women's lack of empowerment, but rarely do policies tackle this complex issue (Drucza and Rodriguez, 2018).

THE ROLE OF FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

Gender norms can also affect formal institutions. This section compares the workforce diversity data of two key agriculture institutions in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (MoANR) and the Ethiopia Institute of Agriculture Research (EIAR) because the gender sensitivity of these institutions has a direct bearing on the gender sensitivity of the entire agriculture sector.

More women are needed in the agriculture sector and in government departments. Drought-related research found that adaptation measures were highly influenced by extension services and government aid packages, and that these forms of assistance tended to reproduce gendered norms and

gendered roles and responsibilities (Mersha and Van Laerhoven 2015). For example, the training offered to women reinforced their reproductive and community roles (child-nutrition, sanitation, hygiene, family planning, compost and biogas) and men were taught new farming techniques to help adapt to a shortage of rainfall (ibid). Similarly, Buchy and Basaznew (2005) make the link that gender-blind organizations also deliver services that are gender blind.

Affirmative action measures are needed, because they help men *and* women overcome stereotypes and norms of behavior that are detrimental to the nation's growth and coping strategies. The government of Ethiopia has directed government institutions to take gender more seriously; proclamation no. 916/2015 mandates institutions to address women's and youth affairs when preparing policies, laws and development programs and projects (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2015). Additionally, there is an affirmative action proclamation to help women gain equal access to formal employment. Affirmative action is also enshrined in Ethiopia's Constitution, Article 35(3). Thus, Ethiopia's laws aim to protect women and mandate equal opportunity within government institutions.

However, the success of the government's affirmative action policy requires strengthening in the two key government-led agriculture institutions:

- The Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) was established in 1966 to nationally coordinate agricultural research and advise the Ethiopian Government on agricultural policy formulation. EIAR is comprised of 17 different centers spread across the country's regions and agro-ecological zones (Table 2 presents the EIAR's workforce diversity data);
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (MoANR) is the primary government institution assigned to transform the agriculture sector into a technologically advanced, productive sector able to feed the entire nation (Table 3 presents the MoANR's workforce diversity data).

Table 2 shows that for the EIAR, there has been a 4.5% increase in female employees over the past 12 years of affirmative action, which implies the need for more (or different) initiatives. The MoANR has increased its ratio of female employees by 22% during the same timeframe, but in lower skilled positions.

Table 2. EIAR workforce diversity figures

	2005		**2017**	
	M	**F**	**M**	**F**
PhD	80	3	94	8
Masters	214	16	361	69
Bachelors	325	23	845	173
Diploma	369	115	193	119
Certificate	13	17		
Level I, II			236	163
Grade 9 -10+			776	362
Grade 9-12[5]	431	226		
Grade 5-8	406	73	563	80
Grade 0-4	488	87	115	25
Total	2326	560	3183	999
Total %	80.5	19.5	76	24

The above figures reveal that affirmative action is not enough. Just adding more women into a process will not lead to gender equality. An institution's culture and the unconscious gender norms that lie behind an organizations policies and procedures must change for affirmative action measures to be effective. This requires tackling power inequities across and within institutions. Moreover, one of the main reasons cited for the lack of data on women is the poor awareness among top managers and practitioners of gender mainstreaming and of the need to gather sex-disaggregated and gender-responsive data (MoANR 2016, 57). Consequently, awareness raising for gender equality is a requirement for affirmative action to be successful. Until then, government institutions are not representative of the citizens they serve.

[5] N.B. the Ethiopian school system changed between 2005 and 2017, hence the different categories reflect the new way of counting students.

Table 3. MoANR Workforce Diversity Comparison 2005 – 2017

Job levels	**No. of Staff (by position & sex)**						**Proportion (by position & sex)%**					
	2005[1]		**2014[2]**		**2017[3]**		**2005**		**2014**		**2017**	
	F	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**
Senior officials & experts (PS 6 & above)	1	20	47	230	52	265	5	95	17	83	16	84
Middle level experts (PS 1 - 5)	23	94	22	84	29	82	20	80	21	79	26	74
Junior Professional (JP 4 - 12 & Admin)			26	81	12	18			24	76	40	60
Lower (less skilled, labor, secretarial)	31	160	361	415	269	192	16	84	46	53	58	42
Total	55	274	456[4]	810[5]	362	557	17	83	36	64	39	61
Grand Total	55	274	469	907	362	557	17	83	34	66	39	61

[1]Source: 2005 E.C. National study on women's representation in leadership positions. Cited in Gender audit report of MoANR.

[2]Source: MOA HR Management and Admin work process, April 2014, and own computation. Cited in Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) 2014. Gender Audit Report. Mela Development Training & Consultancy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

[3]Source: collected from MoANR during interview. Date: 1/02/2017.

[4]An additional 13 staff had unidentified job levels.

[5]An additional 97 staff had unidentified levels.

CONCLUSION

Gender equality remains an important development goal for Ethiopia and globally. Countries that create better opportunities and conditions for women and girls, and make institutions more representative, can raise productivity and economic outcomes and advance development prospects for both men and women (World Bank, 2011). While Ethiopia may lag behind other African nations at a similar level of growth in terms of gender-equality indicators, it has progressively expanded rights for women.

There are many compounding factors that culminate in women's lower productivity and lower benefits accruing to women from agriculture than what men receive. The available data has not been collected in a gender responsive manner, and does not capture the different needs and rights of different kinds of women. Women's drudgery is a key issue to address, because when women have time to attend agriculture extension, sell in markets, and be leaders of community groups, whole communities benefit. Women are under-represented in formal institutions, because these institutions mirror the wider society. Unequal gender norms pervade Ethiopian society.

The government of Ethiopia has made significant attempts to improve women's participation in, and benefit from the agriculture sector. They have mandated affirmative action and joint land titling and begun counting the participation of women at agriculture extension events. However, unless gender norms become a focus of government interventions, policy efforts will remain slow to achieve results. It is not that government attempts have been misguided, just that they are incomplete without also addressing gender norms. Gender inequality is a key social, economic and political challenge to address in Ethiopia.

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Chapter 9

THE INVISIBLE PRESENCE? THE POLITICS OF FEMALE ENROLMENT NUMBERS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in higher education participation in Ethiopia, along with major reforms under the Higher Education Proclamation. One aspect of this development is that women are now partaking much more in higher education than they used to. This paper looks more closely at this trend, drawing on government policy and institutional reports and surveys from several government ministries to examine what it might mean in terms of the actual evolution of gender relations and participation in the formal labour force. It will argue that increased female participation on its own does not substantially impact on

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gender inequality, while women continue to be held back by other relations in their society/culture.

Keywords: Ethiopia, gender, higher education, labour force, policies

INTRODUCTION

The importance of higher education for national development is now being recognised at all levels of government in 'developing' countries. Influential international organizations unanimously view higher education as one of the pillars for economic development, democratic participation and the construction of 'knowledge economies.' World Bank (2002) ascertained that 'tertiary education facilitates nation building by promoting greater social cohesion, trust in social institutions, democratic participation and open debate, and appreciation of diversity in gender, ethnicity, religion, and social class' (xxi). UNESCO (1997), likewise, described higher education as the crown of education systems in every country and that a higher education system is to a country what the head is to the body. UNESCO (1999) later stressed that 'access to higher education must be equitable for all citizens, based on the principle of merit and regardless of gender, religion, ethnic or socio-economic background' (5).

With the increased emphasis on higher education as an agent for development, social inclusion and economic growth, several African countries are making great strides in increasing access to higher education and in reforming their higher education systems. Rapid enrolment growth and increased demand for higher education have been seen across most of the continent, particularly over the past decade. Several African nations have invested greatly in the massification of higher education (that is the scaling up of education to a mass scale), in order to increase the numbers of tertiary-educated citizens. Some, however, take a dystopian view of what mass education can actually achieve. Lomas for example laments the fact that, sometimes, 'more means worse' – massification leading to poorer qualify provision (Lomas 2001, 2).

Ethiopia is a case in point. The government has certainly shown some commitment to expanding the higher education sector. It has increased the number of government universities from 2 in 1999 to 38 by 2018. Paralleling the growth of the public sector has been the expansion of private higher education institutions. As of 2018 there were 98 accredited non-government higher education institutions (HEIs), four of which are universities (Unity, St Mary's, Admas and Rift Valley) comparing to four private HEIs in 1999. These private HEIs account for 13% of the total enrolments (MoE 2016/2017).

The Ethiopian government has also implemented various policies and legislation aiming to improve female higher education participation (i.e., Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009; Education Sector Development Program IV, 2010). Female enrolment was on the rise since the early 2000s; increasing from 15.6% in 2002/2003 to 23.3% in 2006/2007. The aforementioned policies further contributed to the upward trajectory, achieving 34.2% of the total enrolment in 2017 (MoE 2016/2017).

While the growth of female enrolment in Ethiopian higher education in recent years is, no doubt, encouraging, it is far from assuring equity for women in higher education (see Semela 2007). In fact, as argued by Molla (2013), the exclusive policy focus on increasing female participation is problematic. The broader patriarchal structure of Ethiopian society has maintained the hierarchal gender culture, which also permeates its education system, including universities. The discussion of increasing female participation in higher education without addressing this broader structure, hence, runs the risk of obscuring the real cause of gender inequality/equity. Furthermore, it is also important to ask 'which women' are coming to universities in increasing numbers, in terms of ethnicity, socio-economical background as well as geographic location.

In light of debates around gender and development, this study critically examines the Ethiopian government's political intent and policy initiative to achieve numerical gender parity in higher education and by extension labour market participation. This will be explored with a view towards the particularities of institutional culture and gender relations in the country. More specifically, my discussion is premised upon the following two

theoretically informed assumptions about gender inequality. First, gender inequality in higher education and labour participation cannot be meaningfully considered in isolation from the wider norms of gender relations and culture. Second, various sectors or parts of society can evolve and change at different rates, often in line with different degrees of resistances or propulsions, and tensions and contradictions will necessarily appear. This view usefully explains the serious limitations of the Ethiopian government's narrow focus on expanding female participation in higher education. What follows is a discussion on whether the demonstrably increased presence of women in higher education has translated to their representation in the formal labour market in Ethiopia. Firstly, the article critically analyses the various national gender-based policies. Following on from that, it discusses the improvement in access for Ethiopian women in higher education. Lastly, it discusses women's presence or absence in the formal labour market. This relates to the key argument of the paper that increased female participation on its own does not substantially impact on gender inequality. Women continue to be held back by other relations in their society.

METHODOLOGY

The findings in this article were drawn from content analysis of official documents supplemented by secondary data analysis. The document analysis focused on the Ethiopian government documents,' specifically, higher education policies/strategies, proclamations, legislations, Strategic Development Program Sector, HEPs (351/2003, 650/2009), Higher Education Development plans, and government reports. Secondary data discussed here are from the Ministry of Education Statistical Annual Abstracts (2004/2005 to 2016/2017), the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA), The Labour Force Survey and the Decent Work Country Profile reports by the International Labour Organization (ILO). O'Leary's (2014) eight steps process for document analysis was used to identify and evaluate relevant documents in a way that

produces empirical knowledge and understanding of how government policies locate with (or, more usually, fails to locate with) the actual lives of Ethiopian women. Questions around explicit assumptions and intentions, who commissioned/authorised the documents and consideration of current event in the broader society at the time that may have affected the policies' process were asked of the documents in order to establish frameworks of analysis (Campbell 2013). These processes were used to establish a chain of evidences to show how the improvement of female higher education participation has not translated into similar improvement in female labour participation. As well as show, the inadequacy of current government policies to address broader cultural and institutional gender order in Ethiopia.

As a scholar with commitment to social justice, my goal here is to present an image of Ethiopian women that does not simply reproduce the 'general discourse' of assuming that women are 'poor, powerless' (see Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2004). I aim to go beyond this essentialised view of Ethiopian women which views them only through the lens of oppression. In the light of this, the following section examines gender based policies in Ethiopia, and, in particular, how they try to address issues associated with gender equality, providing greater access and gender norms.

DEVELOPMENT, POVERTY REDUCTION AND GENDER INEQUALITY

Ethiopia in line with many other developing countries has made a tremendous effort in developing policies to enhance women's rights. The government has introduced various policies and pieces of legislation in the last twenty years in order to promote women's rights (see Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe 2014; CEDAW 2009; MOWA 2006, 2010; Mulugeta 2008). Arguably, this is partly due to pressure from donor countries as well as the government wanting to show that Ethiopia is capable of matching global standards.

This drive for women's equality showed in the establishment of the Women's Affairs Office in 1991, and the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs, (formally known as the Ministry of Women's Affairs) in 2005. Furthermore, women's affairs bureaux have been established at regional, zonal and district levels, and all ministries have a gender unit (Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe 2014). It is worth noting here that women's associations existed well before and during the Derg regime (Mengistu's regime – 1974-1991). Women's participation in armed struggle against the Derg regime for the victory of the Tigray People's Liberation Front has been well documented (Oda 2010). Arguably, their role in armed struggle and the subsequent transgression/transcendence of patriarchal/hierarchal boundaries then opened doors for many women in Ethiopia.

Following the fall of the Derg regime, the new and current government's (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)) concern for the inequality between men and women was evident in their policies. This was expressed in Article 35 No.3 in the constitution which gave affirmative action entitlement to women (see FDRE 1995, 93).

Within this framework, the National Policy on Ethiopian Women was issued by the current government in 1993. Subsequently, the Action Plan on Gender Equality was put in place to speed things up (see Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe 2014).

Additionally, affirmative action was incorporated in the new Education and Training Policy (1994), stating: "Special attention will be given to women and to those students who did not get educational opportunities in the preparation, distribution, and use of educational support input" (TGE, 1994; Article 3.7.7.).

The Ethiopian government's second poverty reduction strategy plan titled Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (2002-2005) acknowledges the gender dimensions of poverty and how gender inequalities have negatively impacted sustainable change and development because of women's relative exclusion from educational advancement. The policy recognises that in order to accomplish long-lasting change to the educational attainment of both men and women it must address development across the board. Reflecting the broader development and poverty reduction

agenda, the Educational Sector Development Programs (ESPD - I, II, III & IV) integrated gender issues across all aspects of the education system (Rose 2003). It has explicitly incorporated gender issues in the formula for sustainable and equitable economic growth.

Later, the Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE 2009) also spoke of the need for affirmative action through special admission procedures for female students, students with disabilities and students in disadvantaged regions (see FDRE 2009, 5004, Article 39.4).

On paper the Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE 2009) aims to 'level the playing field' between female and male students. The Ministry of Education (MoE) established affirmative action policies, such as allowing female students to join HEIs with lower average scores (15 points lower) in the Ethiopian HE Entrance Examination (Semela et al. 2017). It is important to note that affirmative action here applies to a range of target populations and not just to women. The policy is intended also for those who are from disadvantaged and marginalised areas, such as Gambella, Somali, Afar, Benigshangul Gumuz and for disabled individuals.

From a gender perspective one might be concerned that these affirmative action policies, could 'dilute' the gender equality agenda, due to their aim of addressing multiple forms of disadvantages (see Crowley 2016). However, we must also consider the overlap between women's issues and rural issues since '80 percent of the population resides in rural areas and women provide the majority of the agriculture labour in these communities' (USAID 2018).

A second National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2006-2010) was then issued. This National Action Plan for Gender Equality was heavily influenced by the Beijing Declaration and Platform-for Action where it frequently linked gender equality, development and education (Mjaaland 2013).

This Action Plan reflects a form of global gender agenda in accordance with the 'critical areas of concerns' which were defined in the Beijing platform in 1995 (Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe 2014). Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe (2014) went further to note that there is an increasing tendency by the Ethiopian government '…to pay close attention to international guidelines when domestic policies are formed' (30).

Steiner-Khamsi's (2010) notion of 'policy bilingualism' is useful to further explain how the process of transnational gender policy lending and borrowing impact on the local context. According to Steiner-Khamsi (2010) there are often two types of reforms which are sometimes diametrically opposed – one type of reform is supported by aid from international donors ("global speak") and the other type is promoted with local support. She goes on to say that aid recipients are not passive, 'rather they are creative with their economic dependence by channelling funds they acquire to finance locally developed programs' (Steiner-Khamsi 2010, 331). In other words, while developing countries talk the global language of gender parity in order to secure aid money, once that money is secured, they use it to finance other initiatives they deem more important. These ideas and the question of how the global policy framework shaped and reshaped the gender parity initiatives in Ethiopia is an important part of the story too. Thus, it is safe to say that these gender policy reforms are not always for the intrinsic value and/or for women's own self-development (Mjaaland 2013).

The focus of the discussion in this section is to show the historical trajectory of how gender parity became integrated into the government's development and poverty reduction schemes and education. What we see in the policy review is that women in Ethiopia are being encouraged through government policies (i.e., affirmative action). Attempts are being made at the federal level to encourage girls to pursue education. However, the issues that prevent girls from equal educational participation seem intractable. This is partly because policy rhetoric and some of the current jargon may change but that does not automatically translate to real change on the ground. Additionally, it is not always easy to tease apart the benefits flowing to the national economy from those which benefit women specifically. Furthermore, not much has changed in terms of societal roles and attitudes towards women that would allow greater participation of Ethiopian women (see Molla and Cuthbert 2014). According to Biseswar (2011) the hierarchical nature of Ethiopian society combined with the lack of radicalism, leadership and innovative perspectives, have stagnated progress on women's equality in Ethiopia.

Thus, what is largely ignored in these policies is the consideration of factors like education and gender hierarchies and practices in multiple registers. It is clear that encouragement of formal access to education for girls has been equated with achieving equality, without taking into account other factors such as the "highly entrenched patriarchal culture and socially consented gender roles" (Kassie 2018, 158).

HIGHER EDUCATION AND POLITICAL AND RESOURCE ISSUES

The way in which Ethiopia gained independence from direct colonisation made their education system different from other African education systems. Unlike some of the other African countries, Ethiopia had a centuries-old religious traditional education system before the establishment of modern education in 1908. However, both the Church-based education and the introduction of modern education excluded women. The opening of the Empress Menen Girls' School in 1931 gave access to women, but only to those who were associated with the ruling elite (Semela, Bekele and Abraham 2017).

Higher education in Ethiopia, by contrast, has a fairly short history. Modern higher education started in Ethiopia in 1950 under the imperial regime of Haile Selassie. Ethiopia's first university, Haile Selassie I University (HSIU) - now Addis Ababa University - became an official university in 1961. As of 2018, the total number of public universities had reached 38, and is due to grow to 47 by 2020 (see FDRE 2016). Through the expansion, total government and non-government enrolment in higher education institutions (HEIs) increased from 42,132 in 1996/1997 to 860,378 in 2016/2017 (MoE 2008/2009, 2016/2017). Reisberg and Rumbley (2010) describe the speed of higher education expansion in Ethiopia as 'intoxicating' and grounded in firm political commitments. This expansion was achieved partly through new construction, and partly through merging and upgrading pre-existing Technical Vocational and Education and

Training (TVET) colleges and institutions. According to Paul O'Keeffe, many of the universities are merely shells and are poorly resourced, and in some cases shoddily built (West 2015).

The expansion and consolidation of the Ethiopian higher education sector was initially faltering. Little progress was made in expanding the sector until the introduction of the education and training policy in 1994. Following the adaptation of the 1994 education policy, the Ministry of Education put out a document titled "Higher Education System Overhaul" outlining the objectives of higher education reforms. Some of the reforms focused on increasing access, reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and, most relevant to us, making efforts to enhance gender equality and bridge the development gap between the various regional states, nationalities and social groups (Wondimu 2004). The official reasons for the establishment of new government universities was to aid widening participation and economic growth. However, it can be argued that this is political stunt and/or political commitment to appease some of their unhappy constituents in particular regions instead of fulfilling the objectives stated in the higher education proclamation 650/2009, Article 4 (see Akalu 2014). Paul O'Keeffe, who specialises in studying Ethiopia's higher education system, offers a more sceptical view when he suggests the following, "it would seem that they [the new universities] are built almost as a token where the EPRDF can say to hostile regions 'look we are doing something for you, we've built a university'" (West 2015, para 11). Teshome Yizengaw who was Vice Minister for Higher Education at Ministry of Education in Ethiopia at the time, acknowledged the influence of political partisanship on academia and went on to say that the reform and expansion agenda "was seen by many as a purely political issue, rather than as a development objective" (Yizengaw 2005, p. 6).

This political commitment or political incentives as referred to by Corrales (2006) is evident in the way individual government universities were initiated and established. A case in point is after the 2005 national election, (whereby the ruling party was defeated almost everywhere). The aftermath of this election brought with it a group of new universities in some of the most remote parts of the country, like Gambela, Metu, Ogaden (jigjiga

and Kebridehar), Wollega, Benshangul Gumuz. Some of these universities had little to no infrastructure only foundation stones but yet were considered universities in official accounts. For instance, students who attended Wolkite University were taught in the Town Hall and other offices of the municipality some 20 kilometres from the university site.

Another example is, after the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) was badly defeated in Hosanna (Hadiya Zone) in the 2005 election, Meles Zenawi, the late PM, went to Hosanna to have discussions with the community. By this time, he had already been PM for years. The first thing he was asked by the community was to open a university in the town and he did it. The following year some local scholars were brought in and made to admit students in a few programs with only the foundation set in place. The students were accommodated and taught at the Hosanna College of Teacher Education while awaiting the construction of the university. So, once again, the university in name proceeded the university in actuality.

The opening of these new universities has brought suspicion of the government's political intent. It became clear that the expansion was a matter of honour for the regional constituents and the government had to open universities to keep them happy. Thus, one could argue that, this wave of new universities was prompted not so much by a balanced assessment of local needs but mainly because certain areas were unstable, and the central government wanted to bolster the regime's power and reputation in hostile regions. Further evidence of this, is the distance between Arbaminch, Wachemo and Sodo Universities. One can see, that Sodo and Wachemo are very near to each other and that the establishment of them was done to carry favour with locals but with little or no independent needs assessment. We should just make the point here that we would not expect governments to provide no services or refuse to plan and implement policy. That is part of their remit after all. The point of critique is more to do with the sometimes-opportunistic placements of promised facilities and the niceties of timing in relation to such voter-appeasement strategies.

The recent and rapid growth in the Ethiopian higher education system has come at a cost. There have been criticisms of such factors as, the

relevance of curricula, scarce funding, poor facilities and infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient levels of academic preparedness among students, and a shortage of qualified teaching staff. All of the above could be to the detriment of the educational quality (see Trines 2018).

Additionally, most of the government universities offer almost the same types of programs, which has contributed to an over production of graduates in similar program areas. As it stands today, Ethiopia has a high, and growing, unemployment among university graduates whom "many believe that they must become party members in order to secure a job in either the public or private sector" (Arriola and Lyons 2016, p. 86). Despite rapid growth the public sector remains the primary employer as there are too few private sector positions (see Arriola and Lyons 2016). One could argue that the situation for some graduates has come down to a stark choice. They either go to work in hard physical labour jobs, like working in road and pavement construction, or they join political parties, to protest/riot, and block roads against the government.

It is argued here that the Ethiopian government largely mis(used) the establishment of HEIs to achieve the narrow objective of staying in power. Even in the field of gender equality there is the possibility that a sudden increase in female representation could fall under the heading of window dressing. It remains to be seen whether such gains for women can be sustained or translate into wider improvements in gender relations in society.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND GENDER

Access to higher education in Ethiopia, particularly to socially and historically disadvantaged groups, has mushroomed. For instance the first woman started higher education in Ethiopia in 1952 and a decade later there were 40 female students attending HSIU (Balsvik 2005). Today, female enrolment in higher education has increased substantially. In terms of undergraduate enrolment in government HEIs, the number of females have increased from 22.47% of total enrolments in 2004/2005 to 33.51% in 2017 (MoE 2008/2009, 2016/2017). The postgraduate sectors have also

welcomed more women (see Table 1 below). For Master's courses, the female enrolments went up between 2004 and 2011 from 9.19% to 20.09% with a drop in 2007. Since then, female enrolments has gone up and down. For instance in 2014/2015 it went up to 24.08% and dropped to 16.87% in 2016/2017 (MoE, 2016/2017). The PhD female enrolment numbers are even more volatile. For instance from 2004/2005 female enrolment numbers went from 6.38% to 2.71% in 2007/2008. There was a 17.25% peak in female enrolments in PhD courses in 2011/2012, but dropped down to 8.73% in 2016/2017 (MoE 2016/2017). Although, the increases in their enrolment, not dramatic, these growth rates are an indication of the government's resolve to boost female participation rates[1]. However, the enrolment trends also show that women are still underrepresented in comparison to their incidence in the population, especially as the academic level gets higher.

Table 1. Female undergraduate & postgraduate enrolment trends in Government HEIs (2004-2017)

Undergraduate				Postgraduate					
				Masters			PhD		
Year	Total	Female	% Female	Total	Female	% Female	Total	Female	% Female
1997 E.C.(2004/05)	78,232	17,579	22.47%	3,557	327	9.19%	47	3	6.38%
1998 E.C.(2005/06)	93,689	20,911	22.32%	6,321	636	10.06%	64	3	4.69%
1999 E.C.(2006/07)	107,960	25,321	23.45%	6,935	705	10.17%	122	3	2.46%
2000 E.C.(2007/08)	127,033	30,058	23.66%	7,211	702	9.74%	258	7	2.71%
2001 E.C.(2008/09)	157,429	45,517	28.91%	9,436	1,069	11.33%	325	26	8.00%
2002 E.C.(2009/10)	190,043	49,921	26.27%	12,621	1,485	11.77%	791	47	5.94%
2003 E.C.(2010/11)	211,197	54,159	25.64%	18,486	2,490	13.47%	789	99	12.55%
2004 E.C.(2011/12)	250,229	66,203	26.46%	22,804	4,635	20.33%	1,849	319	17.25%
2005 E.C.(2012/13)	294,357	82,301	27.96%	25,103	5,043	20.09%	3,165	356	11.25%
2006 E.C.(2013/14)	308,589	88,136	28.56%	26,117	5,246	20.09%	3,292	370	11.24%
2007 E.C.(2014/15)	618370	204754	33.11%	30,466	7,337	24.08%	3,135	380	12.12%
2008 E.C.(2015/16)	660,189	212,596	32.20%	44,104	9,706	22.01%	2,725	281	10.31%
2009 E.C.(2016/17)	679,299	227,624	33.51%	64,880	10,943	16.87%	3,369	294	8.73%

Source: Compiled from MoE Education Statistics Annual Abstract (2004/2005 – 2016/2017).

[1] There are other factors, beyond the scope of this chapter, which could have contributed to increased female enrolment. For instance, did the gender policies and legislations have a trickle-down affect in terms of reform processes in other sectors? What contribution might new housing provisions for female students, and policies around security issues, sexual harassment, have had?

Female participation rates have improved in the last decade or so. However, it could also be noted that men have benefited from the expansion of educational opportunities, in fact slightly more than women have. This is one factor that keeps the gender 'gap' wide.

Graduation rates have steadily been increasing as well. Completion rate has not improved as much as enrolment rate. Table 2 below shows the numbers and percentages of graduates. Similar to enrolments, male graduates are significantly more than female graduates. The percentage of female graduates doing undergraduate studies has increased from 14.85% in 2004/2005 to 28.59% in 2012/2013 dropping the following two years and increasing again in 2015/2016 (MoE 2016/2017). There has also been a steady increase to female graduates in Master's degrees going from 8.97% in 2004/2005 to 14.94% in 2012/2013 with a drop in 2006/2007 and 2011/2012). Female graduation rates for Master's degree peaked to 19.80% in 2013/2014, the highest it has ever been before and since. PhD female graduates have seen some big jumps and drops going from zero graduates in 2004/2005 to 5.26% in 2007/2008 to 12.08% 2009/2010 to 4.76% the following year. Once again, it is fair to conclude that gender parity in graduates widens as academic level increases.

In short, while some progress have been achieved in enrolment and graduation rates, however, it must be treated with caution as it glosses over the following two facts: 1) the gender gap in higher education participation has not narrowed and 2) it deflects attention away from the actual experience of women in higher education.

Again, the devil is in the detail; the government's own figures show how the existing gender gap in HEIs remain high. Whereas some aspects of government discourse narrow down gender issues to things like increasing female enrolment, there are other (systemic and ideological) factors at play, as suggested by the attrition rates already noted. A variety of reports and studies (Semela 2006 & 2007; Yizengaw 2007; Kassie 2018) have identified the following to be among major factors contributing to the continuation of the gender gap in enrolment and in graudates HEIs: poverty, socio-cultural issues such as HIV/AIDS, the burden of family responsibilities, poor and inadequate learning environment, female students' scepticism about the

chances of real change, lack of adequate number of female academics to act as role models, sexual harassment, intimidation and threats of violence, verbal and physical harassments, problem in implementing gender policies, sexual teasing, public humiliation and lack of guidance and counselling. It is a long list and, in some ways, its effect could be accumulative. While gender-equity policies were established by the Ethiopian government, gender equality is still effectively out of reach. In practice, implementation of these policies starts and finishes at the enrolment stage.

Table 2. Female undergraduate & postgraduate graduation trends in Government and Non-Government HEIs (2004-2017)

Undergraduate				Postgraduate					
				Masters			PhD		
Year	Total	Female	% Female	Total	Female	% Female	Total	Female	% Female
1997 E.C.(2004/05)	10,768	1,599	14.85%	1,126	101	8.97%	0	0	0.00%
1998 E.C.(2005/06)	24,501	3,827	15.62%	1,381	136	9.85%	7	0	0.00%
1999 E.C.(2006/07)	29,354	5,196	17.70%	2,661	259	9.73%	10	0	0.00%
2000 E.C.(2007/08)	38,202	7,264	19.01%	2,645	283	10.70%	19	1	5.26%
2001 E.C.(2008/09)	43,272	9,612	22.21%	3,574	423	11.84%	15	0	0.00%
2002 E.C.(2009/10)	66,999	15,699	23.43%	4,724	661	13.99%	149	18	12.08%
2003 E.C.(2010/11)	75,348	20,565	27.29%	6,229	898	14.42%	21	1	4.76%
2004 E.C.(2011/12)	78,144	19,759	25.29%	6,092	853	14.00%	70	7	10.00%
2005 E.C.(2012/13)	79,073	22,607	28.59%	6,353	949	14.94%	71	7	9.86%
2006 E.C.(2013/14)	96,980	24,868	25.64%	7,941	1,572	19.80%	80	13	16.25%
2007 E.C.(2014/15)	107,567	30,651	28.49%	11,680	1,974	16.90%	485	61	12.58%
2008 E.C.(2015/16)	127,275	42,502	33.39%	10,205	1,952	19.13%	263	24	9.13%
2009 E.C.(2016/17)	141,700	47,175	33.29%	15,210	2,940	19.33%	2,806	360	12.83%

Source: Compiled from MoE Education Statistics Annual Abstract (2004/2005 – 2016/2017).

Female students in universities across Ethiopia have to deal with a self-compounding negative space rooted in their low status in a traditionally patriarchal society. Female students reported being subjected to violence, hostility, humiliation and harassment for being female (see Molla and Cuthbert 2014). As noted, such hostility and violence toward female students is arguably directly relatable to the general status of women in Ethiopia (MoE-WAD 2004). As one female student interviewed by MoE stated regarding the lack of action by the government, “mengist yihen bota

ayawkewum" which literally means "The government seems to be unaware of the existence of this place" (referring to her university and the harsh treatment of female students on campus) (MoE-WAD 2004, 15). Sometimes there is a case of blaming the victims and females suffer doubly if they try to name their problems. This could change (and one would expect universities to show a lead in this area), but whether it will is an empirical question.

For the moment it seems there is a silence around some of these issues, and even an unwillingness to name them up in terms of sexual politics. A lack of direct action on things like sexual harassment is indicative of continuing discrimination against women. By not addressing the deep-rooted problems of the overall position of women, the government's educational reforms are deflected or weakened. As Molla (2013) argues, gender inequality and inequity necessitate more aggressive approaches such as 'gender mainstreaming in the curricula, protective legislation and gender awareness for men parallel to the assertiveness training for women' (207). It requires 'deeper levels of specialization…gender-competent theory, research and analysis' that are aligned with the current realities in Ethiopia (Mama 2003, 105).

WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Both the Ethiopian Federal Constitution and the Labour Proclamation emphasise gender equality including the idea that women have the right to equal pay for equal work. The Federal Constitution goes a step further and creates affirmative action for women with the hope to eradicate persistent gender discrimination. The Ethiopian government has also ratified the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention of 1981 (no. 156) in 1991 as well as the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention which dates from 1966 (see Gebretsion 2015). These policies and legislations ostensibly prohibit discrimination in employment and promote gender equality in employment.

However, significant labour market segregation between men and women in various occupations persists. A study by the ILO in 2013 which draws data from various Ethiopian surveys (e.g., National Labour Force Surveys (NLFS) of 1999 and 2005, and the Urban Employment and Unemployment Surveys (UEUS) of 2009 and 2010) reveals that in 2010 of legislators, administrators and managers, only 1.5% were female whilst for men the figure was 4.6%. This reflects Molla's (2014) findings that it is hard to find women in senior management positions suggesting that women do not have enough opportunities for promotion and career advancement. In 2014 the Education Strategy Center (2015) found there were no female presidents in all of the HEIs; this is still the case today (see Tamrat 2018). This "absence of women in senior academic and leadership positions is underpinned by hegemonic gender bias that operate at the workplace…" (Semela et al. 2017, 16).

This is reflected in the larger community where the few women managers in civil service and central government make it hard for women to be visible in decision-making as well as exert pressure on their government to take action that will enhance the situation and contribution of women (See Odaga and Heneveld, 1995). This in turn has an impact on role models for girls. Certain discriminatory laws and regulations that govern marriage, inheritance, women's access to and ownership of land for instance, or access to credit and to the labour market also contribute to the state of women. Some (eg. King and Hill, 1991 and Namuddu 1991) argued that facilitation of these is a necessary precondition for gender equity in education and other sectors.

Furthermore, women wages are lagging behind those of men. In 2005 the wage gap between men and women was 38%, wider in urban (48.3%), than rural areas (27.1%) (ILO 2013). This could lead one to conclude that gender responsive policies and legislations '…require more than ensuring women are merely included in the text of policies and legislations; rather it urges rigorous analysis of existing structural inequalities…' (Gebretsion 2015, para 4).

This cannot be conceived of only in terms of coercion. People have agency. It could be argued, for example, that occupational segregation and

wage gap trends may be put down to women's personal choices. For the sake of argument we could assume they still prefer certain type of occupations over others. These occupational choices may be part of 'doing gender' in the Ethiopian context as well as being delimited on the other side by systematic barriers to better paying occupations or jobs. In other words there may be both 'pull' and 'push' factors at work.

The formal and informal sector trends is part of this as well. According to the Ethiopian National Labour Force Survey (2005), the most recent survey that is currently available, 47% of the workforce was female. Sixty-eight percent of those are unpaid family workers and an additional 24.8% were informally self-employed. The same National Labour Force Survey shows that, in the urban areas, women occupy 65% of the informal employment sectors and 35% of the formal ones. While both sexes have seen improvement in terms of employment rates in Ethiopia, females consistently have higher unemployment levels compared to their male counterparts and they mainly participate in the informal sector (see ILO 2013; Elborgh-Woytek et al. 2013). The general drift of this article – that women still suffer poorer educational and employment opportunities partly owing to entrenched gender patterns – does seem to be recognised occasionally in official documents. The ILO (2013) for example argues that this could be due to prevailing gender norms which deprive women from access to equal employment. Their report went on to say that 'traditional gender expectations continue to hinder women's participation in the labour market' (ILO 2013, 18).

The trend of employment-to-population ratio in Ethiopia has fluctuated slightly in recent times. For instance, the ratio decreased between 1994 (74.5%) and 1999 (73.1%), and dropped from 2005 to 2007. This is particularly the case for women (see Table 3 below from the FDRE KILM 2013).

There are some unsurprising elements here too. As with some other countries there is an assumption that service work is 'female.' Certainly more women than men are employed in the service sector in Ethiopia. In 1999 it was 20.1% compared to the male rate of 7.3%, in 2005 it was 16.1% for women and 8.4% for men (FEDRE KILM 2013). As noted above there

is a complex relation between the formal and informal labour market as well as trends of migration from one to the other. The percentage of the population that is employed in the informal sector was 27.3% for men but 42% for women. For men there has been a decline in the proportion of those who work in the informal sector from 1999 to 2010. However, women's presence in the informal sector continues to be much higher than men's (see Table 4 below, FDRE KILM 2013). Overall there are some small regional variations but women are more employed in the informal economy than men in almost all regions.

Table 3. Employment to population ratios, 1994-2007

Year	Age Group								
	15+			15-24			25+		
	M	F	M+F	M	F	M+F	M	F	M+F
1994	86.9	64.3	75.5	76.1	62.1	69.1	92.8	65.6	79.0
1999	85.1	62.8	73.9	77.4	61.0	68.9	89.2	63.8	76.6
2005	88.3	72.3	80.0	78.6	67.6	72.8	93.3	74.9	83.8
2007	78.8	64.2	71.5	62.6	58.4	60.5	88.5	67.6	78.0

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs - Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) (2013).

Table 4. Proportion of employment population aged 15 years and above in the informal economy

Year	Percentage of population employed in the informal			Female share in total employment in the informal economy
	M	F	M+F	
1999	53.6	85.2	72.8	71.1
2003	39.5	60.1	47.8	50.9
2004	37.0	57.4	45.2	50.8
2005	29.5	49.6	38.5	57.5
2009	29.8	45.0	35.8	49.8
2010	27.3	42.0	33.3	51.6

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs - Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) (2013).

Looking at female unemployment also adds to the overall picture. In many ways it mirrors their concentration in the informal sector. For the last two decades women's unemployment rate has always been higher than men's (FDRE KILM 2013). One could hypothesise that women's

unemployment could be caused by a lack of access to education and training (as well as the ideologies and practices around women's reproductive roles.) According to Selam Gebretsion (2015), a women's rights lawyer and gender expert, many Ethiopian employers still discriminate by seeing a potential conflict between women's job responsibilities and child-rearing and/or their likely/assumed role in caring for aged parents.

Many studies (see Aguirre et al. 2012; Elborgh-Woytek et al. 2013) have shown that increasing the earning power of women has a direct positive effect upon family welfare and upon the education of children. This in turn is indexed to national economic development and sustainable growth. Yet in so many developing countries women are still not fully integrated in the formal employment sector and Ethiopia is no exception. In one sense this seems paradoxical. Presumably the things that are holding women back (as evidenced here in relation to their lagging behind men in opportunities for formal employment and lower wages across the board[2]) are barriers partly constituted by ideology and social practice and not by 'pure' economic reasoning. Markets are imperfect or subject to distortion. Nevertheless, it does seem paradoxical that educational expansion in some forms may benefit the country but still militate against the opportunities of women

At some point we begin to move from indices and measures to a summative view of gender practices and ideologies in Ethiopia. It seems fair to conclude that Ethiopia, like many other societies, has a widespread set of practices that are profoundly patriarchal in nature. The general pattern seems to be one of entrenched differentiated gender roles and an assumption that women should be tied in some essentialist kind of way to child care and domestic duties. This belief is reflected in Ethiopia's social practice as well as its employment scene, where a woman's career is usually considered secondary and should be compromised without question for family life/duties. Some women experience this gender conservatism as extremely limiting. It is as if everything in life, including the woman's sense of identity and worth, should be secondary to being a wife and mother (Amazan 2011, 2012).

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[2] The Urban Employment and Unemployment Surveys (UEUS) of 2009 and 2010 states that women earn about 45% less than men.

We have argued that we need to take more account of the fact that Ethiopian women usually work outside *and* inside the home. Most do what feminists have long since recognised as a double shift. However, Ethiopian society has yet to really acknowledge the multi-layered roles imposed on women. The underrepresentation of women in decision making positions and political involvement does relate to women's labour (and domestic labour), in that it is often hidden and/or taken for granted. The gender traditions in the country are persistent. For example, Ethiopian women, especially in rural areas (where over 80% of Ethiopians still live), are expected to work on the farm as well as looking after the home. In other words, while men's roles have remained the same over the years, women's roles have widened, with expanded responsibilities and expectations.

With that said, recent political developments (election of the new Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed of the ruling party EPRDF in 2018), have brought with them some new found hope for the country and for increasing women representation in leadership postions. In a recent unprecendeted historic move the first female president was elected along with half of the Ethiopian's cabinet being filled with women, including the new Minister of Science and Higher Education, an academic and former vice president of the country's first university, Addis Ababa University. Women now hold 37% percent of Ethiopia's parliamentary seats. There are signs that Ethiopia's new leadership is pursuing an agenda of equal respresentation of women on boards and top national leadership positions (see Tamrat 2018). These political developments are exciting and suggest that the future looks brighter for women in Ethiopia. However, it is the hope that ingrained gender traditions will be systematically addressed, so that these newly elected women can stay in their positions.

CONCLUSION

There is no simple formula that can be applied to understand the complex relations between the evolution of the education system and gender equality. It is a well-known fact that social relations and schooling reinforce

social norms whilst, at the same time, creating new ways of being and possibilities to set subjects free. It is always contradictory. Such is the case with higher education of women in Ethiopia.

Even with close empirical work to offset the statistics, it is always going to be very difficult to tease out the autonomous actions of the subjects from the social context within which these actions make sense. As Marx (1852) crucially observed, 'people make history but not in circumstances of their own choosing.' Further, we cannot claim a perfect comprehension by looking down from a height. Just as there is no totality, there is no position 'outside ideology' in one sense. We cannot sum up a whole society and the life choices of women no matter how 'thick' [C/F Geertz (1973)] our description is.

Looking from a government's perspective as it were, we have to appreciate that policy is always incomplete, partial and often deflected. The idea of getting more women into the formal education sector in Ethiopia promises but cannot necessarily deliver. Perhaps its aims are in contradiction with the societal structure (Assié-Lumumba 2006, 103). In other words, the government make policies that address the malady, but cannot easily get to the root cause in the gender system. In effect there is a binary contradiction not only with what is written on paper and what is implemented, but also with what the policy is trying to change or solve. However, can we take the fact that gender imbalances in Ethiopian society are stubbornly present as proof of an intractable and systemic discrimination against women? Are the policy makers 'guilty' of trying to change behaviour (micro system) without changing the bigger structure (macro-system)? Where should they best intervene?

Often 'culture' is used to justify/as a reason for lack of change/progress in women's rights and or gender equity. The problem has been framed in this way before. Blystad, Haukanes and Zenebe (2014) 'confirmed that patriarchal cultural ideas and institutions remain key obstacles to gaining an understanding of women's rights and to secure change' (34). However, authors like Abu Lughod (2009) and Merry (2003), have critiqued this notion that culture in development discourse is a hindrance/an obstacle to gender progress.

There is more to be said about the uneasy co-existence of reformist impulses, government 'gender agendas' (if you like) – some of which presumably come from UN-led global targets and statements of desired equity - and the imprecise/incomplete outcomes on the ground. We have already suggested that despite government policies promoting gender equality, women continue to be under-represented in top positions (i.e., legislators, senior officials and managers).

A realistic assessment of progress on the gender equity front would be cautious but not despairing. The recent increasing in enrolment/admission rates in higher education for women perhaps suggests that gender gap here will eventually decrease. Further, recent policies and strategies/initiatives have played an important role in ensuring that girls and women are getting an education in larger numbers than before. However, follow up interventions will need to be instigated in order to address the high dropout rates. The government's commitment needs to be backed up with a sufficient allocation of resources. There are many challenges that remain. As noted, retaining females at various levels of the education system is critical. This is a prerequisite for helping to equalise gender relations and for ensuring that women can contribute to the development of the country.

We need to build some historical understanding into our modelling of the situation. Like all social arrangements, the further integration of women is subject to lags and discontinuities. Thus, while I have shown that the increased numbers of women in universities have not produced significant changes across the board so far, changes will continue to affect the future. There could still be a flow-on effect such that the number of women who are currently in the middle tiers of the higher educational sector now may yet rise to senior positions. Should we trust that this will happen eventually? If not, then we must at least continue to expose the mechanisms which militate against this trend bearing fruit.

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Chapter 10

STATE OF CROPLAND AVAILABILITY IN RAINFED FARMING SYSTEMS IN ETHIOPIA: ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO ADDRESS LANDLESSNESS AND FOOD INSECURITY

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge on existing state and potential of rain-fed agricultural land is crucial to inform policies aimed at ensuring sustainable land use and food security. Using multi-criteria spatial analysis techniques, this study assessed the present state of cropland availability and projected implications for future crop production in Ethiopia. First, the extent of rain-fed agricultural area (RAA) was delineated. Then currently cultivated area was mapped. Subsequently, excluding currently cultivated land, completely unsuitable areas, protected, and intact forestlands; the potentially available cropland was assessed using suitability analysis techniques. The findings show that RAA covers 59% of the country's landmass. The present state of crop cultivation covers only 33% of its RAA. The result also indicated that the PAC (yet uncultivated) accounts for 16% of the country's RAA. This is largely found in the less-densely populated western and south-western parts of the country. Challenges to the use of the available cropland and ways of addressing land shortage to needy farmers are highlighted to inform efforts to redress landlessness and food insecurity in Ethiopia.

Keywords: cropland, potential cropland, land suitability, rain-fed agriculture, landlessness, food insecurity, Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

Efforts to ensure food security in developing countries such as Ethiopia requires evidence-based spatial information on the availability of land suitable for crop production (Lotze-Campen et al. 2010, Lambin et al. 2013, Wirsenius, Azar and Berndes 2010, Pretty 1999). Despite that desirability, however, information and knowledge on the extent, of the cultivated land, carrying capacity of the Rainfed Agricultural Area (RAA), and Potentially Available Cropland (PAC) are essential but lacking (Mandryk, Doelmn and Stehfest 2015). The RAA is not yet precisely defined in spatially explicit ways. Indeed, there exists non-spatial information on the extent of RAA and fairly reliable data on currently cultivated land and virtually no information on the PAC at different scales. Furthermore, the pieces of information in the literature on the extent of Ethiopia's RAA and currently cultivated area are

inconsistent. This is partly due to definitional limitations (agriculture or cropland/cultivated land). Moreover, it also depends on the type of data used, approaches followed and purpose of estimates. For instance, there is no agreeable definition of RAA and highland region of the country. The term rain-fed agriculture is broadly used to describe farming practices that rely on rainfall (Wani, Rockström and Oweis 2009). It may also include a wide range of agricultural practices, such as those focused on crop production, forestry and livestock. Thus, definition of RAA depends on the context it is used in. Under Ethiopia's complex agricultural practices, some studies have used the definition and boundaries of highland and RAA interchangeably. As a result, the highlands of Ethiopia are synonymously referred to as the RAA; and that interchangeable reference leads to inconsistent estimates of agricultural area or cultivated area in the country (Hurni 2015).

Theoretically, altitude, controlling rainfall and temperature, is the best indicator of rain-fed agricultural system in a given area (Hurni 1998). Thus, the spatial distributions of altitude, rainfall, and temperature are among the factors that signify the availability, potential, and suitability of landscapes for crop production. Other factors such as soil types and slope are also important in determining suitability of the landscape for crop production. Indeed, avoiding inconsistent estimates due to interchangeable use of the two terms requires redefining/delimiting the boundaries of Ethiopia's RAA based on variables that determine specific agricultural practices. Moreover, previous boundaries of RAA and cultivated land are old and require generating up-to-date evidence using recent and better input data and applying current technologies, such as remote sensing and multivariate spatial modeling tools. Given that the RAA of the country is entertaining huge human population, appropriate land management options could not be designed without having the required information at the required scale (local-national). The available datasets are either only specific case studies, which are scanty (Muluneh and Arnalds 2010) or at national level, which are obsolete and divergent due to difference in approach, extent they covered, and their purpose (Kassawmar et al. 2016). The national-level datasets provide generic information and thus they have limited use for national-regional ecosystems assessment. The present study aimed to fill the

knowledge and information gaps in: clarifying the extent of the RAA by delineating its boundary based on pertinent and contemporary criteria; estimating the suitability, availability (PAC's) and usability of land in the RAA for crop production and thereby contributing to efforts to address landlessness and food insecurity in Ethiopia.

STUDY AREA AND DESCRIPTION

Ethiopia as a whole is the focal area for the present assessment. The assessment first considered the entire Ethiopia boundary to delimit the extent of the Rainfed Agricultural Area (RAA). Later detailed assessments were made on the RAA part, the vast proportion of which is often referred as 'highland.' The highlands, which account for about 45% of the country's total land area, and are home to 90% of the total population and about 75% of the 33 million livestock population (SCRP 2000). The larger part of the highland areas of the country, where smallholder traditional agricultural system has been practiced for thousands of years (McCann 1997, 1995), has agro-climatic zones that are favorable to rain-fed agriculture (Figure 1). According to McCann (McCann 1997), the Ethiopian highlands inhabited by humans far longer than most places in the world. As a result, the highland areas face many environmental degradation problems due to long-standing agricultural activities, intensified by population pressure (Hurni 1985).

Given that about 80% of Ethiopia's population is dependent on agriculture, high rate population growth (2.5% in 2016) affects the RAA's capacity in providing required ecosystem services (Teshome 2014). According to the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (CSA) estimates (CSA 2007), the country's population was 22 million in the first National Sample Survey in 1967 (Bantider 2007). It reached an estimated 100 million by 2014 (CSA 2014). It is Africa's second-most populous country. The growing population size has led to steady increase in the extent of cultivated land over the last half century (EEC/EEPR 2002) but a decline in per capita cultivated land area. In 1950, on average 35 people shared 1 km2 of cultivated land; today, 1 km2 of cultivated land is shared among 270 people

(Teshome 2014). According to projections, the Ethiopian population will double every 20–30 years (Teshome 2014). This population growth could lead to acute land scarcity for crop production, with serious repercussions for food security (Hurni et al. 2005). The current household level landholdings of majority of Ethiopian highlanders is very small – 46% of households possessed <1 ha in 2014 (CAS 2014) and about 10% of the highland household is landless.

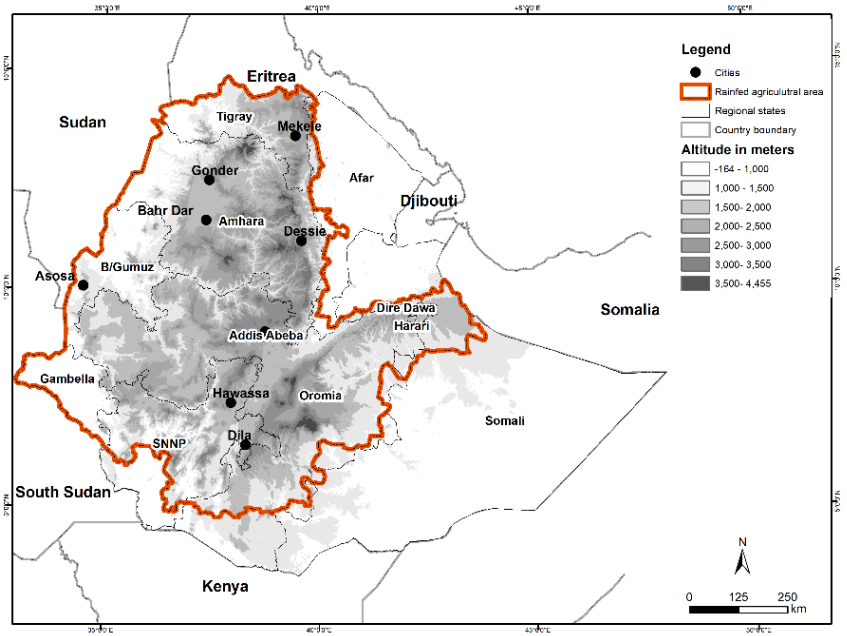

Figure 1. Location of rain-fed agriculture areas in Ethiopia.

The effect of climate change and extreme environmental degradation resulted from undesirable Land Use and Land Cover Change (LULCC) processes, coupled with population pressure, would impede sustainable development in Ethiopia (Wondie 2016). For example, land degradation contributes towards declining agricultural productivity and continuing food insecurity (Taddese 2001). The continued population growth (Hurni et al. 2005) and fragile institutional settings [4, 23] (Pretty 1999, Cuffaro 2003) further exposed the highlands for continuous land degradation and

transformation (Zeleke and Hurni 2001). Consequently, smallholder farming system in the highlands has become less rewarding and the carrying capacity of the land has extremely declined (Zeleke and Hurni 2001). At the current situations, increasing yields per hectare alone cannot ensure food security at household level (average 4.5 family members) (Teshome 2014). In the highlands of the country, producing grain to feed the increasing population is a concern that necessitates implementing alternative remedial measures considering realities of each farm plot (Taddese 2001, Hurni 1990, Pender, Place and Ehui 2006). Apparently, effective remedial measures on highly fragmented plots and patchy landscape requires detailed spatial information. Thus, research that identifies the extent of RAA, (currently cultivated, and unused land but suitable for rainfed crop production is important to inform efforts to recast Ethiopia's development policy in the right direction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Datasets and Materials

The present study required integration of various geospatial datasets at national level. The major datasets used include: Land Use and Land Cover (LULC); climate, topography, soil, and surface rockiness maps (Figure 2). For the year 2016, a detailed LULC map was generated from 30 m pixel resolution Landsat 8 images, employing a classification approach explained in Kassawmar et al. (Kassawmar et al. 2016) that accounts for landscape heterogeneity. In addition to the LULC maps, supplementary spatial datasets were incorporated, including data on institutionally restricted areas (e.g., protected areas and settlements) obtained from government offices and sources indicated in Young (2012) and UNESCO database (UNESCO 2004). Other geospatial datasets used include: agro-ecological zones (Hurni, 1998); datasets on topographic variables such as slope and altitude ranges (SRTM in 30 m resolution from NASA; those on climatic variables such as rainfall and temperature from the National Meteorological Agency of

Ethiopia (NMAE) and WorldClim data; soil data from the Water and Land Resource Centre (WLRC); and socio-economic data such as the agricultural area survey report, population census, and landholding sizes (CSA 2007). Improved versions of many of these spatial datasets are available at WLRC as a series of geospatial database packages known as EthioGIS-II (www.wlrc-eth.org).

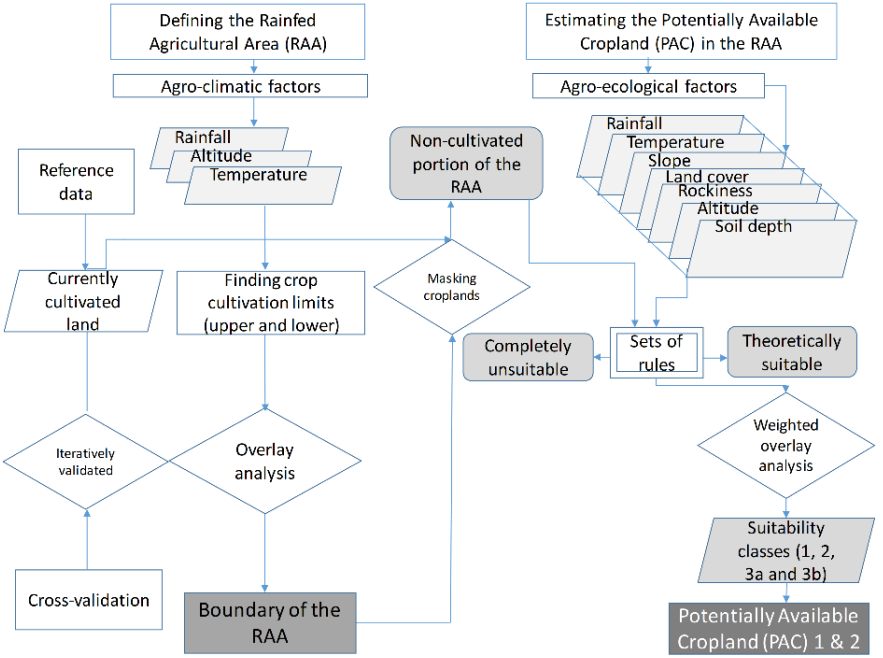

Figure 2. Schematic representation of the approach.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed in three main steps; 1) defining the RAA, 2) assessing the overall LULC composition in the RAA, and 3) estimating the currently cultivated and available (but uncultivated) cropland using sustainability analysis techniques.

Defining the Extent of RAA

Considering the stated objectives of the study, defining the RAA was a prerequisite to: 1) precisely know the currently rainfed-based cultivated area, 2) properly identify the potential of future rainfed based cropland expansion areas, and 3) assess the potential of the RAA in accommodating agriculture-dependent rural (highland) population in the further. Multi-criteria spatial analysis of major factors of rainfed-based crop production, was employed taking agro-climatic suitability into account (Hurni 1998, Lambin 2012). To redefine the RAA, we examined rainfall, temperature, altitude and slope datasets against current crop production in a rainfed system. A recent map (2016) showing the cultivated areas was used to know area of land currently under cultivation and to later validate the boundary of the RAA iteratively. Delineation involved the following steps. First, we reclassified four major determinant factors (rainfall, temperature, altitude and slope) as varying ranges of values (eight classes). Next, we performed iterative spatial analyses by overlaying cultivated pixels over the maps of the reclassified major determinant factors. Afterwards, the presence of pixels representing cultivated lands in each reclassified range of the determinant factors was studied and statistically analyzed to know the presence and absence of cropland in each class as well as the association between the determinate factors and cropping practices. Later, taking the association, we determined the limits of each factor for crop cultivation.

Obviously, it is impossible to assign a unified or single threshold value for temperature, rainfall, and altitude that is applicable to the entire country. This is because different locations at the same altitude may experience different patterns of rainfall and/or temperature (Hedberg 1970). Rainfall and temperature in Ethiopia also vary spatially according to longitude and latitude. The influences of rainfall and temperature on growing crops vary over time, in particular due to climate change, ecological adaptation, cultural change and technology. For proper delineation of Ethiopia's RAA, the threshold values for the upper and lower limits of crop cultivation were adjusted accordingly, mainly accounting for traditional and technology-based crop variety adaptation practices. Incorporating these insights into our

iterative spatial overlay analyses, we finally defined the boundaries of Ethiopia's RAA.

Assessing the Overall LULC Composition in the RAA

To properly assess and estimate the cultivated and non-cultivated areas within the RAA, we produced detailed LULC map as explained in Kassawmar et al. (Kassawmar et al. 2016) that applies a second level classification scheme containing about 40 classes. In order to get reasonable and accurate estimate of cropland from Landsat images, we followed context-oriented, practical and applicable approach for Ethiopia (Kassawmar et al. 2016). As the emphasis of the study was on cultivated landscape, special classification technique was followed during the production of the LULC map. In view of Ethiopia's farming systems, in the satellite image different croplands appear with different spectral signature that vary with every specific cropping practice. For instance, from spectral property point of view, agroforestry appears as forest landscape in the satellite image. If we consider only a cover to differentiate such kind of cultivated lands from other LULC classes (e.g., forest), it would be classified as forest. Similarly, the shifting cultivation practices may be considered as shrub land/woodland as often covered by perennial vegetation rather than annual crops. To overcome such challenges, this study identified and mapped the different types of cultivated landscape (having different surface vegetation characters with varying sub-classes) such as, croplands with scattered trees, croplands without trees, croplands on degraded areas, agroforestry, slash and burn crop cultivation, large-scale and mechanized farms, and irrigated fields. Therefore, during the classification stage, the cultivated landscape was defined considering the land use and its cover. Subsequently, using such detailed LULC mapping, we accurately mapped the currently cultivated area of the RAA. Finally, we reclassified the LULC data into two classes, cultivated and uncultivated so that potentially available cropland would be assessed on the currently uncultivated landscape. Later,

the composition of LULC classes in the RAA was transcribed using statistics summarized by administrative and agro-ecological boundaries.

Estimating the Current and Future Cultivated Area

Following the delineation of the RAA boundary, next we proceeded to mapping the suitability, usability and availability of potential cropland area within the RAA. According to Lambin et al. (Lambin et al. 2013), suitability of potentially available cropland (PAC) – sometimes referred to as land reserve, underutilized land, or spare land – is a category used to distinguish land areas considered moderately to highly suitable for cropping, which could be brought under cultivation in the near future. Two major approaches are widely used to estimate PAC: residual and categorical (Lambin et al. 2013). The residual approach entails simple exclusion of currently cultivated areas from the total agro-ecologically suitable region (Ramankutty, Foley, Norman and McSweeney 2002). The residual approach is used when there is no spatially-explicit, detailed LULC information and/or when the extent of analysis is very wide, e.g., global or continental (Campbell, Lobell, Genova and Field 2008). Use of the categorical approach requires detailed LULC data and enables integration of various agro-ecological determining factors of crop production. The output can be categorized into different levels of suitability classes. Thus, for spatially explicit and interlinked analysis that is made at the local/regional scale, the categorical approach is the most appropriate (Campbell, Lobell, Genova and Field 2008). To assess the present and project the PAC in the RAA, we followed the FAO Land Suitability Assessment Framework (Caracall 2007). We performed the following steps; (1) First, we took the 2016 LULC map of the RAA and we excluded the currently cultivated pixels from the RAA. The total non-cultivated land out of the total RAA which is assumed to be environmentally-suitable and theoretically-usable for crop production was finally determined. (2) Next, we identified completely unsuitable (N) and theoretically suitable (S) landscapes within the RAA using the detailed LULC maps. The N landscape includes settlement, water bodies, exposed

rocks, afro-alpine, infrastructures and river courses. (3) Then, we identified institutionally-constrained areas, such as parks, sanctuaries, reserves, conservation priority areas, ritual sites (churches and mosques), priority forest, and hunting areas. To map the PAC, within the RAA, we need to determine the level of suitability of the non-cultivated area using various crop production factors (slope, rainfall, temperature, land cover, soil depth and altitude). (4) Thus, in the final step, we determined the level of suitability of S pixels within the RAA. That implies, S was expanded upon the suitability classes according to both biophysical and socio-economic perspectives. A multi-criteria spatial analysis technique was performed in the context of smallholder farming systems, taking the entire rainfed agricultural area. This was performed after excluding currently cultivated land, completely unsuitable areas, protected, and intact forestlands; later evaluating the biophysical suitability of the remaining areas using multi-criteria decision rule techniques. Finally, the usability of the PAC was transcribed using systematic assessment of PAC and availability from a socio-political perspective, such as population density, settlement, land holding size, landlessness, farming /livelihood system, policies and history in the country.

RESULTS

Extent of the RAA and Currently Cultivated Land

According to the redefined RAA, crop production limit, based on altitude range, varies from 500 to 3800 m.a.s.l. The RAA covers 667,094 km^2, comprising approximately 59% of the country's land mass. The upper and lower altitudinal limits of the RAA encompass both currently cultivated and non-cultivated areas. Within the boundary of Ethiopia's RAA, pixels representing currently cultivated land comprise 221,653 km^2, or 33% of the RAA. In other words, 67% (445, 441 km^2) of the RAA – is non-cultivated.

Table 1. Composition of major LULC types in the RAA (2016) by administrative regions

SN	Class	National level		Regional level						
				Oromia	Amhara	SNNP	Tigray	B/Gumz	Gambela	Others
		Area (Km^2)	Area (%)							
1	Forest	79767	12.0	39276	8691	17222	1826	6150	5977	626
2	Woodland	116079	17.4	40572	20519	13220	6458	19041	6575	9693
3	Shrub/bush	126104	18.9	39520	27499	10839	15697	13660	7963	10925
4	Cropland	221653	33.2	101489	59176	33857	15975	5534	605	5016
5	Grassland	77702	11.6	25128	19319	7804	5971	6073	6899	6507
6	Barren land	31992	4.8	4390	17534	1051	5190	152	149	3528
7	Wetland	2697	0.4	461	309	81	0	8	1839	0
8	Water body	6634	1.0	1717	3283	1568	30	4	24	8
9	Afro-alpine	2250	0.3	1382	868	0	0	0	0	0
10	667,094	2216	0.3	979	467	217	157	23	11	363
	Total	667,094	100	254915	157665	85858	51304	50645	30042	36666

Overall Composition of Major LULC Types in the RAA

As described above, cultivated landscape covers about a third of the RAA. However, the larger portion of the RAA is covered by non-forest but other woody vegetation (37%). The remaining parts of the RAA are covered by forest (12%), grassland (12%) and non-woody vegetation (7%). The composition of major LULC types, which exist in the RAA for the recent period (2016) is presented in Table 1.

The Forest Landscape

In Ethiopia's RAA landscape, forest considerably varies in time and space with its type, extent species composition and function. The LULC dataset used for the assessment properly identified and captured the varying forest types across the RAA. Major forest types identified and mapped include: high forest, dry forest, degraded natural forest, plantation forest, riverine forest and church forest. The total forest cover of the RAA of the country is estimated at 79,767 km2, which accounts 12% of the RAA. This was calculated ignoring the dense woodlands found in the lowlands of the RAA; otherwise, the forest cover would be higher. The extensive forest cover that Ethiopia has at present is located in southern and western parts of the country (Figure 3). This could be associated with various socio-economic, political and biophysical factors. Based on the statistics, the larger share, nearly half (49%) of the RAA forest is found in Oromia regional state followed by SNNP (22%). However, forest cover by each region boundary reveals that Gambela regional state is the most forested region that covers about 20% of its regional area.

The Woody Vegetation Landscapes of the RAA

The woody vegetation landscape (other than forest), include: woodlands and shrub /bushland. The total area covered by such landscape is 242,183

km^2, and accounts nearly half of the RAA. As a matter of fact, in Ethiopia, cropland has been expanding over the years at the expense of landscapes covered by woody vegetation including forest. The non-forest but woody vegetation landscape comprises four classes: open woodland, dense woodland, open shrub/bushland, and dense shrub/bushland) identified based on their canopy cover and vegetation density. The woody vegetation landscape covers the largest portion of the RAA followed by the cultivated landscape. The area coverage of the woodland landscape (open and dense woodland classes) found within the RAA is estimated to be 116,079 km^2. Whereas, the shrub land and bushland (open and dense shrub/bushland classes) cover 126,104 km^2. Together, the two classes (the woodland and shrub/bushland) accounts for 37% of the RAA. In terms of the total area coverage by regions, a large woody vegetation cover is found in Oromia followed by SNNP regional state (Table 1). However, from the density and canopy cover point of view, Gambela is characterized by dense woodland and shrub/bushland followed by Benishangul Gumz and SNNP.

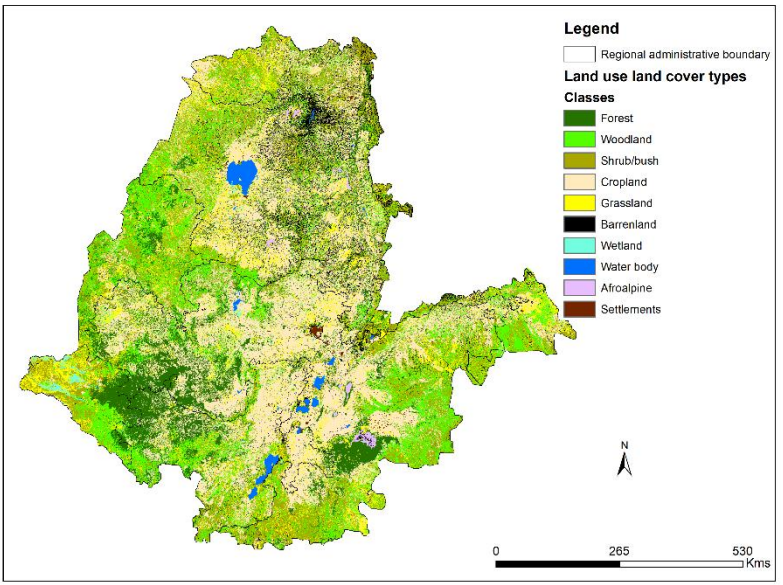

Figure 3. The spatial distribution of major LULC types in the RAA.

The Grassland Landscape

The grasslands are vegetated landscapes largely covered by herbaceous or non-woody plant species and often existing as open fields but rarely featured with scattered and woody plants. In the highland parts of Ethiopia, cropland expansion had been overwhelming grassland landscapes. They are economically viable to convert them as often found in highly favorable landscape for crop production. Therefore, they are the most vulnerable for conversion. In the RAA of Ethiopia, grasslands cover a considerable area (77,702 km^2), which accounts about 12% of the region. In translating the grassland information, care has to be taken as the term grassland here refers cover not use. In the context of Ethiopia's free grazing system, almost all land cover types are used for grazing.

LULC Types and Possibility to Use Them for Future Crop Production

In projecting availability of land for crop production, the nature of LULC types by themselves determine the prospect of cropland expansion. Thus, before making any detailed assessment on the suitability of land, we made exclusion of land for crop production using their current land cover information.

The Completely Unsuitable Portion of the RAA

According to the definition given by the present assessment, the completely unsuitable landscapes are those areas that will not be used for crop production in the future at any cost, technology, and effort. These landscapes are represented by LULC classes such as exposed rocks, extremely degraded hills, exposed sand surface, river course, water bodies, settlements and permanent wetlands. The assumption is that there will be no possibility for such surfaces to be converted to cropland. As observed from

the spatial distribution map (Figure 4), these classes cover a considerable area, particularly in the central and northern parts of the RAA, notably in Amhara and Tigray regional states. This could be attributed to the presence of extremely degraded and exposed landscape in these regions, which is a result of age-old agricultural practices. These landscapes in total cover 43,539 km^2.

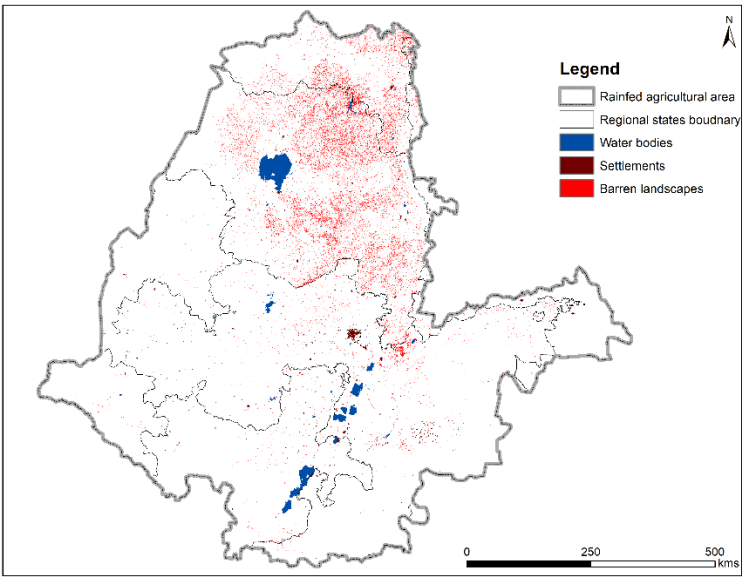

Figure 4. The non-vegetated landscapes of the RAA identified as completely unsuitable for future agriculture use.

Institutionally Restricted and Protected Areas of the RAA

The entire currently uncultivated area is not usable for crop production even if theoretically and biophysically suitable. That implies that not all land cover types are suitable and available for future crop production, mainly due to institutional constraints. Institutionally constrained areas identified by this study include parks, sanctuaries, reserves, conservation priority areas, ritual sites (churches and mosques), priority forest, and hunting areas. These classes in total account about 6% of the RAA.

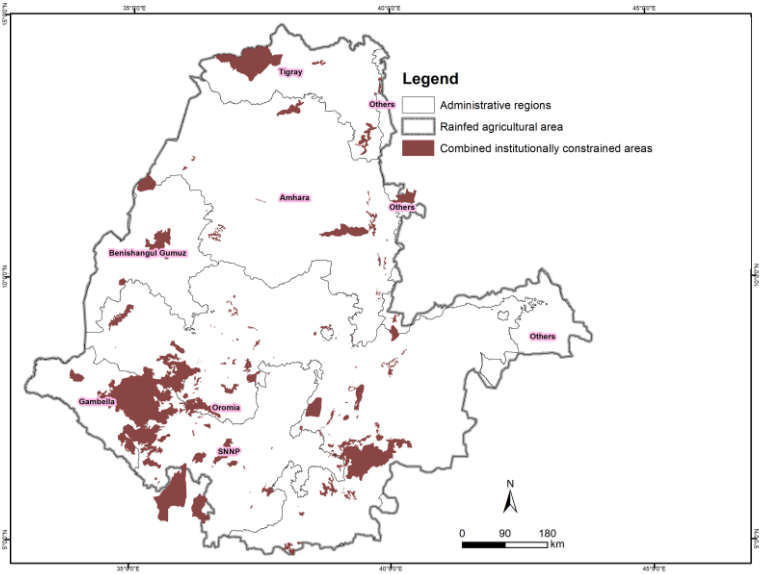

Figure 5. Institutionally restricted areas found within the RAA.

Potentially Available Cropland (PAC) in the RAA

The PAC in the RAA were estimated at four different suitability classes which show the degree of conversion to cropland. S1 and S2 suitability classes (which we presumed PAC) together represent areas to be used in the near future. According to the estimates, about 15,797 km^2 is highly suitable whereas, the moderately suitable landscape covers 94,051 km^2 and accounts about 4% and 21% of the currently non-cultivated land of the RAA, respectively. In total, both accounts about 25% of the currently non-cultivated land of the RAA or 16% of the entire RAA. Whereas, the remaining currently uncultivated area is estimated to be slightly suitable (56%) and marginally suitable (12%). The spatial distribution and administrative-region-based proportional distribution of currently cultivated area and the PAC are presented in Figures 6 and 7.

Table 2. Currently non-cultivated, permanently unsuitable, and theoretically suitable areas of the RAA

Regional states	**Region area (km^2)**	**RAA area (km^2) (b% = b/a*100)**	**Total non-cultivated area (%) from total RAA (ci = c/b*100)**		**Completely unsuitable area (N) (out of the RAA) d = c-N; (di = d/b*100)**		**Theoretically suitable land (S) (out of the RAA) (e = c-d; ei = e/b*100)**	
	(a)	**(b)**	**(c) in km^2**	**(ci) in %**	**(d) km^2**	**(di) in %**	**(e) in km^2**	**(ei) in %**
Oromia	299,676	254,667 (85)	152,869	60	4,980	2	147,889	58
Amhara	157,928	157,671 (100)	100,372	64	11,143	7	89,229	57
Tigray	51,401	51,332 (100)	35,625	69	4,012	8	31,613	62
SNNP	108,668	85,916 (79)	50,762	59	1,971	2	48,791	57
Gambella	30,286	30,265 (100)	30,076	99	951	3	29,125	96
B/Gumuz	50,595	50,595 (100)	44,809	89	285	0.6	44,524	88
Other	439,936	36,653 (8)	30,482	83	2,315	6	28,167	77
Total/average	1,138,488	667,094 (59)	444,995	67	25,657	4	419,338	63

"Other" includes regional states that partly overlap with the RAA boundary, namely Afar, Somali, Harari, and D/Dawa .

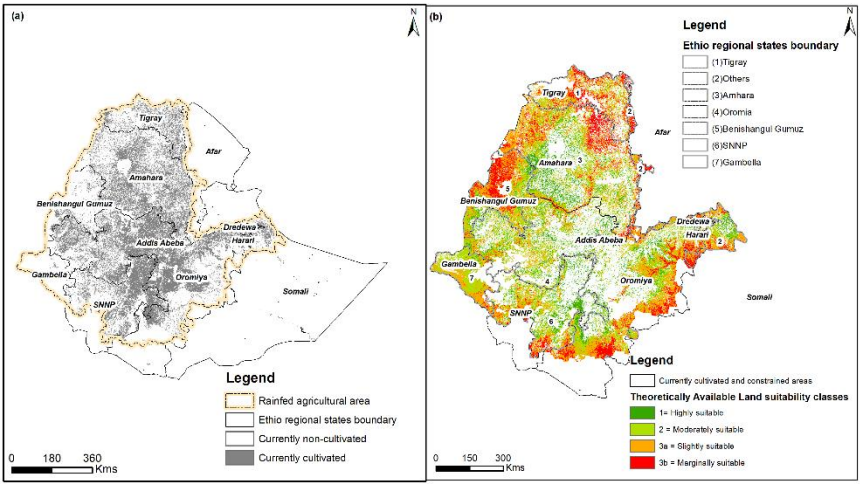

Figure 6. The redefined RAA supper imposed on the currently cultivated area (a) and the PAC within the RAA (b).

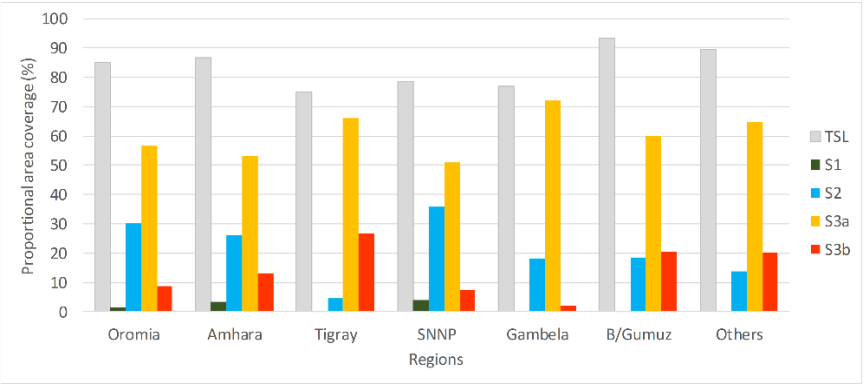

Figure 7. Proportion of Theoretically Suitable Land (Sum of S1, S2, S3a and S3b) with different suitability classes in the RAA summarized according to administrative regions of Ethiopia.

About 67% of the RAA in Ethiopia is currently not cultivated; and over half of the RAA in each region is non-cultivated (Table 2). Considerable proportions of non-cultivated RAA are found in Gambela and Benishangul Gumuz regional states. The *theoretically suitable land* (S) of the RAA is about 419,338 km^2 (63%). S assumes that all such areas could be converted from their current land use type to crop cultivation. Under normal

circumstances, however, landscapes are subject to constraints from a variety of biophysical, socio-economic, and institutional factors. Excluding those areas that refer to completely unsuitable (N) areas from a biophysical perspective, the theoretically suitable land is reduced by 4% (i.e., from 67% [column "ci"] to 63% [column "ei"]). According to our assessment, about 6% of Ethiopia's RAA is institutionally constrained in terms of possible land use. Broken down into administrative regional states (see Figure 4), more land in Gambela is institutionally restricted (20% of the RAA of the region), followed by SNNP (15%), Tigray (15%), and Oromia (9%). Amhara region has the smallest (2%) percentage of institutionally restricted land. However, this analysis only refers to landscapes subject to state-level institutional restrictions. If local-level institutional restrictions were considered (e.g., community enclosures), the estimated PAC area would likely shrink significantly.

DISCUSSION

Extent and Suitability of the Uncultivated Portion of the RAA

This study defines the RAA, assess its LULC composition and further estimate PAC so as to generate policy-relevant knowledge and information on the suitability, availability and usability of land for cop production under rainfed system. There have been few attempts of delimiting the RAA; among which Hurni (1998) and Hedberg (1970) are well known. According to Hurni, 3,800 m.a.s.l. is the upper most altitudinal limit of cropping, while the lower altitudinal limit varies depending on the dryness. He indicated that the limit varies spatially; in the western side of the country; it can reach up to 800 m.a.s.l.; in the eastern side of the country, it reaches up to 1,200 m.a.s.l. Researchers in the field also identify clear temporal trends of land use practices related to change in agro-climatic factors, which shift the lower and upper altitudinal limits of crop production (Hurni 1998, Ramankutty, Foley, Norman and McSweeney 2002, Harvey and Pilgrim 2011). Moreover, ecological and technological adaptations also temporally push

the boundaries of crop production systems (what can be cultivated and where). This highlights the importance of continually redefining the physical boundaries of Ethiopia's RAA in a manner that is spatially consistent and temporally fitting with existing cropping practices. Moreover, establishing such boundaries alone does not guarantee knowledge of the suitability of the land for crop production, since biophysical, socio-economic, and institutional factors constrain the production of crops within the RAA. Cognizant of these research gaps, therefore, this study attempted to redefine the extent of the RAA and estimated further PAC using the state-of-the-art techniques. Given the vast extent of RAA, which covers about 59% of the country's land mass as well as the larger portion of it is uncultivated (67% of the RAA), theoretically, Ethiopia still has huge potential for future crop production. However, intricate biophysical and socio-economic factors limit efforts to utilize the uncultivated portion of the RAA to address landlessness and food insecurity.

ETHIOPIA'S PAC AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CURBING LANDLESSNESS

The PAC estimates indicate those highly (S1) and moderately (S2) suitable portions of the RAA that remain non-cultivated. Figure 7 shows ranges of suitability after accounting for biophysical, institutional and socio-economic constraints. S1 represents areas that can be easily used for crop cultivation with relatively little investment in land management. S2 represents areas requiring moderate investment in land management. According to our assessment, Ethiopia's PAC – i.e., the sum of highly (S1) and moderately (S2) suitable areas – is 109,848 km^2 and accounts for 25% of the currently non-cultivated land of the RAA. This implies that an additional 16% of Ethiopia's RAA could be further used for crop cultivation in the near future. This figure appears small when compared with the percentage of marginally suitable areas ($S3_a$ and $S3_b$).

Table 3. Administrative level PAC and its implication for addressing landlessness

SN	Region	Total population (in millions for 2016)	Average family size	Total estimated rural households (HH in millions)	Landless population (%)	Average land holding size (in ha)	Highly suitable PAC that can be immediately (in ha)	Moderately suitable PAC, usable in near future (in ha)	Estimated households that the S1 PAC can accommodate	Estimated households that the S2 PAC can accommodate
		a	**b**	**c = a/b**	**d**	**e**	**f**	**G**	**h = f/e**	**i = g/e**
1	Oromia	35.6	6	5.8	13.6	1.3	547,100	3,937,800	420,846	302,9177
2	Amhara	20.8	5	4.2	9.8	0.8	496,200	2,348,900	620,250	2,936,125
3	Tigray	5.2	4	1.3	11.1	0.5	63,900	128,500	127,800	257,000
4	SNNP	18.7	7	2.7	17.6	0.3	228,300	1,423,700	761,000	4,745,767
5	B/Gumz	10.1	7	0.15	14.4	1.8	36,500	416,200	20,277	231,222
6	Gambela	0.42	7	0.06	0	1.5	170,600	773,600	113,733	515,733

Source: CSA (2007, 2014, 2016) and Teshome (2014) and authors analysis.

The theoretically suitable (S) and potentially available (PAC) RAA for crop production in comparison with landless populations vary considerably across Ethiopia's regional states (Figure 5b, Figure 7 and Table 3). For example, less populous regions such as Gambela and Benishangul-Gumuz regions have relatively large proportions of uncultivated landscape. However, most of these landscapes in the region are not highly suitable compared to the highland landscape (Figure 6). As a result the usability of the uncultivated landscape in these regions is limited. By contrast, populous regions such as SNNP and Amhara have many landless people coupled with small proportion of PAC, making it difficult to address landlessness through farm-based livelihood options. Thus, how the larger (67% of currently non-cultivated land RAA) can be used to address landlessness and food insecurity is an important strategic challenge that need to be answered. Given the spatial variation of the availability of land within PAC and when the population to land ratio varies greatly over the regional states, and at same time to reduce the pressure on the environment and other ecosystem goods and services, expanding cropland within the respective regional states may not meet the required land per capita to achieve equitable economic benefits. Under such circumstances, implementation of any alternative measures, such as resettlement redistribution/reallocation and intensification) largely depends on the existence of an enabling policy environment (Lotze-Campen et al. 2010, Pretty 1999, Harvey and Pilgrim 2011).

Outmigration and Resettlement Options

In the severely degraded, densely populated and food insecure highlands of Ethiopia, outmigration and/or resettlement for smallholding households had been considered as alternative policy options to address issues of drought, famine and landlessness and food insecurity (Rahmato 2003). For example, Ethiopia's 2002 food security strategy presents resettlement as one of the pillars of its approach (FDRE M. of R. D. 2002). Leaving aside the directional flows and forms of migration, these policies had primarily

focused on (planned and large-scale) *rural–rural migration* (Rahmato 2003). In our view, however, strategies to address landlessness that emphasize rural–rural migration must first examine two critical factors, namely: (1) the availability (area) and spatial distribution of PAC; and, (2) the existence of an enabling policy environment for implementation. Regarding point one, the spatial distribution of PAC in Ethiopia varies significantly from one region to the next. Rural–rural outmigration or resettlement (sporadic or planned) could be seen as a major option for regions such as Tigray, Eastern Amhara, and Eastern Harerghe in view of the lack of PAC (FDRE M. of R. D. 2002). These regions have already utilized most of their suitable areas for crop cultivation (Figure 6 and Table 3). Their remaining areas are subject to institutional bans (see Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation, Proc. No. 456/2005). These imply that resettlement and rural-rural migration are right measures in view of factor 1.

However, the second critical factor – the need for an enabling policy environment – reveals complications: Ethiopia's population policy, adopted in 1993 and described in strategy papers (GoE *PASDEP* 2005, FDRE 2003), discourages rural–rural migration (small or large resettlements). In effect, inter and intra-regional planned resettlement is prohibited after 2005. Further, resettlement programmes aiming to move people from degraded, densely populated areas to supposedly fertile, sparsely populated areas are highly contested from a variety of ecological, political, and socio-cultural perspectives (Mengist 2014, Lemenih, Olsson and Karltun 2004, Hammond 2008). In recent years, the political face of the issue is more complicated by ethnic-based resource use and protection, which is leading to 'ethnophobia.' There are also criticisms that administrative and executive efforts are weak to resolve those problems. There is also ample evidence that large-scale resettlement programmes in Ethiopia have failed to achieve their goals (Rahmato 2003). Thus, intra-regional resettlement and rural-rural migration are not supported by enabling institutional, administrative and political climates.

Overall, programmes of rural–rural migration and/or planned resettlement of landless rural households appear problematic and

unsustainable both in the short-term and the long-term (Mengist 2014). The prospects of using such strategies to address landlessness and food insecurity in Ethiopia were further diminished with the adoption of a decentralized land administration policy. The evidence generated on PAC in the different regional states can be utilized to revisit and analyze the intra-regional resettlement policy options and help to steer again resettlement and migration policy making.

Land Distribution/Redistribution, Allocation/Reallocation as Options

Efforts towards addressing landlessness may require land distribution/redistribution, and allocation/reallocation. Following the overthrow of Ethiopia's imperial regime in 1974, the use right of land was transferred from the former landlords to the poor peasants under the motto "land to the tiller" by Proclamation No. 31/1975. Since then and until the late 1990's, allocation and reallocation (redistribution) of land were undertaken as important means of addressing landlessness (Rahmato 2003). However, in the previous times until 2005, land use arrangements (especially cropland expansion) and legal land redistribution were made untenable (Hurni et al. 2005, Zeleke and Hurni 2001). This is mainly because, the redistribution considers addressing landlessness not land suitability and productivity. As a result, major portions of RAA landscapes gradually deteriorated due to inappropriate land use conversion, improper crop production practices, and lack of entitlement or ownership within a functioning tenure system. Land redistribution can only work where the plots of land are large enough to support individual households under any possible strategy of intensification or sustainable use of land (Teshome 2014). Some researchers have criticized previous repeated land redistribution efforts for transforming Ethiopian agriculture from small-scale agriculture to micro-agriculture, hampering food security at the national level (Teshome 2014). It may be feasible for example in Oromia, Somalia, and Gambella regional states where redistribution was not

implemented. However, considering that efforts to redistribute currently cultivated land would negatively impact Ethiopia's food security and thwart its Green Economy development strategy, land redistribution was banned.

Concerning the second option (land allocation and reallocation) in fact, land reserve is required to a growing future population, especially for youths who have no option to inherit land from their family. Given that about 10% of the highland rural household in Ethiopia is currently landless (Table 3), such options are very important. According to projections, Ethiopia's population will grow to 120 million by 2025 and 150 million by 2050 (based on the 2007 national census) (see Figure 8). This implies a doubling of Ethiopia's current landless household (from 10% to 20%) and serious shortages of land for cultivation. Under such condition, land allocation/reallocation could be important option to utilize the available uncultivated land for crop production. In this regard, the 67% of currently non-cultivated land within Ethiopia's RAA would be huge resource to address landlessness and related food insecurity. Viewed nationally, disregarding the currently cultivated land areas, a maximum of 25% of the currently non-cultivated portion of the RAA is available (i.e., S1 and S2) for *near-term* use. At the sub-national level, the potentially available land could accommodate about 10% of the current landless population in Oromia, 25% in Amhara, 19% in Tigray, 37% in SNNP, and 15% in Benishangul Gumz regional states (see Table 3). In the *long-run*, there is also the possibility of using marginally suitable ($S3_a$ and $S3_b$) land and landscapes as these areas could be made suitable for cultivation through massive land rehabilitation and management measures, use of improved crop varieties and agronomic practices. The former option, however, has a much longer time horizon as major efforts to rehabilitate degraded lands have already been underway for two decades. Given that existing policies do not favor redistribution of currently cultivated land, allocation of PAC to the landless and produce grain shall be seen as an important option. However, it is well understood that, while rural land use and administration policy does foresee expansion of cultivatable land, there are conflicts with environmental protection goals and development strategies of the country such as investment policies that need much of the PAC. Therefore, this option can be useful only if

appropriate land use and sustainable land management measures are implemented as part of land allocation programmes and the country's agricultural development strategies.

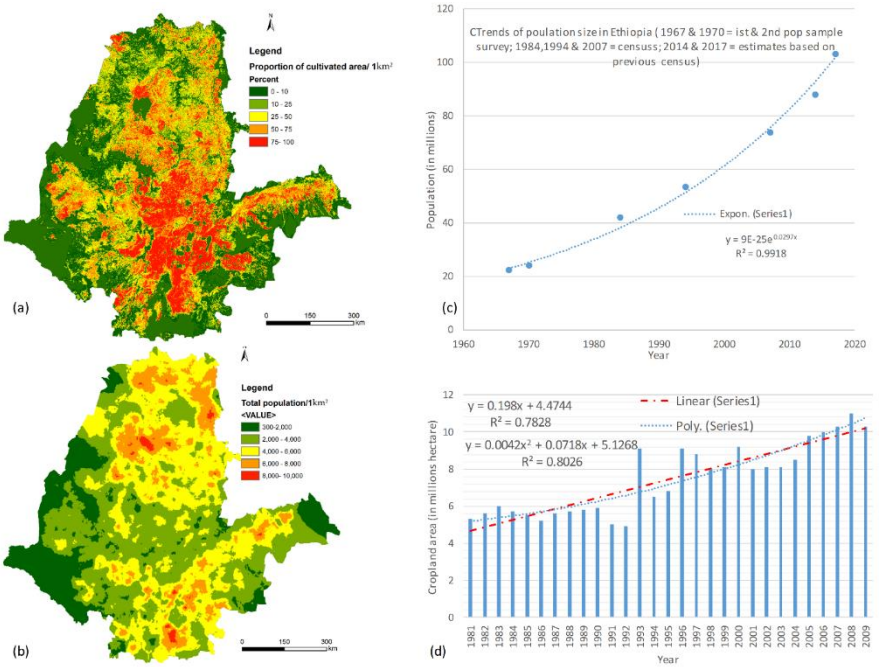

Figure 8. (a) currently cultivated area per km2 (source: present study) and (b) Comparison of rural population density (c) national population growth and (d) cropland expansion (source CSA 2007, 2014, 2016).

Intensification Option

Present trends in global agricultural development are oriented towards intensification of agriculture through technology improvement and knowledge transfer (Lambin and Meyfroidt 2011). In Ethiopia, some observers see intensification as capable of meeting future food demand with less environmental harm and stopping inappropriate future cropland expansion (Harvey and Piligrim 2011). However, efficiency of Ethiopia's current smallholder-farming system is hampered by land fragmentation, low

input usage, reliance on traditional agronomic practices and its complete dependence on rainfall. Besides, per area yields tend to be very low. Thus, smallholder agriculture in Ethiopia has challenges in addressing food security at the required level (Hurni 2015). Current landholdings (average <1 ha per household) are not enough to ensure food security for a family of 4-5 people. All efforts to increase yields are likely to be hampered by as further diminishing farm size, climate change (Hurni 2015), and the land tenure system (Rahmato 2003). In smallholder farming systems, it could be difficult to increase grain yields and address land shortages in most parts of Ethiopia where people cannot afford inputs, technologies are limited, and where topographic factors and tenure systems deter intensive agriculture (Teshome 2014).

In fact, achieving the full potential of agricultural intensification requires making marginal areas more productive through sustainable land management practices. Various land rehabilitation activities are already being implemented in many parts of the RAA landscapes. Ensuring sustainable land management and enhancing productivity call for prohibiting undesirable land use shift and enforcing proper land use practices, including making sure any crop cultivation on steep slopes embeds in it soil and water conservation measures. Integrating land rehabilitation with intensive agriculture will enable farmers to both obtain diverse benefits from conserved ecosystems and increase their yields. Experiences from the regions of Tigray and eastern Amhara show that investments in marginally suitable lands can bear fruit by generating ecosystem services and creating extra cropland. At the same time, successfully integrating land rehabilitation and intensive agriculture requires innovative technologies, improved inputs, effective agronomic practices, and supplementing the rainfed system with irrigation. In this regard, agricultural research must also be intensified to enable better technological options. Above all, introduction of better land management interventions can help to boost agricultural production and, in turn, contribute to addressing landlessness and food insecurity in Ethiopia.

CONCLUSION

The present study redefined Ethiopia's RAA and found it comprises about 59% of the country's land mass. It also assessed the suitability of the uncultivated portion of the RAA for rainfed based crop production. The results indicate that Ethiopia is currently using only 33% of its RAA for crop cultivation. Out of the remaining 67% of the RAA, only 16% is highly and moderately suitable which is considered as PAC. Ethiopia's remaining total reserves of PAC accounts 16% of the RAA. This study highlights the possible options to use this portion of the RAA. The study confirms that, in Ethiopia, there is less remaining land, which is highly suitable (4% of the currently uncultivated portion of the RAA) and can be cultivated without investment than is usually assumed. If land allocation is chosen as a policy option, the highly suitable PAC can't fully accommodate the current landless household (10% of the total rural household population). However, inclusion of both highly suitable and moderately suitable PAC (109,848 km^2) makes it possible to fully address current landlessness. However, implementation of the identified policy options – land distribution/redistribution, resettlement and intensification – will face challenges. Because, there is considerable incongruity between areas of population density, landlessness, and potentially cultivable land throughout Ethiopia. Ethiopia's existing highly and moderately suitable (PAC) landscapes are located in sparsely populated areas. In theory, this points to resettlement or rural–rural outmigration as possible options. That implies, land use planners could think resettling landless people from highly populated regions to the less populated region but policy makers could find these options very difficult. However, under the current ethnic-based political administration, resettling people could continue to foment unrest or ethnic tensions unless handled very carefully. Implementation of such alternative measures also depend on the existence of enabling policy environment across and within the regional governments. Moreover, PAC is largely found in relatively harsh environments (particularly regarding temperatures). This implies the use of PAC requires moderate investment.

In sum, efforts to address landlessness issue, by implementing any of available options (resettlement, land distribution, land use adjustment), is more difficult without availing spatially explicit datasets and information. Thus, authors strongly suggest to incorporate spatial information in decision making processes like land use planning and land administration. In this regard, such kind of studies can provide both knowledge and information on the availability of land, alternative options to these land in addressing landlessness. Therefore, the presented approach and outputs play a considerable role to support scientific and evidence-based decision making.

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Chapter 11

LAND DEALS, RURAL UNREST AND THE CRISIS OF STATE IN ETHIOPIA[1]

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Ethiopia's extensive program of large-scale land investments (LSLI), which was promoted with renewed vigor following the global agricultural commodities crisis of 2007/2008, was notable for providing farm land, water and other resources to investors, foreign and domestic, at exceptionally low prices and with few contractual obligations. The program, which was once the darling of policy makers, has come under critical scrutiny of late, as its performance has fallen far short of expectations, and as it has become increasingly evident to public authorities that it will remain a burden on the

[1] This paper was written during the first two months of 2018, as the political system constructed by Meles Zenawi and his associates was collapsing and a new leader was being elected to head the government. The unceremonious fall of the regime has revealed to the public a clearer picture of how the ideology of ethnicity became a master tool for political and economic domination by the TPLF elite. New information provided by the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed show how a sophisticated network of patronage and corruption was established and how massive funds from the public treasury were siphoned off to benefit this elite on a scale never seen in the country before. These revelations, which came too late for me to use in this work, reinforce the arguments presented here.

country, especially on the financial and banking sector, for a long time to come. The area covered by land deals is not accurately known, with different sources giving different estimates. In an earlier study, I estimated that there were close to three million hectares of land leased out to investors, but around about the same time, government sources put the figure at about two and half million.[2] The first Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP I) expected the government to allocate 3.5 million hectares to commercial farmers by 2015, the end of the Plan period, of which about half was to go to foreign investors (MOFED 2010). This target was not met, on the contrary only a small number of new applicants were allocated land in this period.

In this paper I shall argue that the program of agricultural land investments, which was resented by many peasant farmers, was an important factor, albeit not the sole one, in driving the rural unrest of 2015 – 2017. The unrest in turn played decisive role in fueling the political crisis in the country in the final months of 2017 and the subsequent collapse of the state that was dominated by the TPLF elite and its close associates.

THE PROMISED LAND

In Ethiopia, LSLI as well as other farm operations engaged in producing agricultural goods predominantly for the market are grouped under the term commercial agriculture, differentiating them from family farms (or subsistent agriculture) where the primary aim is own-consumption, though some of what is produced is often marketed. Neither the physical size of the farm nor the form of ownership or management is the defining factor here: commercial farms can be small, medium or large, and they may be owned or operated by private or public, corporate or individual, domestic or foreign investors. Some farms, like those in the horticultural industry, operate comparatively small plots, but what is produced on them is destined for the

[2] See UNDP Ethiopia 2012 for the various estimates; my estimates are given in Dessalegn 2011 and 2014. CSA (2015) shows nearly one million hectares of commercial farms were under crops in 2014/15 crop year. Keeley et al. (2014) put the total land leased between 2005 and 2012 at one million, clearly a low estimate.

urban and export markets. The general literature on land deals has focused primarily on LSLI, often assuming that such investments are driven by corporate interests, with host countries being mostly unwilling or reluctant victims (Cotula et al. 2009, White et al. 2012). This is not the case in Ethiopia: the investments in question are a mixture of all varieties, and the country was one of several in Africa which was keen to open its agricultural sector to international capital, offering highly attractive incentives in the wake of the global food price crisis of 2007/2008. The Ethiopian government has been an active player from the very beginning, and the collapse of the investment program at present, which, as will be discussed later, the government has recently acknowledged, must be placed squarely on its shoulders. In this paper, my main focus will be on large-scale land investments undertaken in the period between 2007 and 2014, however, I shall also look briefly at the consequences of the rapid expansion of the horticultural industry, in particular the export-led flower cultivation, where farm sizes are much smaller.

The TPLF-led government was keen to promote commercial agriculture from as early as the mid-1990s when it began to allow the allocation of land to investors in various parts of the country.[3] The lands allocated to domestic as well as foreign investors at the time were relatively small, compared to later periods, and investors were subject to few if any regulatory obligations, nor was there any institutional or resource capacity on the part of Regional or local authorities, the main actors in land allocation, to undertake even limited monitoring and supervision of investor activity. In 2002 the government issued a new investment proclamation which was received quite favorably by the business community and which attracted considerable interest from foreign investors, a growing number of whom began to seek investment opportunities in the country. However, following the global food crisis, there was a sudden land rush by foreign investors, a rush which peaked in the years 2009 and 2010 resulting in the transfer of nearly a million hectares of land to a score or more of investors, a majority of whom were Indian nationals. A similar scramble for land was taking place just about the

[3] For this and the discussion that follows as well as the literature on agricultural land investments in Ethiopia see Dessalegn 2011, and 2014.

same time in other African countries, but here the dominant players were investors from western countries (LPI 2013). Foreign capital was attracted by the incentives the country was offering: exceptionally low lease payments (one Indian investor calling them "throw away prices"); generous financial and tax incentives; minimal regulatory requirements and state interventions; full repatriation of all profits and other income; lease of land guaranteed for the duration of the contract period, free from any land disputes since land is state property; and investors were promised fertile land suitable for many kinds of crops (for a fuller discussion, see Dessalegn 2011).

The global crisis was seen by decision-makers as offering excellent opportunities for the country to export large volumes of farm products and reaping the benefits of high commodity prices. Consequently, the government was open to what I have described in an earlier work as *mega-land deals,* which involved the allocation to foreign investors of huge tracts of land, measuring from 25,000 to 50,000, and in one case, 100,000 hectares, often with little or no evidence the investors concerned were capable of operating them profitably (Dessalegn 2014). From 2009, following the establishment of the "federal land bank," all Regions were required to transfer rights to investment land under their jurisdiction to the bank, and by 2011, the bank had received pledges of over 3.6 million hectares of land, with the three largest donors being Beni Shangul Gumuz Region (1.1 m), Gambella (1.2 m) and Oromia (1.0) (see Dessalegn 2011). The rationale for the land bank, which was managed by a federal agency attached to the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), was that it would provide a "one-stop shop" for investment, making it an efficient mechanism for all concerned, including investors.

Investors were allocated lands in many parts of the country, most importantly in Beni Shangul, Gambella, Oromia Regions, as well as in the Awash and Omo River valleys of Afar and SNNP. Lowland areas utilized by pastoralists and semi-pastoralists, as well as wetlands, lands under forest cover and in national parks were given out to investors. We must not note here that what we are concerned with is not just land but also water: strictly speaking, the proper term for our subject should be *land and water deals*. The lease price that investors were charged did not include the value of the

water they were expected to use. Investors sought the lands for the purpose of growing broadly three classes of crops: a) food crops for export, notably rice, oil crops, soya, and maize; b) biofuel crops such as castor beans, oil palm and *jatropha*; and c) industrial crops, notably sugar cane and cotton for the sugar and textile industries, respectively, both of which were expected to enter the global market in a big way. Land transfers to investors deprived households and communities of valuable resources vital for their livelihood: peasant farmers were evicted from the land; access to pasture, water sources, and other environment resources were placed off-limits to them; they were deprived of the use of lands which were important as venues for religious and social events as well as for mobility; pastoralists lost their grazing land, access to water and transit corridors.

Documents on land deals issued by the Ministry of Agriculture in the period 2008-2010 are quite revealing (Dessalegn 2011). All decisions having to do with the transfer of land to investors was made by government officials, at Regional level earlier but later at Federal, and transmitted down to the district for implementation, and the people most impacted by the decisions, namely land users and their communities, were neither consulted nor were their needs taken into account. Moreover, the investment program did not include issues having to do with food security or poverty reduction. Some program documents issued at the time express the hope that investors will create social assets such as health facilities, schools, etc. in the communities in which they will be operating, but this was not a contractual obligation and was left to the discretion and good will of the investors concerned. The economic model adopted by the government was neither inclusive nor equitable, and, instead, the needs of the state were considered paramount.

On the other hand, the horticultural industry (flower growing, and the growing of fruit, vegetables, spices and herbs), and in particular the floriculture sector, has benefitted by the special attention it has received from government. In terms of area coverage, the industry is tiny in comparison to large-scale farm investments - the total area under horticulture is between 13 to 15 thousand hectares - however, its economic value is far more important than the latter. The export of cut flowers, for

instance, earns the government much more foreign currency than large-scale commercial agriculture as a whole. Flower growers have been allocated prime land, often near major urban centers served by air transport, as well as along the country's main transport corridors, and foreign capital is a major player here. The transfer of the lands to flower growers not only created shortages of farm goods for urban consumers but also deprived the peasants in question a source of steady income. In many instances, the lands were requisitioned by the government at low rates of compensation and given out to investors at considerably high lease prices. There are however some cases where investors have directly leased the land from the holders themselves, however, in most cases, peasants have invariably contested the compensation they received as being unfair and inadequate. The horticulture industry, whether employing green house technology or not, is known for its on high usage of water and agro-chemicals, both of which have come to be a cause of friction between investors and rural communities.

A far greater force of land evictions and rural displacement has been public sector land investments, of which the giant state-owned sugar industry is the prime example. Other public schemes responsible for displacement in several parts of the country include special agricultural development zones (with an initial land fund of 250,000 set aside in several Regions); the growing number of enclosures for industrial parks; and lands taken for heavy infrastructure schemes such as roads and large dams. In view of space limitations, I will only deal, and that briefly, with the state-owned sugar industry under the management of the Sugar Corporation (see Dessalegn 2014, Mulugeta and Fana 2014, Kamski 2016).[4]

One of the highly ambitious (some would say, foolhardy) schemes proposed by the GTP I was the construction of ten mega sugar factories, complete with extensive land for their own sugar cane plantations; the projects were expected to be fully operational by 2015, the end of the plan period. The Sugar Corporation, which was entrusted with this mammoth task, quickly acquired huge tracts of land across the country, notably in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Tigrai and SNNP Regions. It has been provided almost

[4] Information on the Corporations website accessed in 2014 has since been removed. The number of factories in the Kuraz project has recently been reduced from six to five.

unlimited funds by the government, as well as loans from domestic and foreign banks. I estimate that the Corporation now controls over 430,000 hectares of land, the largest of which is the Kuraz project in the Omo Valley, where six large factories are being constructed and 250,000 hectares of land has been requisitioned for the project's exclusive use. While accurate figures are not available, there is evidence the ten sugar projects underway have been responsible for widespread displacement of farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in many of the sites, my own conservative estimate of the total number of people involved ranging between 200 to 250 thousand.

The Corporation has so far spent billions of *Birr* and hundreds of millions in hard currency on the new projects (Sugar Corporation 2016), however, as of the first half of 2017, not one of the ten sugar factories planned had been commissioned, with many, in fact, still under construction. Moreover, the Corporation has, on several occasions, reported the loss of thousands of hectares of planted cane because of management failures and poor planning: the canes were either not harvested on time or simply left to rot on the farm for lack of harvesting capacity.[5] Government bodies, including MOFED, the National Planning Commission, the Auditor General, as well as MPs in Parliament have expressed serious concern on several occasions about the lack of progress despite the immense resources that have been spent on the projects. The second half of 2017 witnessed a severe shortage of sugar in the country, impacting badly not only on consumer households but also on the food, beverages and hospitality industries. A system of rationing introduced by officials made matters even worse, as a result, the Corporation was finally forced to import sugar from overseas costing millions of hard-earned foreign currency.

Why was the government so keen to attract foreign investment in commercial agriculture and why did it allow a land rush at the very moment when it was in a highly advantageous position due to the global commodity crisis? The overriding objective of the investment program was to produce agricultural commodities in demand in the world market which, following the crisis, were expected to be in high demand, fetching high prices. Earning

[5] This and what follows is based on press reports; see *Reporter* (Amharic), *Addis Fortune*, various issues in 2017.

foreign exchange was thus a high priority and investors promising to meet the government's expectations in this regard were welcomed with open arms. The government also expected collateral benefits to trickle down to local communities. It was assumed that foreign capital would introduce new technology, and this, it was hoped, would benefit local populations enabling them to adopt improved farming practices and higher production. Other gains investment projects were expected to provide included employment opportunities for local people, and improved community assets such as clean water, rural roads, and educational and health services. As we shall see below, all this remained largely a wish list and many of the benefits identified failed to materialize.

It is now evident that judged by all criteria, the great majority of land investments in the country, public and private, domestic and foreign, have failed. The government arrived at a similar conclusion following an investigation in Gambella Region undertaken by a high-level committee set up by the Prime Minister's cabinet office in 2016. The report that came out provides a catalogue of mismanagement, corruption, inaction and unacceptable levels of poor performance on the investors part as well as public authorities at the Regional and Federal level alike (OPM 2016). The study collected information from 623 investors who altogether held 630,518 hectares of land spread across all the *woreda*s of the Region, of which 30 percent was held by just eight foreign investors.[6] It found that there were no rules or procedure for identifying, selecting or measuring land for allocation to investors, opening the way for corruption and favor peddling. On many occasions, land was transferred to investors and certificates issued following "informal payments" to local officials. Moreover, it was found that land in protected forests, wildlife reserves, and occasionally land already leased to others was given out to applicants. The report is critical of Federal and

[6] OPM 2016 (hereafter Gambella report). The committee found wide disparity in the data held by different public bodies in the Region; it settled on the 623 investors because more information was available about them. At the Regional level, land was leased out by two different bodies. The total land figure shown here is made up of land leased by the Region (65%) and by the Federal land investment agency (35%).

Note. The *woreda* is an administrative unit comparable to a district; below it is the *kebelle*, or sub-district.

Regional authorities for inefficiency and incompetence. On the other hand, the report also highlights gross shortcomings by investors themselves: of the total land given out by the Region, only 15.8 percent was found to be under cultivation, while in the case of land leased out by the Federal agency, the comparable figure was 6.2 percent. The performance of foreign investors was just as bad: they had utilized only 6.2 percent of their holdings. Using several other comparative measures, the study found that only 14 percent of investors had performed well or very well, 26 percent had performed far below expectations, and 60 percent were found to be the worst performers, showing no activity altogether.

One of the hopes of the government was that land investment would serve as a catalyst for the spread of improved farming practices and technology in the rural areas. However, the findings of the study show very little technology usage by the investors themselves: only 36 percent were found to own or have access to agricultural machinery, while the rest possessed no farm equipment at all. It is worth noting that earlier investigations had shown that cultivation practices in investor lands were not any better than those in peasant farms (Dessalegn 2011, UNDP 2012). In terms of employment, the picture is similar: investors have created far less employment than expected, and only ten percent of the jobs created have gone to local people, most of which were jobs requiring no skill at all.[7]

The report blames officials at the Regional and Federal level for mismanagement, incompetence and corruption, but its most stinging criticism is reserved for the investors themselves. It argues that a great majority of investors show no strong desire or ability to operate the land; that they request more land than they can manage for speculative purposes as well as for accessing bank loans and tax free privileges; and that the loans and tax privileges they received have been employed to purchase and import goods intended for other purposes. Of the 200 investors that had received loans from two state owned banks, for instance, only 18 percent were found

[7] A total of 4776 permanent jobs were said to have been created, which comes to about 8 jobs per investor, or 0.0076 jobs per hectare. The jobs figure is based on information provided by investors and is likely to be on the high side.

to have undertaken cultivation of the land.[8] The government has now become convinced that drastic action is necessary if the investment program was to be saved from complete collapse. In light of this, the Federal land investment agency was down-sized, and its responsibilities redrawn. The report recommended that the contracts of 238 investors whose performance was deemed to be poor should be revoked and the land in their possession reclaimed by the government. Following the report, Gambella decided to withdraw the licenses of 269 investors in the Region. Beni Shangul in fact had taken similar measures against investors in 2014 and 2015, though we do not have figures of how many investors it involved.

The general debate on land deals as well as that specific to Ethiopia is primarily concerned about investment governance, project performance and corporate behavior, but the impact of investment projects on the day-to-day lives of smallholders has been largely ignored. While the evidence at present is somewhat incomplete what we know so far shows that investment projects have aggravated social and economic pressures on poor rural households. The value of land often appreciates in communities where there is an investment project, but while this may benefit land holders in some ways, it has a damaging impact on families that depend on land rentals and sharecropping arrangements since it will lead to increased competition for land access as well as higher rental fees (Dessalegn forthcoming). This is particularly the case in areas where horticultural projects have rapidly expanded. The social and familial consequences of all this is evident: increased competition for land has given rise to friction among neighbors and rivalry among siblings leading to tension within the family (Dessalegn forthcoming). A related issue is the problem of landlessness and unemployment, which is increasing in rural areas (ibid). In many areas, the landless, who, in many cases are young people, rely on renting land from kin or neighbors to make a living. The shrinking opportunity for land rentals and the increase in land fees makes life difficult for them and feeds rural unemployment and resentment. Finally, land projects are associated with

[8] The Institution of the Ombudsman, a government agency, which issued a report in 2017 on the activities of investors in four Gambella woredas, makes similar criticisms of investors. It states very few jobs were created by the investment projects.

damage to the environment and natural resources. There has been considerable deforestation and land clearance by investors- a point which was noted by both government reports cited above (more on this later). Overall, the presence of investment projects in rural communities is a cause of apprehension for all farming households because they believe that the projects pose a threat to property rights and accepted ways of life.

The transfer of land to investors was also accompanied by the transfer of financial resources from government-owned and private banks. According to the Gambella report noted above, 4.3 billion *Birr* (about 200 million USD) was loaned to investors in the Region by two government-owned banks, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) and Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE). We do not have a full picture of the extent of loans offered to commercial farmers in the country as a whole, nor is there information about loans provided by private banks. Of the two banks in question, DBE is the most at risk due to loan defaults, forcing it to suspend loans to commercial agriculture in Gambella in 2016. DBE was unhappy with the utilization of its loans to investors here, many of whom, it suspected, were using the loans for purposes wholly unrelated to their farm business. In a recent statement to the press, the bank admitted that bad loans made up 25.3 percent of its loans portfolio, or 8.6 billion Birr, of which 42 percent was to investors in commercial agriculture.[9] Karuturi, the Indian investor, whose holdings in Gambella measured 100,000 hectares, borrowed heavily from local banks, and, by the time he fled the country without settling his loans, he owed over 170 million Birr (about 10 million USD). His farm business was on the verge of collapse at the time, according to government officials.[10] Commercial farmers benefited from privileges other than loans from financial institutions, and these included duty-free imports of capital goods and tax incentives. It is difficult to put a monetary value on these privileges but I note them here because these and other privileges noted

[9] *Reporter* (Amharic) 17 January 2018. Compare this with a World Bank publication authored by Daniel Ali et al. (2015), p. 10, where it is claimed that loans did not play a significant role in land investments (investors relied on "own equity"). The Gambella report found that 200 out of the 623 investors investigated had received bank loans while many others were waiting for their loan applications to be finalized.

[10] *Reporter* (English) 25 January 2015.

above are not available to peasant cultivators or herders, clearly an unfair bias against smallholder farming and the absence of a level playing field in the agricultural economy.

RURAL UNREST

Rural communities have reacted unfavorably to land deals from the very beginning, partly because they were neither consulted nor informed in the first place, and partly because of their fear that such deals will have unwelcome consequences on their livelihoods. Government in this country, in the past as well as today, has treated rural people in a highly paternalistic manner, and, conversely, the latter, on their part, remain deeply mistrustful of its intentions. Land enclosures in the past have often deprived communities of vital natural resources and posed a threat to their property and well-being (Dessalegn 2009). The reaction to investment projects varied from one community to another but the most common ones could be described as "everyday" forms of resistance. However, recourse to militant and aggressive action did occur from time to time, as I have noted in an earlier work (Dessalegn 2014). On a number of occasions, investment project staff were attacked, farms set on fire, equipment damaged or stolen. The escalating violence eventually forced the government to recognize that there were serious security concerns needing to be addressed in Beni Shangul, Gambella and SNNPR (*Reporter*, Amharic, 13 May 2015).

The focus of this section is on the outbreak of riots and disturbances that occurred in the country, first in 2015 but later, on a much bigger scale, in 2016. As will be discussed further down, these disturbances involved work stoppages, blockage of transport networks, as well as violent acts causing damage to property, private and public, and leading to the loss of lives and widespread injuries to people. The disturbances were essentially rural because they occurred largely in rural areas and small rural towns, and, as we shall see later, because peasant farmers and landless rural youth were

important actors in a great many cases.[11] The two main centers of unrest were Oromia and Amhara Regions which together make up over 60 percent of the country in terms of population and settlement. Fifteen of the eighteen Zones in Oromia were seriously affected by the disturbances, while in Amhara, six from a total of eleven Zones experienced medium to high levels of disorder. In SNNP, only Gedeo Zone and the six woredas within it were affected (EHRC 2017). Notably, there were hardly any disturbances in the predominantly pastoralist areas of the country, nor in the border Regions in the west.

From the evidence at hand, we can discern three groups of active participants, especially in the 2016 unrest. First were people with legitimate grievances directly related with their everyday lives. These included peasant farmers, young people from the rural areas, and the unemployed. The issue of land was high in the minds of many in this group. One of the most worrisome problems facing many farming communities in the country is high levels of landlessness and rural unemployment, a consequence of many factors of which growing land scarcity, high demographic pressure, and limited opportunities for non-farm employment are salient (Dessalegn forthcoming). As was noted earlier, land deals have, in one way or another, aggravated land scarcity and have contributed to the problem. While landlessness is predominantly a youth problem, its consequences are much broader, impacting on family relations, driving families and the young into the arms of criminal people-smugglers, and straining the social fabric of communities. The second group of participants in the unrest consisted of activists belonging to, or supportive of, local or "Diaspora" political organizations, on the one hand, and, on the other, urban youth, who may or may not be associated with these organizations. The last group may be described as "opportunists," that is, people who sought to benefit by the breakdown of law and order, a phenomenon that is common in many social disturbances here and elsewhere. The unrest was for the most part spontaneous and unorganized but in some Oromo areas, notably in and near

[11] Since the events under discussion occurred very recently, there is very limited written evidence. I have relied on government reports, reports in the local independent press, and anecdotal evidence.

larger urban centers, a youth group known as *Qeerroo*[12] was the driving force and provided informal leadership.

It would be wrong to attribute the rural unrest solely to the ethnic factor, though ethnic discontent cannot be completely ruled out. Certainly, the initial triggers of the disturbances in Oromia were events of significance to the Oromo as an ethnic group, but these initial ethnic-oriented disturbances quickly turned into protests raising broader questions about governance, democracy and land rights. Two reports that have examined the unrest in some detail from the standpoint of human rights, prepared by EHRC (2016, 2017), a government body, and by HRC (2017), an independent NGO, hold remarkably similar views regarding the issues of concern to protestors. These were grievances relating to maladministration at the Federal, Regional and local level. Protestors, both reports note, complained about the lack of transparency, and accountability of government officials, and corruption among state employees. There were widespread complaints about gross corruption especially at the local level, involving woreda and *kebelle* officials as well as law enforcement bodies such as the police, courts, public prosecutors, and prison authorities. Bribery and nepotism were high on the list of corrupt practices. We should note that it is the poor who are hurt the most by corruption in government. Thirdly, many rural protestors raised the issue of land governance, landlessness and unemployment in their communities. Among the specific grievances here were evictions from the land, compensation either not given or delayed, lack of transparency among local officials about rights of land holders, and common lands, which are supposed to be for the use of all in the community, cultivated by kebelle officials for their own benefit.

In the Oromo areas, the trigger which set of off the disturbances in 2015 was the issue of the Addis Ababa city integrated master plan, which proposed linking, in some sort of benefit-sharing arrangement, the surrounding small towns in Oromia with the capital. Political activists in the Oromo community saw this as a hostile act, an attempt by the Federal government to deprive Oromos of their territorial rights. The protests soon

[12] Not much written material on this youth group in English or Amharic, but see Tom Gardner in the *Guardian*, 13 March 2018.

spread to many parts of Oromia involving not just young people but peasants and other social groups. Similarly, the unrest in September of the following year was sparked off by an incident at an Oromo religious event, called the *irrecha*, in which protesting young people clashed with police, resulting in the death of dozens and injuries to scores of participants. In many ways, the larger and more extensive protest of 2016 was a continuation of that of the previous year. On both occasions, the protests spread to a much wider section of the population, raising broader issues of relevance to all population groups in the country. Coinciding with these protests were widespread unrest in Amhara Region, and while the immediate causes were different from those of Oromia, the grievances of the participants were similar to a good extent. In brief, the state was faced with widespread disturbances and civil unrest in numerous rural and urban areas from the second half of 2015 through to 2017.

Badly shaken by the unprecedented uprisings the ruling authorities responded, in October 2016, by declaring a six-month state of emergency and establishing a Command Post staffed by, and giving unlimited powers to the military and security forces. Under the state of emergency, which was later extended by another four months, all constitutional rights of citizens (such as peaceful demonstration, assembly, due process, free speech, etc.) were suspended, and a wide array of restrictions on people's movements and activities were put in place. The Command Post was authorized to issue rules and guidelines as well as to detain people for an unspecified period of time without a court appearance. In brief, the country was under martial law for a period of ten months. Mass detention of people started soon after the Command Post was established. According to HRC (2017), a total of 22,800 people were detained in the months between December 2016 and January 2017. The Parliamentary special investigation of detainees conducted in the last month of 2017 found that 31,625 people were in detention at one time, though a great majority was released shortly after[13]. Detention centers were set up in military and police camps, training colleges, schools, kebelle offices, as well as prisons.

[13] See Addis Fortune and Reporter issues of January 2018.

In most of the rural areas and towns affected by the protests, there was extensive destruction of property, public assets, as well as infrastructure and investment projects. The target of attacks included government offices, local businesses, schools and training camps, health centers, places of worship, roads and bridges, transport vehicles, and manufacturing enterprises (HRC 2017). Agricultural investment projects (large and small commercial farms) were particularly singled out: they were vandalized, with farm machinery and equipment, installations, workshops and buildings destroyed or damaged, while farm products and agro-chemicals burned or stolen. Plantations owned by state run enterprises were set on fire. In Oromia, the main targets were large-scale farm operations, horticultural investments as well manufacturing enterprises (cement, textile, and water bottling). In Amhara, the evidence we have at the moment suggests that the targets were primarily horticultural investments. An investigation carried out by DBE to determine the property damage of its clients in the Bahr Dar area showed that of the 19 projects attacked, 16 of them were farms growing cut flowers, fruits and vegetables (DBE 2016). According to local press reports, many of those involved in the attacks were said to be peasant farmers who had been displaced by the investment projects (*Addis Fortune*, 6 September 2016). Rural resentment against horticultural investments in particular was reported to be high because they were said to pay low wages, were accused of contaminating community water sources (because of their high usage of agro-chemicals) and contributed nothing to the local community. Moreover, as noted above, both horticultural and large-scale land investors operated only a small portion of the land they had acquired (between 10 to 15 percent), leaving the rest lie idle; this was highly resented by peasants many of whom farmed land too small to meet their essential needs, and where landlessness was a serious problem in their communities. Overall, according to the evidence provided recently by the Ethiopian Investment Commission, more than 300 investment projects in the country, many of them agricultural enterprises, were seriously damaged, with the government liable to vast sums of money in compensation claims (EIC 2018).

The human cost of the disturbances was high: many lives were lost and a considerable number of people, including women and children, suffered

injuries of various degrees. According to one report by the EHRC (2017), a total of 669 people lost their lives in all affected areas, among whom were local public employees and security officers. Another report by the same source (this time based on data from ten Oromia Zones and North Gonder only) estimates that 956 people suffered serious and minor injuries, of which the majority were local law enforcement officers and government employees (EHRC 2016). While it does not give specific figures, the findings of the HRC report (2017) similarly shows a high human cost; it states that there were many deaths, a large number of people, including women and children, suffered serious injuries, and there were quite a few incidents of rape.

While a semblance of calm was restored in many places by the second half of 2017, the protests did not completely die down. The government did make some concessions to address some of the grievances of the protestors, including the release of political prisoners, however these did not go far enough and did nothing to allay public discontent. On the contrary, many parts of Oromia and Amhara continued to remain restive, so much so that on 18 February, immediately following the surprise resignation of Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, the government declared a state of emergency again, the second in less than two years.

The rural unrest has had a significant impact on politics and the state, and it was evident that as political events began to move at a fast pace, the ruling party coalition, the EPRDF was thrown into crisis. There was a flurry of marathon conferences by each of the four main parties in the coalition following the unrest, culminating in a closed meeting of the leaders of these parties lasting over two weeks. While the public was kept in the dark as to what was being discussed, it was evident that the protests had a bearing on the issues brought to the table, namely issues of governance and accountability, power and power sharing, and resource distribution. In what can only be described as media theatre, broadcast to the nation on 4 January 2018, the Prime Minister and leaders of the four parties attempted to reassure the nation that they had put aside all their differences, discussed and resolved the urgent problems facing the country, and forged a strong and united leadership ready to move the country forward. Needless to say, this was received with skepticism by the general public, and as if to confirm this

skepticism, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn announced he was resigning from his post a few weeks later (on 15 February 2018), thus giving the lie to the declaration of inter-party harmony earlier.[14] Prime Minister Hailemariam, a Southerner, had no political credentials, and no strong constituent base; he had very little power, was not seen as a threat to any group, and precisely for these reasons had managed to stay in office for more than six years. His sudden and unexpected resignation, at a critical moment, not only left the country without leadership but opened up political wounds within the ethnically constructed state. In brief, the rural protests did not only succeed in shaking the government but brought to the surface the fundamental contradictions of ethnic federalism, throwing the state into deep crisis.[15]

Crisis of State

The land deals program must be seen within the country's broader economic as well as political context that had evolved since the fall of the military dictatorship, the Derg. The two main pillars of the post-Derg political economy are *ethnic federalism*, enshrined in the constitution of 1995 and followed by a far-reaching redrawing of the country's administrative map, on the one hand, and, on the other, state developmentalism, or the *developmental state*, a nebulous concept, not clearly defined but one that Ministers claim informs the government's development strategies. This is not the place for an extended discussion of these two issues, but a brief note on each is necessary to put my arguments in context.

[14] The Party conferences and the political activities of the ruling elite were regularly reported in the local media, including the private press.

[15] As these lines were being written, Parliament approved the appointment of Dr Abiy Ahmed as the new Prime Minister of the country, thus ushering in a dramatic change in the politics of the country.

Ethnic Federalism

The foundation of the federal political system we have today is ethno-linguistic identity: each unit of the federation was formed by a population group with a "…common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language … a common psychological make-up, and … an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory" (Article 39/5 of the *Constitution*). The reconstitution of the state along the lines of culture, language and settlement was hurriedly carried out in the first years of the EPRDF regime, at the initiative and strong backing of the TPLF, which was the dominant force in bringing down the Derg[16]. Party politics followed the same ethnic principle: each federal unit (the Regional State as it is called) was dominated by one ethnic party which entered into a coalition with other such Regional parties to form the EPRDF, with the TPLF accepted as the leading party or *primus inter pares*. Not clearly thought through, with many anomalies and fault lines, ethnic federalism was meant, first and foremost, to change the political landscape and create suitable conditions for the new powers to govern. It is important to remember that despite its victory over the Derg, a victory made possible in part by the abandonment of the military dictatorship by the mass of the peasantry across the country, the TPLF was aware that it would not be able to stay in power for long without allies and support groups in various parts of the country. The allies it found (and some it created) were local elites which in many cases did not have any following to speak of, while there was no popular demand for ethnic politics, at least not evidenced by public action worthy of the name. We should also note that the TPLF began as an ethnic insurgent group and remained an ethnic party, and thus ethnicity was the political discourse it understood best. Ethnic federalism sought to bring harmony among the country's numerous nationalities, autonomy and internal self-administration for all Regional States, and the democratization of social and political affairs- all measures seen as the necessary antidote to historical injustice as well as being important measures for addressing the specific grievances of disadvantaged ethnic and sub-national groups (Turton 2006, Merera 2003).

[16] There is a large body of recent work on Ethiopia's ethnic federalism, but for our purposes it is enough to cite Turton 2006; Markakis 2011; and Asnake 2013.

It was not long before the contradictions of ethnic federalism began to appear, and at the heart of the contradictions lay fundamental questions having to do with power and resource sharing, on the one hand, and, on the other, the over-dominance of the TPLF in the new polity, especially under the leadership of Meles Zenawi. Meles and his associates wasted no time in forging a state machinery at the federal level manned largely by people from their own party and trusted supporters. The goal was to establish a cohesive *politico-administrative elite* in control of the sinews of government and committed to the goals of the party, on the one hand, and, on the other, to enable the TPLF to ensure that the balance of power in the ruling party coalition remained in its favor. By the end of the first decade of the new millennium, this dual goal, namely the establishment of a politico-administrative elite made up predominantly of TPLF loyalists, and the domination of the state by such loyalists, had been largely achieved.

A revealing book written in 2014 by a well informed EPRDF insider details how Meles and his inner circle paved the way for party cadres and supporters to capture all the main levers of the federal state as well as the Addis Ababa city administration, from the senior to the sub-city and *kebelle* levels, in the period up-to and following the controversial election of 2005 (Ermias Legesse 2014)[17]. Despite the promise of devolution and decentralization, the ruling authorities were well aware that real power still remained at the center and in the Federal capital. While the composition of the politico-administrative elite was to reflect the diversity of the ruling ethnic parties, in actual fact it was the party of Meles which was most privileged. Ermias' book further elaborates on the ways in which a massive process of land grabbing in the capital transformed many a lowly activist in and supporter of Meles' party into a rich landlord and real estate businessman within a short time. A good section of the book is devoted to how the control of the administration of the capital, either directly or by proxy, was played out and how waves of urban land grabbing, through corrupt and illegal practices were undertaken periodically in the years

[17] The author was a key activist in the EPRDF, had regular contact with Meles and other senior officials; later, as Minister of State at the Government Communications Office, he served as chief spokesman for the government; he went into exile in 2012.

before, during and after the 2005 election. The author argues that Meles was not only aware of what was going on but was in many instances responsible for it.

Other factors responsible for the failure of ethnic federalism, and widely noted by others, include the centralization of decision-making, both at the state and party level and the absence of democratic practice (see Assefa 2006). In his writings, Meles frequently extols the virtues of revolutionary democracy which he stresses is essential not just for state and party building but also for economic development and poverty reduction (see Meles 2017). However, in practice, he paid scant attention to democratic norms: he was intolerant of opinions different from his own and had a highly autocratic style of governance. One of his admirers, Alex de Waal grudgingly admits that, in the end, power (in all its forms –political, administrative, military and economic) became more concentrated, especially in [Meles'] office" (2014: 170-71). Another issue which needs to be mentioned is the extent to which federalism's promise of ethnic harmony was realized. In his introduction to the book he edited, Turton claims that "ethnic federalism has insured internal peace and security for the great majority of the country's population …" (: 29). But the facts on the ground tell a different story. In fact, one can argue that there have been far too many ethnic conflicts across the country -many often violent and bloody- during this regime than in any of the two previous regimes. I have borrowed the Table 1 below from the wide ranging and perceptive book by Asnake Kefale (2013, p. 5; slightly modified).

In 2017 and early 2018, a bloody conflict between the Oromo and Somali communities along their border in the east of the country caused the loss of numerous lives and the displacement of over one million people. As these lines are being written, there is a major effort by international organizations and the government to provide humanitarian assistance to the displaced people (UN OCHA 2018). Ethnic conflicts have been fueled in part by long standing competition for scarce resources (competition which has been aggravated by federalism itself), because of newly defined ethnic borders, by competition for power and influence among local elites, and the preferential treatment by the state of one ethnic group against its neighbor.

Table 1. The variety of ethnic conflicts under Ethiopian federalism

Conflict type	**Parties/Actors to conflict**	**Disputed issues**	**Form of conflict**
Identity conflicts	Silte vs Gurage Dubbe vs Somali	Identity, territory	Non-violent Violent
Intra-federal boundary	Somali vs Afar Somali vs Oromia Oromia vs SNNPR BGNRS vs Oromia	Territory, boundary, identity	All conflicts violent
Intra-Regional conflicts	Inter clan conflict in Somali, inter- ethnic conflicts among multi-ethnic Regions (SNNPR, Gambella, BGNRS)	Territory, political representation, identity	All conflicts violent
Conflict type	Parties/Actors to conflict	Disputed issues	Form of conflict
Titular vs non-titular	Inter-ethnic conflicts between titular & non-titular Regions (Oromia, Gambella, BGNRS	Territory, political representation	Violent
Armed insurgency	ONLF vs EPRDF Govt OLF vs EPRDF Govt	Self-determination Terrorism	Violent Violent

Note. There have been more conflicts since the book was written.

The Developmental State

I now turn to the second pillar of the country's political economy, namely, the concept of the developmental state, a subject on which we lack clarity though Meles has written several papers on it. Meles rejects what he calls the "neo-liberal paradigm" of economic development, which, he claims, has failed because it has led to patronage, rent seeking and other socially harmful behavior. Neo-liberalism, which, he contends, excludes or restricts the state from playing an active role in the development process, relying heavily instead on the efficient workings of market forces, cannot tackle the immense problems facing developing countries, such as formidable market failures, institutional inadequacies and vicious poverty traps. These problems, he argues, can only be successfully addressed by what he calls "the development state paradigm" which provides a strong role for an "activist state" committed to the goals of development and accelerated economic growth (Meles 2011). For Meles, rent-seeking is rampart in

Ethiopia and affects all sectors of society. In an earlier work written for party activists, he declared that only the ruling party, the EPRDF, is free from rent-seeking while all others, not least opposition political groups, the private sector, civil society, and the civil service are tainted with the rentier disease (Meles 2007). The difficulty of taking such blanket accusations seriously is that nowhere are we provided valid criteria for determining what exactly rent-seeking behavior is. It is quite evident that the label was put on individuals and groups arbitrarily and on highly subjective grounds.

Looked at carefully, the difference between the "neo-liberal" and "developmental state" model is the extent of state involvement (or "state activism") in the economy.[18] The development strategy pursued by Meles while in office (which is still in place today) did not depart from the free market principles promoted by "neo-liberal" Western donor organizations, except in respect of the extent of state intervention in the economy. Indeed, Meles extolled the merits of the development state in theory but followed the logic of neo-liberalism in practice. In many of his writings, and during all his time in office, he argued strongly for a competitive, free market economy. He was in favor of opening up the agricultural sector to private and foreign investment (it was with his approval that the country allowed the massive land rush by foreign investors in 2008-2010), and put in place policies to attract foreign capital and promote an export-led but labor intensive industrial strategy (Meles 2017). The open door policy adopted by his government to attract investment in the agricultural and other sectors was much more "neo-liberal" than that recommended by many in the donor community (see Dessalegn 2011).

Meles' preference for the "activist state" is quite understandable, because what he sought to establish, and succeeded in doing so, was a state capitalist economy. The "developmental state" argument, in my reading, was a convenient justification for promoting *state capitalism* as the dominant economic system in the country. As it evolved under Meles and subsequently, the system enabled the state to achieve a commanding

[18] For critical views of the developmental state concept, see Meheret (2014), and Assefa (2014). Clapham (2018) talks about the success of the "Ethiopian developmental state" but under a tightly controlled political system.

presence in the economy, in particular in the productive, financial and commercial sectors, thereby reinforcing its unrivaled dominance in the political as well as the economic sphere. Meles had an ambivalent attitude towards the private sector: he was positive at times (Meles 2017) and hostile at others (ibid, undated). He distinguished between what he called "developmental" and "rent-seeking" entrepreneurs, and state capitalism was to energize the first and discourage the second. Moreover, in his undated manuscript, he argues strongly for the need for the accumulation of social capital, seeing it as essential for development and economic growth. By social capital he meant popular participation, democracy and civic engagement, and yet he was responsible for the draconian charities and societies law of 2009 which effectively emasculated civil society organizations in the country as well as the anti-terrorism law of the same year thanks to which scores of citizens were thrown in jail on trumped up charges and without due process.

At present, the Ethiopian government has an extensive range of assets and investment portfolios in the manufacturing and industrial sector; in banking and insurance; air, sea and rail transport; power and energy; engineering and construction; telecommunications; and tourism, hotels and resorts. It is also a major player in other ways; notably it controls access to foreign currency, a critical asset keenly sought by investors and businesses, but which is often in short supply. The country is highly import-dependent: fuel for transport, raw materials for industry, agricultural inputs, consumer goods, and essential items such as medicine are all imported and paid for in hard currency. Access to foreign currency is tightly regulated but there are informal channels that privilege businesses and individuals, among which were state run enterprises, businesses controlled by or associated with the ruling party coalition, in particular the TPLF. Such businesses also benefit from other privileges not accorded to the business community, such as tax benefits and greater access to institutional credit, thus enjoying a strong competitive edge over others. Preferential treatment has in fact become the defining characteristics of Ethiopian state capitalism, and the business community has on several occasions aired its concern and called for a level playing field (Eyob 2017).

State capitalism has also been accompanied by the proliferation of patronage networks. State run enterprises provide numerous posts which need to be filled out, and these posts are often offered to favored individuals and those with close ties to the ruling party. Similarly, state run enterprises offer lucrative contracts to businesses, such as contracts for construction works, supplies of goods and raw materials, and a host of services. Here too, businesses favored by the state have been more privileged than others. In both cases, the politico-administrative elite we discussed earlier has played an important role in making the patronage network work effectively. The main objective has been to create a well entrenched *economic elite* closely aligned or intertwined with the politico-administrative elite, giving the TPLF/EPRDF, the ruling party, an assailable dominance in the state.

I now return to our main subject of land deals and ask the question: what was the real objective of the government in promoting land deals? Several works have addressed this question in various ways. In the work noted earlier, Keeley et al. argue that land investment was part of the government's plan to develop agriculture and promote food security. Lavers (2012) similarly makes the point that the goal was to utilize foreign exchange from agricultural exports made possible by land investment to "achieve food security through trade and ultimately to finance technological imports to accelerate industrialization." But neither work provides strong evidence to support their arguments. None of the documents pertaining to the land deals program prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture from 2008 to 2010, which I have reviewed in an earlier work, refers to food security as an objective of land investments (Dessalegn 2011). The government was in fact confident that the agricultural improvement program it had launched (such as the extension package program, commercialization, access to credit, etc.) would enable smallholder farmers to improve their production significantly enough to achieved food security, and as a result, GTP I expected only a small number of poor peasants to be on the donor funded productive safety net program, launched in 2005, by the end of the plan period (see Dessalegn 2013).

In contrast, the works of Fouad (2012) and Fana (2016) examine the land deals program through a global and political perspective, giving special

attention to the country's historic center – periphery dynamic. Fouad makes the point that the transformation of the agrarian order in the north of the country is different from that in the lowland areas where much of the land investments have taken place. Here, there has been a process of enclosures giving rise to dispossession by displacement and de-peasantisation, part of a global trend that has emerged before and following the global commodity crisis. Fana adds a historical dimension, by comparing the dispossession taking place in Gambella, the focus of his study, with that of the imperial past, noting that the aim as in the past has been to control the lowlands and "reconstitute centuries-old centre-periphery relations by undertaking a process of accumulation by dispossession."

I wish to add a politico-economic dimension to the arguments posed by Fouad and Fana. As I have argued in an earlier work (Dessalegn 2014), the main aim of the land deals program was to gain foreign currency to serve the needs of state accumulation. Meles and his followers succeeded in establishing a state capitalist system in which ambitious industrial, agro-industrial and infrastructure projects were launched with the state as the sole investor or major partner with foreign capital or donor countries. One need only look through GTP I to grasp the grandiose nature of the projects envisaged to be undertaken in the five years of its implementation. Moreover, state capitalism needs to continually reproduce the politico-administrative and economic elites that serve it, hence the need for the state to expand its economic outreach. On the other hand, state capitalism, especially in poor countries like Ethiopia, is invariably wasteful and inefficient. This is in part because it is riddled with patronage -the very disease Meles believed would be stamped out by the developmental state. Wastefulness has been made worse by the absence of internal democracy in the decision-making process, lack of accountability on the part of decision-makers, and gross corruption. Thus overly ambitious projects are launched without sufficient debate and public consultation, and despite the lack of adequate resources, expertise, and skilled labor. We have alluded earlier to the massive waste of resources that the state owned Sugar Corporation is

said to be responsible for[19]. Here then are some of the reasons why there is always a pressing need for the state to seek ever more foreign earnings and capital.

To conclude, the main thrust of my discussion of ethnic federalism and the developmental state is to show how and in what manner both gave rise to the disproportionate imbalance of power, privilege and influence in society and within the ruling coalition. There were here and there questions being raised about this imbalance but it was the rural unrest and the destructive consequences that followed which finally brought matters to a head, causing a crisis of the state.

CONCLUSION

The rural unrest which had been going on intermittently for over two years came to an end immediately following the announcement of the appointment of the new Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed. There is no doubt that the change of government was forced on the ruling coalition by the widespread discontent. There were two important messages that came out of the disturbances: one was a deep dissatisfaction with the political-economic status quo which was condemned as undemocratic, unresponsive and riddled with corruption from top to bottom, while the second was resentment by peasants and landless rural youth, one of the most active participants in the unrest, at the inequities of land governance and anger directed at land investments, large and small. One needs reminding that peasant farmers in many parts of the world are opposed to land deals and some have voiced their discontent in various public forums (White et al. 2012). Their opposition is based on legitimate grounds: if smallholder agriculture was revitalized by channeling the same level of financial and other support now extended to farm land investors it would have shown far better results than the latter in terms of food production and caring for the land and the

[19] See Addis Fortune 20 July 2017 for the wastefulness of another state run mega project, MetEC

environment. Moreover, there is significant evidence showing that family farms create more employment than large-scale agriculture (Lipton 2009).

It is too early to predict where the new government is heading and what the future holds for the country, nevertheless we may well consider the appointment of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed as marking a turning point in Ethiopia's political trajectory. In speeches he has delivered in several parts of the country, the new Prime Minister has emphasized the primacy of unity of all Ethiopians, of devotion to country and commitment to democratic values. This is a reversal of the ethnic politics pursued by Meles and the government he has inspired where citizens' first responsibility was devotion to their ethnic roots, and where ethnicity colored all aspects of public decisions. What is being strongly suggested now is the need for a shift from the politics of difference to the politics of inclusiveness under a pan-Ethiopian umbrella. This raises many questions that require careful reflection and deliberation, of which the following is of major concern: does the new political orientation that is now emerging put into question the relevance of ethnic federalism, and will national unity and democracy be placed at the center of the new political system that may be planned by the new government?

In view of the fundamental issues raised by the rural unrest we have discussed above, one should pose the question whether large-scale farm investments are at all necessary for agricultural development. It is often argued that farmland investments in Africa and elsewhere have failed to live up to expectations due in large part to poor regulatory oversight and weak contract management in the host countries. There is, it is said, no clear and consistent policy framework, on the one hand, while on the other, host countries are plagued with corruption, lack of capacity as well as shortage of trained personnel. These shortcomings do undoubtedly contribute to low performance, however, the criticism of land deals must go beyond the question of investment governance and raise more fundamental questions, such as those posed by De Schutter (2011), who argues that LSLI have much less impact in promoting growth and reducing poverty as opposed to a modernized small farm sector. For us in this country, the most important question to ask is this: is it really worthwhile for developing countries such

as Ethiopia to invest heavily in promoting farm land investments? Is there, in fact, hard evidence that such investments contribute significantly to inclusive and pro-poor economic development? Is it not wiser, instead, to commit much greater resources and energy to revitalize smallholder agriculture? The experiences of east Asian countries, where agricultural transformation has been achieved largely on the backs of family farms and without the need for large-scale land investments provide grounds for serious reflection.

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INDEX

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

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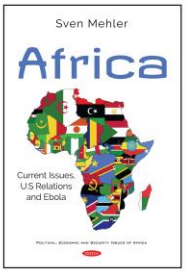

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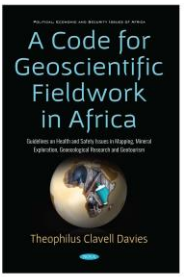

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