HOUSEHOLD LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES IN SOUTHERN WOLLO: THE CASE OF DENKA KA, AMBASSEL *WOREDA*

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ACRONYM

ACSI- Amahara Credit and Saving Institution

AEPA- All Ethiopian Peasant Association

AMC- Agricultural Marketing Corporation

ANDM- Amahara National Democratic Movement

EECMY- Ethiopian Evangelical Church- Mekane Yesus

EPRDF- Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

FAO- Food and Agricultural Organization

KA- Kebele Association

ORDA- Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amahara

PA- Peasant Association

REWA- Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association

REYA- Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association

TPLF- Tigrian People's Liberation Front

UNEP- United Nations Environmental Program

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Daniel Tesfaye

ABSTRACT

This study is a result of three months of field work in the Denka Kebele Association (KA) in Amhara Regional state in Northern Ethiopia. Research was conducted among households who cultivate plots of land and keep livestock in a rugged ecosystem.

An analysis of data from households interviewed indicated that the traditional agriculture has remained the main economic activity and the majority of farmer-producers practices it. The traditional farming system is based on small plots of land, family labor, small-scale production and limited capital input. The livelihood and food security of households is influenced primarily by farm and grazing land availability. Land has the most important influence on the livelihood strategies employed by households, type of crop harvested, and the type and number of livestock possessed or kept by households. The size of household land holding in the research area has been decreased considerably over the past decades. This process has been accompanied by population increase. Population increase coupled with land redistributions contributed to the land diminution at the household level. The recent land redistribution, which was carried out in 1991 particularly, had a serious impact on the diminution of land size as it included town dwellers that were not previously farmers. The diminution of land size in turn has an impact on share cropping arrangements and inter-community relationships. Sharecropping arrangements are shifting in favor of landowning households because newly established households, returnees from resettlement and land short households need land though the carrying capacity of the land is limited. Furthermore, a patron-client relationship is developing between landowning and landless households. On the other hand, newly established households are becoming dependent on their parents (often fathers) in order to have land to construct their houses. These households do not have direct access to services provided by the local government such as credit. They depend on their fathers to access such services. Consequently, a "new domain" that stands between the already contrasting "domestic" and "public domains" is in the formation. Furthermore, fathers become the most influential counterparts in bargaining and decision making in the household.

Scarcity of land has an impact on livestock ownership. The decrease in the size of grazing land has an impact on the number and type of livestock households own. As land becomes scarce, the number of livestock households has decreased and the kind of animals shifted to animals that need less grazing area while they can bring about more income. Analysis of data further shows that shortage of grazing land and the subsequent limit in the number and type of livestock make ownership of livestock less important in differentiating households.

Labor cannot be identified in isolation from other household resources. The mere availability of family labor in the rural parts of the country can hardly make a household viable given the lack of employment and/or low wage which often hardly enable to sustain the household for a larger period of time in the year.

Looking into coping strategies of households, those households that shifted from crop production to marketable cash crops and products such as *chat*, coffee, eucalyptus trees, sesame, fruit trees, etc.; those households that diversify to raising animals which need less grazing area and that can bring in more money and those households that involve in the market can cope with crises more successfully. Such households are engaged in risk minimization prior to the crises period. Whenever there is crisis, households can modulate to risk absorption, which includes dependence on cash credit or food aid in the food-for-work program. The last way out to households that do not have assets at their disposal is reliance on sale of animals, famine foods and reduction of consumption, which are referred as risk taking to survive.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Households are constituted as a means of meeting the basic material and non-material needs of their members. In an endeavor to fulfill these needs, they are affected by the availability of household resources, internal organization, their different forms, the availability or lack of assets and their ability to cope with change and natural and man made calamities.

Land, livestock and labor play a pivotal role in the social, economic and political life of peasant households. Intra-household and inter-household relations can be determined by the availability or lack of these basic resources. Households can be economically stratified by taking one or the other resources as wealth indicators. The issue of food security can be explained by taking one or all of these resources. The relationship of the public domain and the domestic domain can be clarified in relation to these resources.

Some researchers consider land as a major resource that can affect households' crop mix, production combination, productivity and wealth and social relation (Durham 1979, Barlett 1980a, Barlett 1977, Acherson 1980, Yared 1999, Yigeremew 1999, Teferi 1995). Other researchers, on the other hand, believe that, as long as there is administrative based land redistribution, economical stratification based on land is hardly possible. To this effect some researchers claimed that the 1975 Land Reform in Ethiopia brings about neither success to households or access to other factors of production (Abebe 1997, Teferi 1998).

Several researchers studied the marginal utility of labor in different activities. Alexander Chayanov, predicted that the intensity of labor would be determined by the ratios between consumer and workers at the household level. Whenever the ratio is low, there would be lower

supply of labor that corresponds to lower household enterprise. Some other researchers relate the role of labor with household head's managerial skill and entrepreneurship (Barlett 1980a, Donham 1994, Teferi, 1998).

Livestock is taken as another resource that has a vital impact on households' viability. Most researchers take oxen as an important part of livestock. Some even argued that landlords short of oxen become tenants of landless but oxen rich peasants in Tigray. Others relate ownership of pair of oxen with independence, self-reliance, economic status and the rate of household income. Livestock ownership is also related to social and economic relationship between households (Baur 1975, 1977, Yared 1999, Mesfin, 1991, Abebe 1997).

With regards to household resources, women have marginal access especially to land and labor. Lack of access to both is occasionally related to lack of livestock. The role of women both in the domestic and public domain is not also recognized (Teferi 1995, Desalegn 1991, 1991a, Moore 1988, Sanday 1973, Pankhrust 1990).

Macro-level political, economic and social changes affect households in general and the role of resources within household in particular. They can alter the pattern of relationship within the household, its relationship with the rest of society and the public domain. The most important macro-level change in the study area is land reform. Land reform in the narrowest sense can be defined as land redistribution (Dessalegn, 1985). Land redistribution in an agrarian society implies redistribution of wealth, of income, of status and political power (Ibid). Land redistribution also affects existing inter-household relationships and resource flow. It also affects the relationship of households with the state.

Climatic change, natural calamities and population increase also have a tremendous impact on the livelihood of households. They have an impact on the availability of resources to individual households. Besides, they alter relations within and between households in terms of access to and control over household resources. In most of the populous countries including Ethiopia, where population increase threatens food security, a fixed area of arable land is divided among more people. In such cases land is eventually shrinking to a point where people can no longer depend on it to feed themselves (Brown 2000). The shrinking of the land size per household can result in land degradation, deforestation, and increased rural poverty. Deforestation in turn, results in climatic change and natural calamities, which include erratic rainfall, famine and soil erosion.

Food security at the household level is a crucial issue in the study area. Food security can be defined as the ability of household members to assure themselves sustained access to sufficient quantity and quality of food to live an active, healthy life (UN 1990). In such an effort, households try to ascertain the availability of food by engaging themselves in production using the different household resources. All households might not be able to successfully meet this target. In such cases, they might revert to the market or other mechanisms of access to food. Access to food through the market needs cash. Cash is available through the mechanism of asset creation that increases the probability of obtaining assets that can be exchanged for money. These assets include livestock, exchangeable crops or if the worse comes, exchangeable household utensils and farm implements. Other mechanisms of access to food can be food aid. Households also revert to cash credit in order to maximize their asset creation.

Research has clearly shown that households' coping strategies have been a major factor of adjustment in the face of scarcity of resources, macro-level political, economic and social changes, climatic changes, natural calamities and population increase. Most households depend on locally devised coping strategies.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Peasants work hard in order to keep their families even at the subsistence level (Scott: 1976, 14). In order to achieve this task, they use different resources such as land, labor, oxen, social network, etc. One resource is emphasized over the other by different researchers. Some argue that land is the most important resource (Yared, 1999, Mesfin, 1991, Yigremew, 1999, Shanin, 1990). Others like Bauer (1975 and 1977) argue that oxen are the most priceless resource. Others considered labor as the most important resource (Teferi, 1998). Donham (1994), on the other hand, consider social network as the most important resource for the Maale people of Southern Ethiopia.

However, resources alone cannot result in the successful maintenance of households. Different livelihood strategies, which are used by different household vary.

Thus, this proposed research attempts to describe relationship between household resources and viability and the different livelihood strategies which are used to maintain the viability of the household in relation with resources, demographic, natural, social, ecological, political and economic pressures and the economic inequalities of households. Viability is here defined as the ability of households to feed their members using different livelihood strategies and resources in times of scarcity and plenty.

Looking at peasants of the area as a whole, some socio-economic and ecological factors seem to maintain equivalence among peasants. Some of these factors include, the seemingly 'equal' size of land distributed in the 1975 land reform, the consideration of quality in distribution of land that seem to level the agro-ecological difference, the recurrent drought/famine which affect all the households and the continuous deterioration of the agro-ecology (cf. Dewalt and Dewalt, 1980). In actuality, however, these factors do not bring about economic homogeneity. Instead, there is a significant economic difference among households. Thus, households have to be categorized according to their economic standard as rich, medium, and poor as per the standards set by the peasants themselves. The categorization is important, as households, which have different economic standard, do not implement the same livelihood strategies in responding to various natural, demographic, political and economic pressures over time. Instead, they will make-decisions in choosing one livelihood strategy over the other to fulfill their aim of maintaining their household.

Precisely, the research will examine the livelihood strategies of farming households in a two-part research strategy. First, an attempt will be made to understand the varied strategies and decisions household managers make to maintain the viability of their household units depending on available production factors (mainly land, labor, oxen and seeds), market forces and changing weather and policy circumstances. Second, the coping strategies of households will be analyzed in relation to assets the households possess or attempt to possess.

In examining the relationships between changing ecological and political economic (including government policy, demographic, technological and market opportunities) changes on the one hand, and household livelihood strategies on the other, the study will take account of

differences among farmers based on social status, wealth ranking, and gender participation in community affairs. Understanding this heterogeneity will be important because different household managers are likely to respond differently to changing constraints and opportunities.

In dealing with the gender relation in the study area the research will look into the bargaining position of the women in relation to their contribution to the income of the household. The impact of change in rural institutions and political economy on women will also be discussed.

In order to look into the response of different categories of households to different pressures along a specific period of time, the study will cover the periods 1983-2000. The period is chosen, as there were climatic calamities, government change; change in land policy and periodic land redistributions that occurred within this period. The peasants themselves will be asked to divide the period into relevant benchmarks such as times of land redistribution, critical policy changes, memorable climatic calamities, etc. Then, the research will deal with the responses of different categories of households to the constraints and/or opportunities associated with each of these circumstances. In doing so, attempt will be made to differentiate between the common patterns of livelihood strategies that different households followed in their day-to-day and season-to-season activities in relation to the livelihood strategies they used in response to ecological and political-economic shifts.

Households are defined in a controversial manner. A consensus is hardly reached in their definition. In order to avoid the semantic hair splitting of households, the peasants' definition of the term will be made in the foregoing research.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

- To describe the strategies of access to the crucial household resources and livelihood strategies of households in maintaining their household.

1.3.2. Specific Objective

- To look into the most significant economic resources of peasants that is the basis of inequality, status and power and to investigate the strategies of access to resources.

- To describe livelihood strategies in relation to different constraints and household economic differences.

- To look into the impact of external factors to the peasants such as government organizations and non-governmental organizations on peasant livelihood strategies and access to resources

- To investigate the role of women (as heterogeneous) in maintaining the household viability

1.4. Methodology

The field research on which this research report is based was undertaken in Denka Kebele Association (KA), Ambassel *Woreda*, Southern Wollo Zone. The fieldwork took a total of 12 weeks, which were undertaken in three rounds. The first round stretched from August 1 till August 31, 2001. The activities included in this period of fieldwork included gaining entry to the study, rapport establishment and actual data collection. The second round fieldwork was undertaken from October 1 till October 30. In this period of fieldwork, more data was collected.

The last round of fieldwork was undertaken from December 1 to December 31, 2001. In this period besides collection of qualitative data survey was undertaken.

The research site was selected for various reasons. Firstly, the land redistribution in the KA was carried out in two different governments i.e. the Derg and EPRDF and in different periods of time i.e. 1976, 1983 and 1991. As the periods are different, it was possible to observe the impact of demography and change of governments. Secondly, the area is accessible. It is just two to three hours walk from the nearby town, which is Wuchale the *Woreda* capital. Furthermore, as the area is closer to two well-known markets, i.e. Wuchale and Gerana, it was possible to observe the impact of markets on coping strategies.

In order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the livelihood strategies of households in the research site, Denka KA, a combination of different qualitative and quantitative methods are employed.

1.4.1. Secondary data: The research used of available secondary data to construct the changes in demography of farming households, the soil type and the weather circumstances. The research used documents of the Danka Kebele Administration (KA) and the *Woreda* Agricultural Department including Agricultural Development Station.

1.4.2. Participant observation: Participant observation method was utilized in order to obtain information on the day-to-day activities of the peasant households, labor organization, household organization and intra-household relationship. The method was also employed to observe market behaviors of individual members of households. The method was also used

to observe KA meetings, which included political meetings to obtain credit and to decide on households that are eligible to credit and educational programs by development agents.

1.4.3. In-depth interviews: in-depth personal interviews were held with different categories of households including newly established households, older heads of households, richer household heads, wives and female heads of households**.** Interview was also held with KA political leaders, knowledgeable elders and experts at the *Woreda* Agricultural Department. Information on livelihood strategies, means of access to resources, ecological change, labor organization, benchmarks within the study period, history and other aspect of the people were collected using this method.

1.4.4. Case study: case studies of nine household heads had been done in order to reconstruct household histories, coping strategies, decision-making process, livelihood strategies, means of access to resources, relationship with other households, relationship within the household, relationship with KA officials, involvement in non-agricultural activities on an individual basis, cash crop production and livestock diversification. The case studies were collected through open and formal discussion and informal discussion. The case studies include individuals from different economic background, social status and developmental cycle (newly established households, expanding and declining households). The full case studies are attached in annex I. Unless it is stated, real names of informants is used (with their consent).

1.4.5. Survey: survey study was conducted to supplement data gathered through qualitative method. The survey included 134 sample households. Simple random sampling method (using simple random table) was used to select sample households. The questionnaire included such topics as sex, age, martial status, land use practices, crop production, livestock

raring, household food consumption, food security and drought and off-farming activities and labor access mechanisms (Questionnaire is attached in annex II).

The taxpayers' list was used to select households. The list was preferred as it is the latest and relatively complete. However, it has some limitations, as it does not include some of the newly established households who do not pay tax, as they do not have land in their name. In-depth interview was used to overcome such limitations.

Four enumerators (a female and 3 male) were employed to administer the questionnaire. They were given a one-day full-fledged explanation on how to administer survey questionnaire. All of the enumerators are residents of the KA. Three of them have completed grade 12 while one of them has interrupted at grade 11. The latter has his own family and he is a member of the KA. The survey was conducted from December, 10- December 21, 2001.

CHAPTER 2

Back ground to the study area and Social organization

2.1. Location, Topography and Climate

Ambassel *Woreda* is located in Southern Wollo Zone, Amahara Regional State. Ambassel is bounded in the West by Tenta woreda and Northern Wollo, Tewledere *woreda* and Northern Wollo in the East, Northern Wollo in the North and Tewledere and Kutaber *woredas* in the South. Its rugged topography and high mountains characterize Ambassel. Accordingly, out of the total area of Ambassel, mountains constitute 44 per cent, uneven landscape constitutes 36 per cent; 12 per cent is Valley and 7.5 per cent is level plain (Ambassel *Woreda* Department of Agriculture, 2000/01).

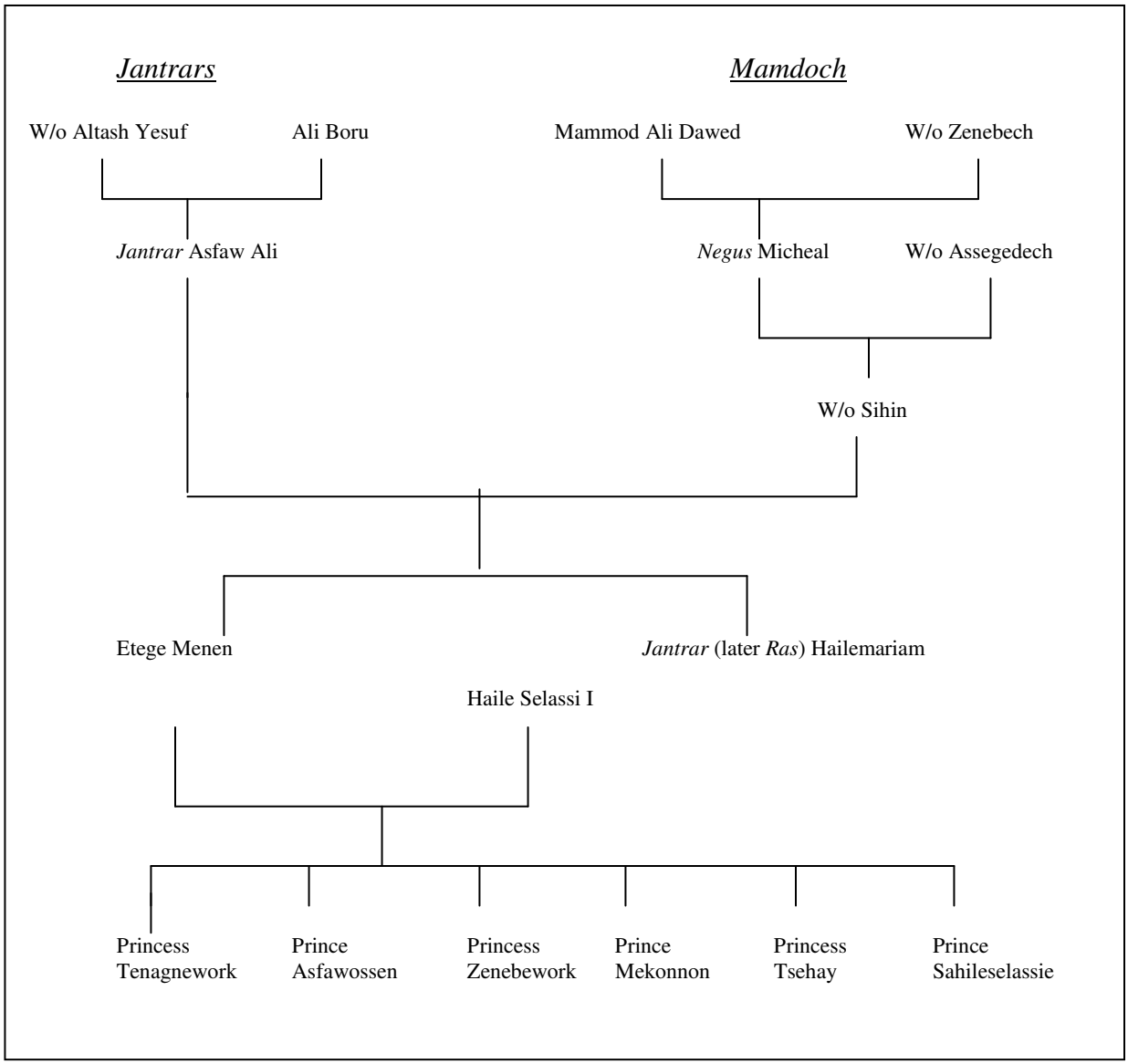
Ambassel has four ecological zones; alpine *(wurch*), highland *(dega*), medium altitude (*Woynadaga)* and lowland (*Kolla)* that constitute 0.47 per cent, 29.53 per cent, 49.64 per cent, and 20.36 per cent respectively (Ibid.) People do not settle in the *Wurch* zone. *Woynadega* and *Dega* area are densely populated while *Kolla* is relatively sparsely populated. Barley, Teff and Sorghum are the major crops cultivated in the three ecological zones less *Wurch*.

The average annual rainfall is 1000-mm. The most important rainy months are July and August. September and October are also important for the growth of crops planted in April. The short rainy season (*belg)* rains are almost absent in most of the area. Data collected by the Ambassel Department of Agriculture in the past three years (1998/99- 2000/01) indicated that the average amount rainfall in *belg* season was 124-mm which is well below the average rainfall. Variations in rainfall are important in the *Woreda,* as most of the peasants of the area depend more on the availability of good quantity of rain and availability of seed than soil type,.

2.2. A short history of Ambassel

Ambassel had long history in the political history of Wollo. The ruling families of Ambassel are called the *Jantrars.* Informants claimed that the *Jantrars* stood on the left side of the Ethiopian kings. However, Ambassel's place in the history of Ethiopia escalated with the advent of *Negus* Micheal to power. *Negus* Micheal started to consolidate his power starting from the 1890s. He became strong in Wollo at the beginning of the 20th century. His strength was due to his strong army and the support he got from Emperor Minilek II. Compared with *Negus* Micheal the local rulers of Wollo were weak. However, he did not show any contempt towards them. Instead, he tried to consolidate his power by creating marriage alliances (Asnake, 1983). In doing so, he married off one of his daughters, Sihin, to *Jantrar* Asfaw Ali of Ambassel who give birth to Menen who later became the wife of Haile Selassie I. Ambassel became prominent after the former married the later. The genealogy of the *mamdoch (negus* Micheal's family) and the *Jantrars* show how the two families established relationship and how the *Jantraras* became influential in the history of Wollo and Ethiopia.

Chart. 1 Genalogy of the *Jantrars* and the *mamadoch*



Source: interview in the field, 2001

The name Ambassel stands for a *Woreda* and later on for an *Awraja.*The capital of Ambassel *Woreda* had been changing from Marye Selassie to Golbo and finally to the present day capital, Wuchale. Marye Selassie had been the capital of Ambassel before the coming of the Italians to Ethiopia. After the Italians conquered Ethiopia the capital of Abmassel was changed from Marye Selassie to Golbo, as the later was closer to the Addis-Mekele road. Finally when Haile

Selassie I was restored to power, Wuchale became the capital of Ambassel *Woreda*. When *Awraja* was introduced, Ambassel *woreda*, Tewledere *woreda* and Worebabo *woreda* merged to form Ambassel *Awraja* and Haik became the capital of the *Awraja.* The *Awraja* was named Ambassel as the later was the birthplace of *Etege* Menen. Derg had kept the *Awraja* system until the introduction of the Zone administration in 1980s. After Zone administration was introduced Ambassel *awraja* was sub-divided into its constitute *Woredas* i.e. Ambassel *Woreda*, Tewledere *Woreda* and Worebabo *Woreda.* Currently, Ambassel continued with its *Woreda* status.

The *Woreda* had various *Chika* territories before the 1974 Revolution. After the Revolution the *Woreda* had been divided into 34 peasant associations. This number was reduced into 23 kebele associations when EPRDF took power in 1991 (see map 2).

2.3. The research site: Denka (01) Kebele Association

Denka is located in Ambassel *Woreda*. It is 460 Kilometers North of Addis Ababa along the main Addis-Mekele road. It is 2-3 hours walk from Wuchale. Denka is bounded by Abet (02) KA in the Northwest, Begeda (012) in the Southwest, North Wollo in the North and East and Tewledere *woreda* in the South.

Denka is a combination of two previously separate Peasant Associations (PAs), Denka (02) and Limo (01). The merging of the two PAs was carried out for two reasons. Firstly, peasant associations whose population size is less than 5000 are combined for administrative convenience. Secondly, as payment of allowance for kebele association chairpersons was executed (120 *Birr*/person), it was necessary to reduce the number of kebele associations from

34 to 23 in order to reduce cost. Contemporary Denka Kebele Association is organized into three sub-kebeles called 01, 02 and 03. Sub-kebele 01 has 13 *gots* and 583 households, sub-kebele 02 constitutes 9 *gots* and 383 households and sub-kebele 03 has 12 *gots* and 492 households. Most of the people who live in the KA are Muslims while there are some Orthodox Christians who predominantly reside in Wuchale town.

With regard to social services, the KA has two first cycle schools (grades 1-4) in sub-kebele 01 and 03, two community taps both found in sub-kebele 01 and two privately owned grinding mills both located in sub-kebele 01. As sub-kebele 02 and 03 are located closer to the town of Wuchale, these have no grinding mills or community water supply facility. They use the services found in the town. There are two rivers in the KA, Inchene and Mille. The former divides the KA into two while the later semi-circles sub-kebele 01. Except in some parts of the KA, both rivers are not used for irrigation, for they are dry for most of the year.

Before the coming to power of EPRDF, the KA had one peasant cooperative that had 50 members and one service cooperative, which owned a grinding mill and a cooperative shop. The service cooperative is still functional.

2.4. The Kebele (PA) Structure

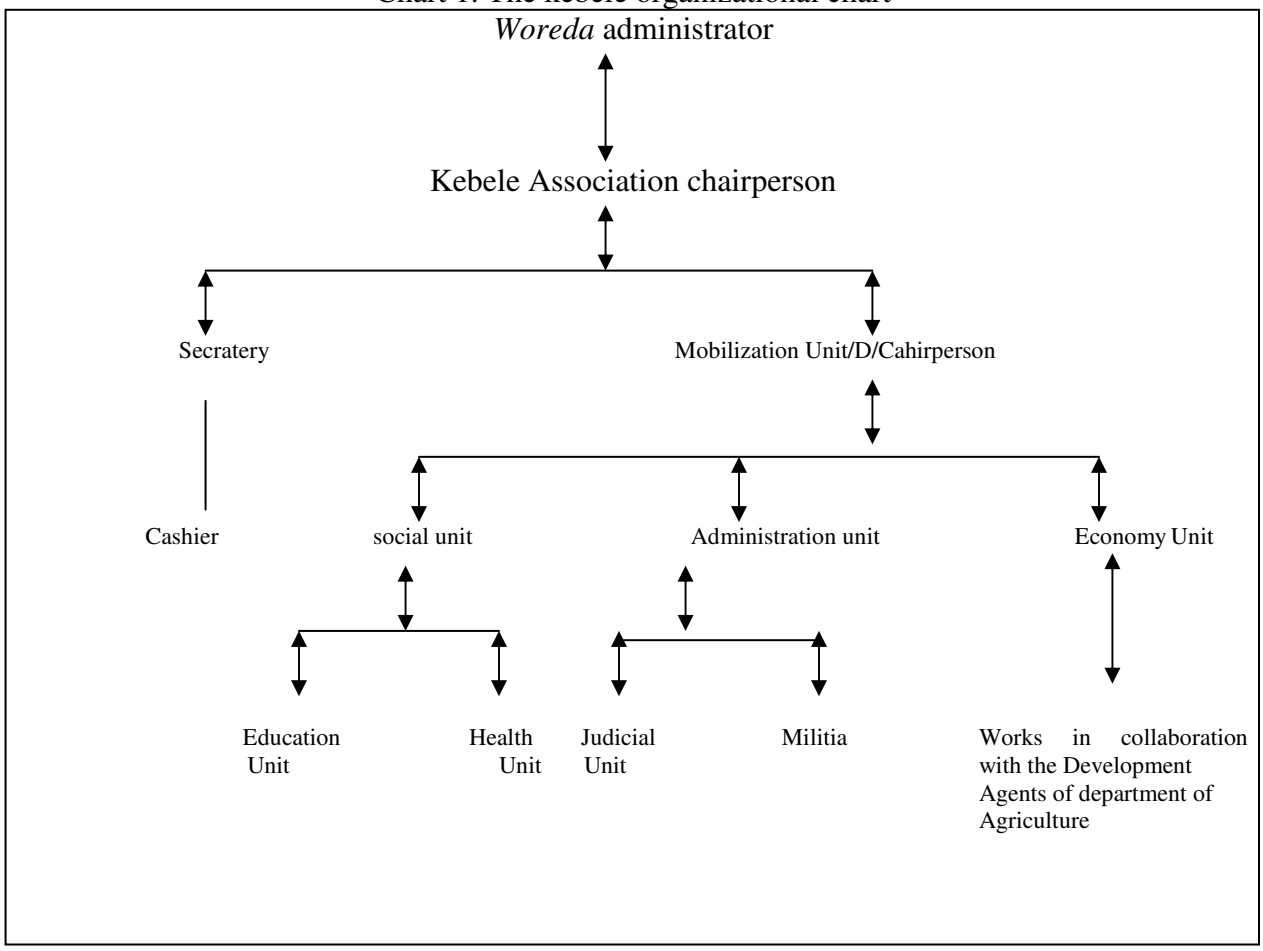
Denka Kebele Association has different *gots*, which has its own boundary and its own name. Before the establishment of peasant associations in 1975, each *got* had a *chika shum*. The *got* was the lowest local structure and the *chika shum* was the lowest executive body. It had the jurisdiction on the local land administration, judiciary activities and tax collection. It has authority both over the *gabars* and the *nech lebash.* It also served as representative of absentee

nech lebashes. The office of the *chika shum* is hereditary. Although most of the *chika shums* are males, the office is not sex bound. All the *chka shum* are accountable for the *mislane* of the Ambassel *Woreda*. The mislane is just like present day *Woreda* administrator. All taxes that are collected by the *chika shum* are passed on to the *mislane.* The offices of the *chika shum* and the *mislane* existed until the 1974 Revolution. They were functional even during the five years Italian occupation. The 1974 Revolution abolished all this local level structures and replaced them with the peasant association.

Peasant Associations were established to provide the peasantry an organization that enables them to, "… involve in activities of common concern and benefit" (Dessalegn: 1985, 14). The task of peasant associations can be divided into land distribution, tasks related to rural development and tasks involving law and order, arbitration and local administration (Ibid.) The PA (KA presently) is also used as a channel through which government policies are executed and feedbacks are collected.

Denka kebele association has the following hierarchical power structure which is shown in the following chart 1:

Chart 1. The kebele organizational chart



Source: Field survey, 2001

The KA Chair person, secretary and mobilization unit works as executive bodies at the kebele level. The social unit, administration unit and the economy unit work at the sub-kebele level within the KA. In sub-kebele 01, the social unit, education unit and health unit are working. The coordinator of education unit at the KA level is the mobilization unit coordinator in sub-kebele 01; the social unit coordinator at the KA level is the economic unit coordinator at the same sub-kebele. Pankhrust (1990,147) and Dessalegn (1991a) noted that the role of women in the public domain is limited, since membership in rural institutions is through the household, which is represented by the household head. Thus, unless women are registered as head of their own household, they are excluded from rural institutions. Even if they are registered, men

dominate leadership in rural institutions. In the research site the role of women in rural institutions is limited even when they are represented in the leadership. Since the health unit coordinator at the KA level is a woman, the male dominated kebele association felt that she could not carry out her responsibilities effectively. Thus, another male member of Amahara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) is elected and appointed as health and education unit coordinator at the sub-kebele level. All the coordinators for sub-kebele 01 are elected from the same sub kebele.

In sub-kebele 02, the coordinators of the Kebele economic unit, administrative unit and the cashier[1] work as coordinators of mobilization unit, health and education unit and economic unit at the sub-kebele level respectively. As the cashier at the KA level is busy collecting taxes and other contributions (including gazette payments and sport contributions), an assistant economic unit coordinator is assigned to him in order to facilitate his work at the sub-kebele level. The people elected the assistant and he is a member of ANDM.

The people elect the coordinators of the mobilization, economic and health and education units of sub-kebele 03. All the three of them have no position at the KA level. However, they are all members of ANDM.

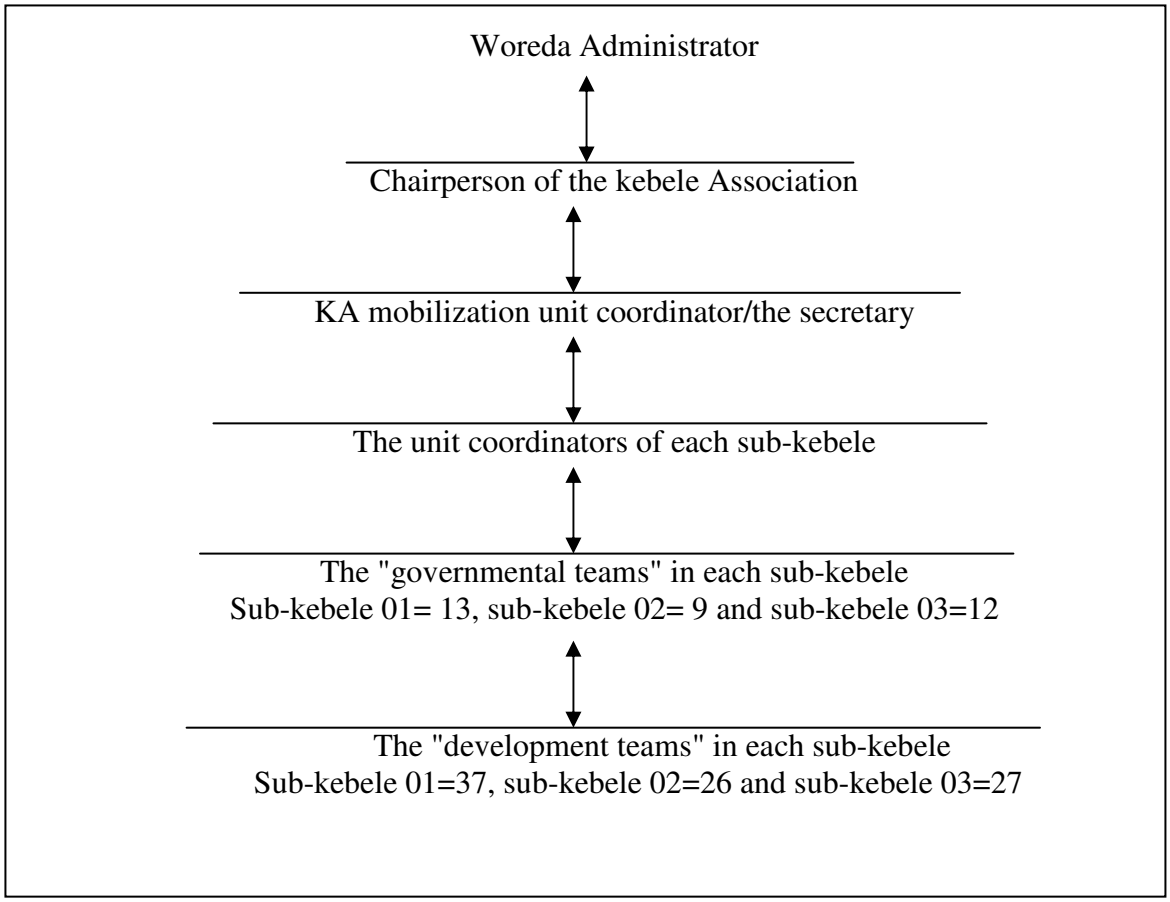
The other bodies in the KA hierarchy ladder are called governmental team *(mengistawi buden*). These are accountable to administration of each sub-kebele. These "governmental teams " have their own mobilization, education and health and economy units like the sub-kebeles. A

[1] The people elected the cashier not as a cashier but as part the administration. Later on the administration will appoint him as a cashier. Therefore he would not loss his decision-making power.

"governmental team" can comprise from 35-50 people. Accordingly, there is one "governmental team" for each *got* in each of the sub-kebeles. Each "governmental team" has three members working as economy, education and health and mobilization unit coordinators. Again, these people are members of ANDM.

The development team (*limat buden*) that is accountable for the "government teams" are the other bodies in the hierarchy. The purpose of its establishment is coordinating development work performed by the people. A "development team" comprises of 10-12 residents. Accordingly, there are 37, 26 and 27 "development teams" in sub-kebeles 01, 02 and 03 respectively. However, the number of residents comprised by the "development teams" can be greater or lesser than the ideal number. For instance, the 37 "developmental teams" in sub-kebele 01 consist of 604 residents. Each "development team" has two coordinators. The hierarchical chart of the different bodies within the KA is shown in chart 2:

Chart 2. Hierarchical chart of the different functionaries in the KA



Source: Field Survey, 2001

AS Dessalegn (1985, 39) inferred, "The kebele peasant association is the basic organization unit of the rural community, the grass roots organization which is charged with administrating the land in its area, and responsible for the basic needs of the peasant community."

2.5. Soil

The land in Denka kebele Association (KA) is classified as *sib* and *anjo* based on the soil content of the land. *Sib* land is a land that has more soil and less stone and it is very fertile. On the contrary, *Anjo* is a land that is less productive and has more stone than soil. According to the study done by the *woreda* Agricultural Office, the arable land of Denka KA has a soil depth

that varies from very deep to moderately deep. Accordingly, 17.47 per cent of the arable land of the research site is very deep (>150-cm), 15.33 per cent of the land is deep (100-150-cm), and 2.49 percent of the land is moderately deep (50-100-cm). The same study shows that the stoniness of the arable land ranges from 5 per cent to 50 per cent, which implies that the land ranges from no stoniness to high stoniness. The percentage of stoniness shows that 32.8 per cent of the arable land varies from no-stoniness to moderately stoniness whereas 2.49 per cent of the land belongs to high stoniness (complied from a study done by the *Woreda* Department of Agriculture Office, 2000/01).

The rate of erosion of the arable land in the area ranges from small or medium erosion rate (32.8 per cent) to high erosion rate (2.49 per cent) (Ibid.). Even though the erosion rate seems low, unprecedented heavy rain and landslide resulted in a high loss of soil. Moreover, as land becomes continuously scarce, peasants began to cultivate steep slopes that resulted in the increase of erosion even in the previously low erosion areas. This is due to the increasing felling of trees and bushes, which covered 32.43 per cent of the very steep topography of Denka. Part of the very steep mountains of Denka was used for grazing land while the other half of the steep area is enclosed as forestland. Due to land scarcity, the mountainsides are over grazed, and this increased erosion. Peasants are aware of the intensity of erosion. They, thus, try to protect the soil from erosion by building rock terraces, which becomes the object of labor investment and food-for-work programs run by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and Organization for Rehabilitation and Development for Amahara (ORDA). In planting crops the peasants of the area do not consider soil type as a factor for crop distribution. Instead, they take the availability of rain and seeds as the major reason for planting crops.

2.6. Crops and Agricultural calendar

The two major crops in Denka are Teff and Sorghum. Other less important crops are Chick - pea, Vetch and Maize. Teff and Sorghum crops have different variety. There are three varieties of Teff crop: *Enat* Teff , *Berke* Teff and *Shebele* Teff. Besides, there are three types of improved Teff seed varieties called Cross 37, Cross 354 and DZ 01-196. These were introduced by Department of Agriculture in the *Woreda*. Both *Enat* Teff and *Shebele* Teff are productive but less resistant to drought. Moreover, compared to the *Berke* Teff , both give yields after relatively longer period of time. They are planted in July and harvested in November and December. On the other hand, *Berke Teff* is less productive but resistant to drought. It also gives yield in a short period of time. It is planted in July and harvested in September. Thus, *Berke Teff* is often planted by households, which face shortage of food. The improved seeds, i.e. Cross 37 and Cross 354 are as productive as the *Enat Teff* and *Shebele Teff* and gives yields in a short period of time just like *Berke Teff*. DZ 01-196 is more productive than Cross 37 and Cross 354 but it takes longer period of time to give yields.

Improved seeds are distributed to farmers by the *Woreda* Agricultural Department when the former requested for assistance of seed during temporary crop failures that resulted in shortage of seed. Individual farmers who requested to plant improved seed can also get it from the *Woreda* Agricultural Department. These farmers would in turn disseminate the improved seed amongst farmers (personal communication with an expert at the *Woreda* Department of Agriculture 2000/01). As *Teff* is expensive, farmer/producers exchanged it for money instead of consuming it.

Sorghum has two varieties *Gadalit* and *Humera. Gedalit* gives more yields per head. It is planted in late April and early May. It is used to make porridge, *injera*, roasted cereal (*kollo)* and for brewing local beer (*tella*). The peasants equate its use with *Teff*. It has a long and strong stalk that can be used as a building material and as fodder to feed livestock. However, it is not drought resistant and it is easily attacked by stalk worm. As there is a continuous dwindling of rainfall or rain comes late in May, peasants stopped harvesting *Gadalit* and shifted to another variety called *Humera*. *Humera* is planted from late June to July. This period is a time when peasants are quite certain about the availability of adequate rainfall. *Humera* is also drought resistance and gives yield in shorter period of time. When it is planted in June-July, this crop is rarely attack by pests. However, *Humera* is not very productive. Since its stalk is short and soft, it is less used as building material. It is often used to feed livestock. Sorghum is the major food crop of the peasants.

Whenever there is a crop failure in the major rainy season *(Mahar*) due to shortage of rain, excessive rain or landslide, peasants plant chickpea or vetch as an alternative. These crops are chosen as they can be planted from late August to the middle of November and as they are drought resistant. They need rain only during their flowering time after which time they need less rain till their harvesting time. Other crops, which are sown by peasants, include Maize, which is often sown on an alluvial soil left by the major river of the area, Mille. Sesame and Haricot beans are nowadays intercropped with sorghum. Another major plant in the area is eucalyptus tree that peasants prefer because it can be harvested faster than other trees. It is used for house construction and as a source of cash. Some peasants whose land is located along a river called Inchene plant orange, banana and coffee. However, their number constitutes a minority.

The agricultural activities include plowing, sowing, weeding, harvesting and threshing. Plowing or *gemesha* begins in February and continues up to April. During this period, secondary growths and left over of the last harvest will be exposed to the sun using the ploughshare. In early May all unwanted straw, stalk, weeds, etc are picked by hand. The soil is then softened using the ploughshare.

Gedalit, which is planted in land closer to the homestead *(wojed),* is planted in late April- early May, if there is rain. Otherwise it will be planted in mid-May. *Teff* is sown from July 17-August 10. *Humera* is planted from June 8 to July 27. During sowing the ploughshare will be used to cover the seeds so that rain will not wash them away or wind will not blow them away. While sowing, members of the family will pick up the remaining weeds, stalk, straw, etc from the field. Sowing will involve from one to four people.

Weeding is a labor intensive and time consuming activity. Peasants pay greater attention to weeding as the yield mostly depends on the intensity of weeding. Peasants claim that their forefathers gave little attention to weeding as the soil used to be fertile. Currently, however, the soil lost its fertility due to over utilization. Therefore, more attention should be given to weeding in order to get more yields. Thus, *Teff* is weeded four times, *Humera* three times and *Gedalit* two times. *Humera* is weeded first. The first weeding is from July-August when it is still unripe. The second weeding is done when it becomes stronger. This time draft power is used, which is called *shelshela.* The third one, which is done by hand, is done in November when it starts giving yield. The first weeding of *Teff* is in August when it is still young. The second weeding is in late August when the seedling covers the soil. As the *Teff* starts to give yield in September, the third weeding is done. The fourth weeding is done in November after

the *Teff* is ripe. *Gedalit*, which these days are rarely planted, is weeded, first in September when it starts to give seed and then in November when it becomes ripe.

Even though the different crops are sown at different times, almost all are harvested between early December and January. *Teff* will be ready for harvesting in late November. But, it is often harvested in December. Both *Humera* and *Gedalit* are harvested in December.

Threshing of *Teff* is done between mid-December and early January and it is stored in a granary. Sorghum is cut between December and January and it is stored in a granary that is dug into the ground, which is locally called *gwdgwad.*

Peasants of the area are extremely preoccupied from February of the previous year to early January of the coming year. January is a wedding month. Thus, there is some relief from work. However, the periods of relief do not exceed three weeks. The other period of relief is November just before the beginning of harvesting.

Belg as a season is almost absent in the area. However, when and if there is rain, the land will be prepared from January to March. *Teff* is the major *belg* crop. It is sown in March, weeded in April-May and harvested and threshed in June. As the *Belg* rain is often absent or inadequate, *Teff* is planted for the main reason that it does not take much seed, which reduces cost. *Belg* season crops are planted in a land found near the homestead called *wojed.*

2.7. Social organization

2.7.1. The household

The use of households in social science research in contemporary Africa is a new departure. African systems were often analyzed in terms of kinship and chieftaincy (Guyer, 1981: 88). A major reason for the focus of research on household could be that everybody grew up in households and continued to live in households (Netting, et al, 1984; Kunstudter, 1984).

Since defining the "household" is controversial (Netting, et al, 1984), different anthropologists perceived it in different ways. Households are considered to have form and function but one should not be reduced to the other (Ibid.) Wilk and Netting (1984) defined households as groups sharing certain activities such as residence, production, distribution, transmission and reproduction. Goody (1972) and Moore (1988) added socialization to these functions of households.

Guyer (1981) and Moore (1988) argued that households should be viewed in the 'native' context. Guyer pointed out that, the analysis of data in terms of the definition of households as Wilk and Netting (1984) did, is problematic to the African case. In the African case, Guyer contended, definition of membership and maintaining records on people with high mobility rate is difficult. It is also difficult to calculate the production and consumption patterns of households and the correlation of worker/consumer ratio. Guyer suggested that in the study of households in Africa one has to use descriptive terms.

The household is established through formal marriage. The most prevalent types of households in the study area are the conjugal nuclear families. Most of them are headed by men whose authority, control of resources, and position as the focus of attention and policies remain

unquestioned although his income-generating role is increasingly shared with his partners. However, this does not exclude female-headed households, which constitute 28.4 per cent of the sample households. Women become heads of households when they are widowed or divorced. In the sample households 18 female heads of households are divorced while 20 of them are widowed.

A household can also constituted of young married couple that remains in the husband's household of origin for limited period of time until the couple is able to accumulate sufficient resources to establish their own separate households. This however is not the only reason. Informants claimed that the couple has to remain with the household of the husband's origin in order to compensate for wedding expenses. The newly formed household share production and consumption with the husband's household of origin for at least one year. When divorce or separation dissolves a union, women with some of their children often return to their household of origin until remarriage or a return to their own conjugal household. The divorce or separation also left males to lead a single parent household in the same fashion. These household types might be considered not so much as discrete forms, but as part of a continuum through the life-course. On the other hand, whenever the economic and personal support is essential, elderly parents, especially widows, may move with one of their children permanently. Such a union of households might be a result of forces of necessity than affection.

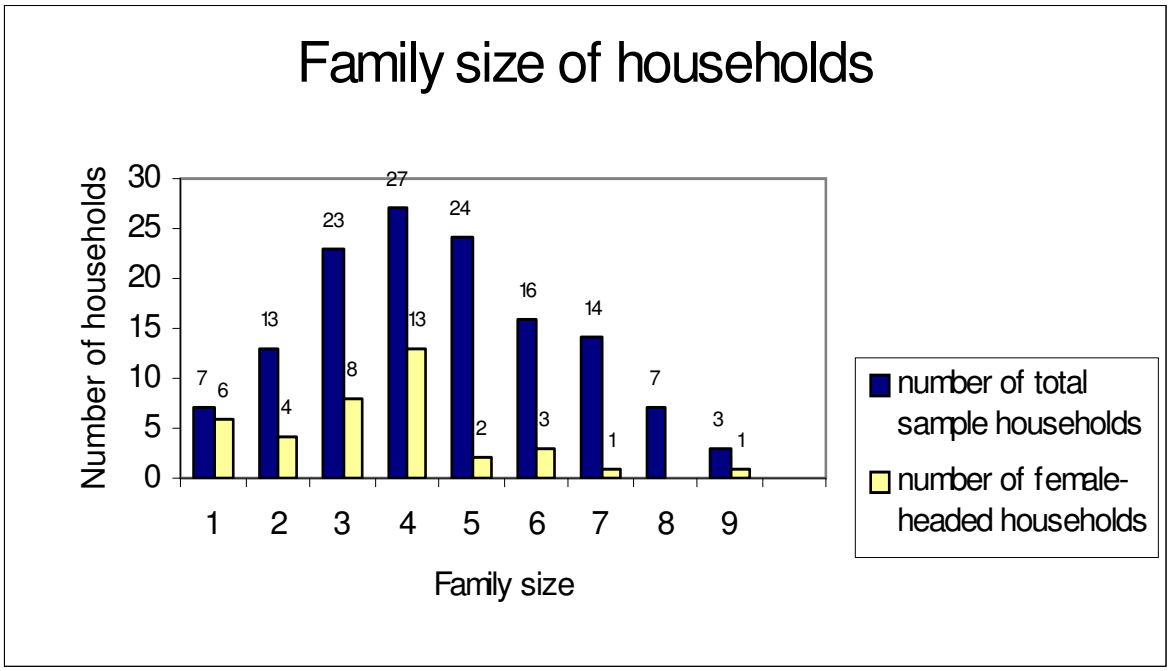
Some newly formed households built their homestead within the homestead of the husband's household of origin everlastingly for lack of land to construct their house. Occasionally these households live with the household of origin sharing production and consumption (a detailed discussion will be made in the next chapter).

Though few in number, there are households, which are led by sons. These household heads take the responsibility when the mother/father or both parents become older or when the mother is a widow or the father abandoned the household. There might be younger siblings working and living under the headship of the elder brother. Besides, female heads of a household might give the *de facto* power to her son when he is strong enough to take such responsibility. She can even make him marry in order to shun the chance of migration in search of a better way of life. Consider the following case,

> Aminat (case 3) is a female head of household. She has one son and two daughters. Her son is now engaged in farming the household's cropland. Though he is only 18, Aminat arranged a marriage with a girl from another KA. She claimed that, if she had not arranged the marriage, her son could have left her and migrates to town in search of a "better" opportunity. Aminat claimed that as her other children are all female, they would marry-out. Therefore, the son is the only one that will inherit her homestead, farm and other properties in the future.

Zenebework (1992, 29) observed that, "… land was distributed by family size and registered under the male head of household," which, is often true in most parts of the rural communities of the country. However, this can occasionally be disproved out of the necessity of the household to obtain land. In the research area 3.73 per cent of the total sample size have their land registered in the name of the female though there is a male head of household. The reason behind this is that the husband might be a trader or engaged in other off-farming activities such as tailoring, weaving, etc and thus could not obtain land in his own name. The male can also be a government employee or owner of a small-scale cottage industry like grinding mill.

The family size of households ranges between 3-5. Female-headed households contain fewer people than the size of conjugal nuclear households. The family size of female-headed households that constitute less than four family members is 81.6 per cent.



Source: Field survey, 2001

2.7.2. The homestead

The settlement pattern of the study area, Denka, has a structural hierarchy which starts from the kebele association, followed by the sub-kebele, then follows the *got*, the village (*mende)* and finally the homestead. The people of the area usually settle along mountainsides in order to save the relatively flat land for agriculture. Ideally households should establish their own homestead up on marriage and after they stayed for at least one year with the husband's household of origin.

The homesteads of the rich and medium households have some significant difference. The rich household's homestead constitute a living house, a kitchen for baking *injera*/ bread, a shade for fire wood, cow's shade for cattle and a separate place for draft animal as they have to be fed over night. It can also have a beehive. There will be a store (*gotera)* near the house and a small store inside the house for grains that are needed for daily consumption. The rich households (often the Muslims) have a separate house for prayer. This house is called *kelewa* that can also serve as a guesthouse. Animals will not enter the *kelewa.* There will also be a separate house built for young boys who reached the age of adolescent, which is called *gotmeri.* There will be wells dug to store sorghum and maize. Goats and sheep will have a separate place to stay. The main house of a rich household usually has a radius of 9-12 meters.

The homestead of the medium and poor households often has a radius of seven meters. Most of the livestock will live inside the main house. There will be no separate place for baking *injera.* There will be no *kalewa* for prayer or guest hosting. The other parts, which are available in the rich houseold, are also found in the medium and poor households.

A plant called *kinchebt* often encircles the homestead. A group of 5-10 homesteads constitute a village.

2.7.3. Marriage

As it is common amongst the Amhara people, marriage in Denka occurs between two people who are not related within seven ascending level of descent (Cf. Yared: 1999, 41). The age of the bridegroom mostly varies between the ages of 21-25 while the age of the bride could be between the age of 12-18. However, if the bride is from a well off household, she could be married at the age of 12-13 years. In earlier years the married couple were bind together in an

Islamic marriage bond called *nika*. In such bondage the female would get a fixed amount of money at divorce. Religious leaders called the *kadi* and religious teachers called the *deressa* would fix the amount of money that would be given to the woman at her wedding day. The *nika* will be "tied" in front of invited guests. The *kadi* and *deressa* will perform the ceremony. However the *nika* arrangement is changing since the 1974 Revolution. Even though the *nika* as a religious arrangement of marriage still exists, there is no fixed amount of money that is given to the woman up on divorce. Instead, she will get an equal amount of the couple's wealth that is accumulated after the marriage. This however does not include land. Land belongs to the owner be it the husband or the wife.

Marriage between a boy and girl used to be arranged by parents. The latter took the responsibility of choosing the would-be wife of their son. However, there is a change in such arrangements too. These days the boys/girls start to choose their future spouse and they start to become acquitted before the marriage. This, however, does not mean that the role of parents on the marriage of their children has vanished. The parents make the final decision of approving the marriage. In considering the marriage between their children, the parents will take into consideration the character of the would-be husband/wife and the character of his/her parents, wealth and industriousness. Marriage was not arranged between artisans (tanners, potters, etc.) and others. However, since 1974 there is a change of attitude towards such marriage arrangements. There are marriages arranged between artisans and others.

After the decision of the groom's family to ask for the hands of the bride, the former will send a married woman to the latter's house. The elderly woman will take a fresh cut leaf called *degeta*

to the prospective bride's house. Then, she will explain the reasons of her visit. The family of the would-be bride will ask for more time to think over the request and to discuss it with their relatives. When the woman returns on the appointed day, they would tell her their decision, be it negative or positive. If their response were negative they would tell her their reasons that mostly include ill character of the prospective groom or his parents.

Patrilocality is the common pattern of residence. Thus, the boy will construct a small hut, which is called *chagula bet* inside his father's homestead or *bota* land. These days the hut is used, as a permanent residence of the couple as there is no land to establish their own house. The family of the groom will give him some money to buy gifts for the bride, which would include clothes, umbrella, shoes, etc. On the wedding day relatives will contribute local beer (*tella)* or a non-alcoholic drink (*bukri)* and *injera*. The neighbors will also contribute money, which will be given to the appointed cashier upon entering the wedding tent called *dass.* The marriage endowment depends upon the economic status of the couple's family. Ideally, the groom will get an ox or a pair of oxen, a cow and some sheep or goats. The girl will get a cow, bull and some grain. Except the grain the bride will take the marriage endowment to her husband's house after her parents make sure that the marriage is permanent. This might be until she give birth to her first child. Besides the endowment in animals and grain, the newly married couple will also get land. Both the boy and the girl will get the land, if land is allocated to their parents in their children’s name. If land is not allocated in the name of the latter, then they will get land on their parents (usually the boy's parents) discretion or they have to depend on other means of access to land. The bride will get her share of land, if she is married within the same kebele association.

The couple will live with the husband's household of origin for at least one year for reasons stated in the section dealing with 'the household'. After a year, the couple will get a third of what they produced with the household of the groom and the livestock they get as a marriage endowment. They would then establish an independent household but not an independent homestead. They will not fully share production and consumption just like the period they lived with the groom's household of origin. Occasionally, the couple can live with the groom's family for more than one year when the parents are weak and old, when the boy is the only child or when the newly married couple have exceptionally good relationship with the parents of the groom.

As the people of Denka are predominantly Muslim, there is polygamous marriage though rarely (only one polygamous marriage existed in the sample household). However, the number of polygamous marriage is declining because of economic difficulty to support more than one wife.

Polygamous marriage can be established without the knowledge of the existing wife or with her own consent when she needs additional labor to share her tasks or when she does not want any more sexual relationship with her husband. Whenever polygamous marriage is established with out the knowledge of the existing wife, the husband has to provide a calf, cow or an ox by way of compensation to his wife if she has children. If she does not have children he will give her 50.00-100.00 Birr in compensation. In the second case, the wife will get nothing as she agrees upon the marriage. As for the property, the second wife will have no right over the property, which was accumulated in the first marriage. She will, however, have a share of the property accumulated after her marriage. The husband is obliged to establish a different hut for his newly married wife.

2.7.4. Divorce

Divorce rate had been high before the Revolution, as women did not get land or other properties upon divorce. The women only got the amount of money assigned to her upon marriage in the *nika* arrangement. After the revolution however, divorce is becoming less. The reason for its decline is related to equal ownership of property specifically land. The woman is entitled to her share of land upon divorce. Thus, in order to avoid reducing the size of land, spouses preferred to solve their problems than to get divorced as far as possible. Divorce is higher when one of the spouses does not possess land.

The causes of divorce in the study area are diverse and personal. However, there are commonly stated causes for divorce. The first common cause of divorce is extra-marital activities by either one or the other spouse. When the woman is the one who is involved in such activities, it is manifested as she becomes disobedient to her husband. If the husband is the one who is involved in such activities, he will neglect his home and disturb the peace of the household. The other cause of divorce is bareness, which is often attached to women. Divorce can also result when a witch told one of the partners that the other is not good for the future of his/her life. The witch will tell the seeker that his wealth or health or both can be ruined if she/he continues to live with the other. Economic decline in the household can also result in divorce. Laziness of one or the other partner can also result in divorce. A lazy husband is one who does not work on his farm harder and on time, one who gets drunk at working days especially during high time (plowing, weeding, harvesting and threshing) and who spends too much money. A lazy wife on the other hand is one who does not do the house work properly, one who do not manage the household resources properly and one who does not engage in farm activities like weeding and preparation of the threshing field (*wudema).*

Divorce takes place after two temporary separations. A woman can temporarily go to her parent's household when there is a serious conflict with her husband. The husband sends elders who negotiate with the wife and bring her back. Occasionally the husband might pay compensation. The same thing can happen for the second time. If the woman left her house for the third time, there will be no negotiation. Instead, divorce will take place.

Resources are divided between the ex-spouses upon divorce. If both the ex-spouses have a share of land in one of the redistributions of land, each will get her/his share. If the land belongs to the ex-husband, the ex-wife will get her share of the other properties including livestock. The same is true when the ex-wife owns land and the ex-husband does not. The ex-wife can give her share of land in sharecropping arrangement or she can remarry. A woman who owns land has a greater chance of remarrying. When the divorce occurs at old age, the women prefers to give her land in sharecropping. A woman can also give her share of land in sharecropping, when she decides to migrate to other places or to marry outside the locality where her land is located. This is possible after the fall of the Derg whose land policy forbade absentee landlordism. The woman can sometimes give her share of land to her ex-husband in sharecropping usually for the benefit of her children. Neighbors, well-known people, *kere/ider* leader (judges as they are often called) and occasionally KA leaders perform the division of resources.

Men are the most vulnerable during divorce. They cannot cook, look after their children and livestock, farm and fulfill their social commitment at the same time. Their vulnerability increases if they have very young children who cannot look after themselves and if there are no family members (mother, sisters, etc) around. Therefore, men are forced to remarry

immediately. In the short interval before the next marriage, neighbors, sisters, a mother, etc can help the man in his household work.

Table 2.1. Number of divorces per number of households

	Number of female- headed households	**Conjugal nuclear households**	**Total**
None	20	63	83
Once	11	13	24
Twice	3	9	12
Three times		3	3
> Three times	4	6	10
Not married		2	2
Total	38	96	134

Source: Field survey, 2001

CHAPTER 3

Land: An Entrance Ticket into the peasantry

"Land acts as an entrance ticket into the peasantry…"

(Shanin: 1990, 24)

Land determines peasant production. Land explains difference in fertility and mortality rates (Durham, 1979 cited in Barlett, 1980a), crop mix and household production combination (Barlett, 1977, Acherson, 1980) and productivity and wealth (Yared, 1999). It is the most important natural resource for peasant life (Mesfin, 1991, Yigremew, 1999). Land can also influence the social relation of peasants. Teferi (1995:35) for instance noted that, in some part of the Amahara regional state, fathers try to restore their control over the labor and destiny of their children by holding back land when children reach the age to establish their own household. Shanin (1990:25) ascertained that land is the basic unit of peasant ownership, production consumption and social life. On the contrary, Dessalegn (1991:69) claimed that, because of the existing tenure system, in Ethiopia, "land is no longer an important factor." In the same vein, Teferi (1998:68) argued, since the 1975 reform, land alone brings neither success nor access to other factors of production. Abebe (1997: 82) argued that, as long as administrative based land distribution remains intact, land ownership alone becomes a weak factor, which can differentiate households.

Land had been and still is the major means of production of the Ethiopian peasantry. It had been a point of contention in the *rist* area and a means of exploitation in the Southern part of the country. The 1975 land reform partly avoided the contention and exploitation. Land was distributed to the direct producer. McCann (1988, 297) noted that, "Direct state involvement in

the distribution of the means of production [land] did not take place until the land reform proclamation of 1975." This eradicated the exploitation of the peasantry by individuals. However, another exploitation and manipulation was replaced, an exploitation and manipulation by the state and its functionaries. The state established a direct relationship with the peasantry by establishing peasant associations. As Donham (1999, 152) pointed out, "Under Haileselassie, the imperial state had floated above the heads of most peasants. After 1975, the revolutionary state began to penetrate deeper and deeper into local communities." Therefore, the state did not only redistribute land to the tiller but it also established itself amongst the peasantry. The peasantry became under the direct control of the state. The peasantry was forced to pay different contributions to the different organizations, the government established. AEPA, REYA, REWA, AMC, committee established to collect "call of the mother land" contributions, etc were burdens laid on the peasantry. There were in a sense more governments than the central government itself. Moreover, the land reform gave rise to a process of diminution of peasant plots. Population growth and political motives resulted in repeated redistribution of land that further resulted in the diminution of plots. As the state has both *de facto* and *de jure* authority over the land, it uses the latter as a means of strengthening its authority. "… The government," Crummy (2000, 240) noted, "…continued to use the lands at its disposal as …pork barrel and to dispense them to built up clients." The peasantry, thus, uses all means in order to have access to the one indispensable production factor, i.e. land. In a nut shall, land is “an entrance ticket into the peasantry.”

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to discuss the land redistribution in 1976, 1983 and 1991. Special emphasis will be given to the 1991 land redistribution. Moreover, other methods

of access to land, other than land redistribution, the option of new land redistribution and the impact of land redistribution and land shortage will be discussed.

3.1. Pre 1975 land tenure

Most informants and researchers (Dessalegn, 1996; Fekadu, 1990) agreed that Wollo had three types of land tenure systems. These were *gabar, galla*[*] *and semon.* The *gabar* land was a kind of free hold in which the owner paid all legally prescribed taxes to the government. *Semon* land was land held in the name of the church and on which the church collected all taxes. As *semon* land was to the Orthodox Church, there was land allotted to the Muslim religious leaders or *Abagars* called *de'ema* land. The *galla* land was a *maderia* land that was held by the state but given to individuals for the service they rendered to the state (Dessalegn: 1996,13)

The *gabar* land was dominant in Wollo followed by *galla* land. The *gabar* in Ambassel paid tribute to *gult* holders and an *asrat* to the government. Tribute was paid in honey and in grain. There was also provision of labor service (*corvee*) which included fencing, fetching water, grinding, cutting grass for cattle, etc. Whenever a peasant could not fulfill his obligations, his land would be confiscated and turn into a *galla* land. This land was referred as *geber ferash.*

The *gult* holders had representatives known as *ababidris* who administered the locality they were appointed for on behalf of their superiors. Their superiors in turn provided them land for their livelihood. They are also entitled to a quarter of the produce they collected from the peasants. The *chika shum* who is the subordinate of the *ababidri* collected the tribute and the *asrat* and passed it on to the latter that in turn submitted to his superiors. The *ababidir* did not only collect tax in kind. They also collected tribute in cash that entirely belonged to them. The

[*] this has nothing to do with the ethnic group Oromo

payment they exacted was referred as *mofer metaya*, which ranges between 2-3 Birr per peasant. Unless a peasant paid for the *mofer metya,* he could not resume farming in the next season. The *ababidri* also got labor tribute, butter and honey from the *gabar.*

In November 1944 the government of Haileselassie I introduced a new proclamation that specified that, "Any other tax, service and fee heretofore payable are hereby repealed," (Crummy: 2000, 240). The government introduced land tax payable in cash, which was directly collected by the government without the interference of intermediaries (Ibid, 241). Accordingly the land in Ambassel was classified as *gabar* and *galla* and the Ministry of Finance made an estimated measurement. A man by the name Assefa Tegegne was appointed for the purpose. Then, the *gebar* landholders paid 32.00 Ethiopian Dollars while *galla* land holders paid 22.00 Ethiopian Dollars.

In addition to the *gabar* who paid tribute to the *gult* holders, there were also farmers who were tenants /*chisegna*/. They did not pay tribute to the government. Instead they worked on *maderia* land in a sharecropping arrangement. In actuality the *gabar* too worked on *maderia* land in a sharecropping arrangement. However, informants agreed that most of the peasants who worked on the *maderia* land were *chisegna.* There was also land that belonged to *Etege* Menen in the research site. Officials in the area rented land from the E*tege* on a contract basis. These officials sharecropped their land with the *chisegna* while the *Etege* received cash from the officials who rented her land.

The other category of land, which needs some discussion, is *galla* land. Peasant soldiers called *ketche zemach* held this land before the coming of the *nech lebash.* The *ketche zemach* as their

name suggests were campaigners who held the land for their service as such. They were summoned whenever there was a campaign. When the father died the son had to replace him in order to continue to cultivate the land. If the peasant failed to join the army upon request, his land would be confiscated. When the *nech lebash* were given *maderia* land, it did not include the land held by the *ketche zemach.* After liberation, some of the *ketche zemach* claimed the land as their own private property on the ground that they had paid tax to the Italians.

In 1943, the peasants of Tigray particularly those who lived in Wojjerat, Raya and Azebbo rebelled. The rebellion that is referred as Woyane Rebellion was instigated due to "usurpation of provisional autonomy, threats to popular customs and institution, mal-administration and economic hardship." (Gebru: 1991,89). Amongst the forces used to crush the rebellion, the *nech lebash* were one of them. The *nech lebash* were Para-military forces recruited from the peasantry in order to augment the regular police force, which was limited within the *woredas*. The *nech lebash* were formed in 1944. Their composition varies from the local gentry to the poor peasants. A rifle was issued to the members of these Para-military forces. As they do not have a regular salary, they received land grants known as *galla meret* (Dessalegn: 1996; Gebru: 1991). The soldiers had some land privileges. Informant claimed that even the wife of a *nech lebash* had priority in fetching water. The *nech lebash* were given land in Ambassel including the research site in 1945. They were allowed to keep the land as long as they belong in the Para-military force. Theoretically the size of land granted to the *nech lebash* was two *gashas* for corporal, three *gashas* for lieutenant, four *gashas* for lieutenant colonel and five *gashas* for a major. The land grant for an ordinary *nech lebash* varies from 10 hector to one gasha. Practically, most *nech lebash* did not have more than one gasha of land. The *nech lebash* gave their land to tenants or *gabar* in sharecropping. The *gabar* or the tenant got 2/3 of the produce

while the *nech lebash* got a third of the produce. The *nech lebash* were unpopular with the peasantry. They often evicted tenants at a short notice. Informants claimed that the *nech lebash* continued to exact cash payment practiced by the *ababidri* known as *mofer metaya.* As soldiers they looted the peasantry. Some of the tenants provided labor tribute.

In 1962, the government introduced a new system of up-keeping the *nech lebash.* The gult holding right of the *nech lebash* was abolished. Instead they were entitled for a salary of 100.00 Ethiopian Dollars per annum. The tenants were allowed to keep their produce but they had to pay 120.00 Ethiopian Dollars per annum per *gasha* for the government. The government kept the 20.00 Ethiopian Dollars (cf. Fekadu: 1990, 86). The tenants did not however hold the land as their private property. This arrangement lasted only four years. In 1965 there was a big famine called Waja. During that famine the *nech lebash* could not sustain their household with 100.00 Ethiopian Dollars, therefore they were granted land. In 1966 they were allowed to turn some of their holdings to private property and to pay a tax of 32.00 Ethiopian Dollars. This action was in line with the government's decree to abolish secular *gult* and tithe and covert a certain portion of the *gult* holding to private tenure (Crummy: 2000, 241). Some of the *nech lebash* started to till the land themselves. Others who lived far away from their land give it in sharecropping. They in consultation with the *chika shum*, selected trustworthy peasants and made them their agents. Their responsibility was collecting the share of the *nech lebash* during harvest. During the 1975 land reform, the *nech lebash* who worked on their land got land just like the other peasants.

3.2. The 1976 and 1983 land redistributions

In the research site, the first land redistribution took place in 1976. This is a year after the land reform proclamation. The 1976 land redistribution did not dislocate the owners of land from

their land. Instead the size of their holding was reduced. In that redistribution, land was measured in an elastic plastic rope made out of car-tire. It was stretched as far as possible so that more land was allocated than the intended measurement. Land was given as per the size of the family. A husband and wife would get 10 *gamad*[*] of land and all the other members of the household would get one *gamad* each despite age. Informants claim that prior to the land redistribution, the Derg has proclaimed that all people should go to their place of birth so that they could get land there. Some people whose birthplace was in the study area did not get land. At that time, most of the people were complaining about the 1976 land redistribution. The complaints included, peasants who own fertile land before the land reform remained holding the same while those landless got less fertile and pest prone land. Some PA officials skipped the next name in order to give more fertile land to their favorites, i.e. kin and friends. Since the land was measured in an elastic rope, the land was not equally measured. Due to these complaints, another land redistribution was necessary. The next land redistribution took place in 1983.

The procedures of the 1983-land redistribution were as follows. Firstly household heads were registered. Then, a *gamad* land was given to each household as *bota* land (homestead). A committee, which utilized the land redistribution, was formed. The people selected its members. The committee members were made to live in isolation. The land was measured

[*] 1 *gamad* is 35*35m^2 for fertile land and 40*40m^2 for infertile land

using a meter. In order to avoid measurement "errors" two people who came from the *Woreda* supervised the land redistribution. Land was given using a lottery system to each household. One *gamad* of land was given to each member of a household including the husband and wife. Since, everybody including those peasants who in the 1976 land redistribution held their pre-reform land were included in lottery system, the 1983 land redistribution was called *sernekel* (drastic land redistribution).

In these two land redistributions, children who were born during the land redistribution got a share of land despite their age. Thus, when they get married, they are entitled to their share of land that is called *gulema* (gift) land. Both male and female are entitled to the *gulema* land. However, since the settlement pattern is patrilocal, women's share of land often remains with the parents. If however, both the marriage partners are from the same KA, parents are obliged to give the woman's share of land. Children who are born after the land redistribution are not included in the land fund of the household. Therefore, they have to depend on other mechanisms of land access. Occasionally land that was left by deceased people who do not have inheritors would be given to new applicants. Often it is male applicants who get the priority. Teferi (1994) and Dessalegn (1991) noted that because of different social and cultural constraints against rural women, peasant wives can only own land if they are married to somebody or if they head a single parent household of their own. Furthermore, the provision of lands left by deceased people were the sources of corruption and manipulation. Such lands were given to those applicants who either had some kind of relationship with PA leaders or who could give bribe. One informant told the researcher that he saw the previous PA-leader (the name is not included in order not to violet privacy) taking bribe rapped in Chat. The

informant then told an *azmari (*singer) some lyrics to be sung in a wedding. The lyrics go like this,

የኛ ሊቀመንበር ደረሳ ነበረ
ፓውንዱን እንደ ጫት ይቅመዉ ነበረ

(lit. Our chairperson is like a deressa [religious teacher]
He chewed money just like *chat*[mentally stimulating drugs])

3.3. The 1991 land redistribution

The 1991 land redistribution was carried out from mid- December 1990 to mid-January 1991. The land redistribution included only sub-kebeles 02 and 03, which used to be an independent PA. EPRDF forces that controlled the area, abandoned by the previous government, carried out the redistribution. The area was one of the "free lands" that was "liberated" by EPRDF forces. The redistribution had the following objectives,

1. EPRDF was trying to win the confidence of the people by giving land to the land less. The mechanism of winning the confidence of "liberated" people is not new to EPRDF. Just before TPLF became EPRDF by incorporating other liberation fronts, it used the same principle. Asmelash (1995) cited Gebru (1984, 47) who wrote that, “TPLF believes that it cannot enlist the active support and participation of the peasants unless it shows them tangible results in the social and economic spheres of their life. And in glorious tradition of liberation movements, it had instituted some social reform, including redistribution of land, literacy campaign, building health centers and schools.” During that time there were 34 PAs in Ambassel *woreda*. Land redistribution was carried out only in 12 PAs, which were administered by EPRDF as "free lands". The main objective seems political, as EPRDF did not carry out land redistribution in other

PAs where there is as equal problem of landlessness as the 12 PAs where land redistribution was carried out.

2. To distribute land equally.
3. To provide land to the many applicants whose request for land did not get response. There were about 250 applicants that included, returnees from resettlement whose land was confiscated after they went to resettlement areas, ex-members of peasant cooperatives whose land was confiscated after they left the cooperative on their own will and peasants whose land was confiscated because they or their children refused or escaped the military service after conscription. There were farmers who did not get land in exchange for their land, which was confiscated for the purpose of establishing nurseries. Town dwellers that cannot engage in other occupations like trade because the Derg encircled the area were also asking for land as a means of livelihood.

EPRDF followed the following procedures in redistribution of land.

1. The members of the households were registered through the household head. The members included children under the age of 18 and a wife. Children above the age of 18 were considered as adults and land was allocated to them as heads of a household.
2. Then a committee, whose members were chosen by the people, was formed to carry out the land redistribution. Accordingly, for each of the six *gots* (i.e. Mehojege, Guba, Danka, Dessalegn Esayas, Ablogya and Girar Genda), nine committee members were chosen. The committee members were given training at Kuwaho PA. According to the training, children above the age of 18 would get equal amount of land with their parents. Consequently, 1 child above the age of 18 will get 25*50 m^2, two children above the age of 18 will get 50*50 m^2 and more than two children above the age of 18

will get an additional land of 25*50 m^2 for all of them. Parents got 25*50 m^2 land and additional land will be added according to the size of the family. If parents have one child below the age of 18, they would get no additional land, if they have two children they would get 6*50 m^2 additional land, if they have two children and above they would get 12*50 m^2 additional land. Only parent households were given a 20*20 m^2 *bota* land.

3. The land was then divided into thick, medium and soft based on the soil depth and fertility of the land. Grazing land was left aside and they were not included in the redistribution. A four-meter walk way divided each plot. But the walk way is all included to the cropland through time. Then a sign was posted in each plot.
4. The people were summoned and categorized according to their family size. EPRDF's political cadres called *kifle hizeb* performed the organization. The different categories chose their chairperson who drew lottery to take the already divided groups of land. The land is divided into *wojed* (land found closer to the homestead) and *berha* (land found far away from the homestead). If the *wojed* land is fertile then the *berha* land would be less fertile and vise versa. The chairpersons of each category made each household to drew lottery in order to take the land that belong to them.

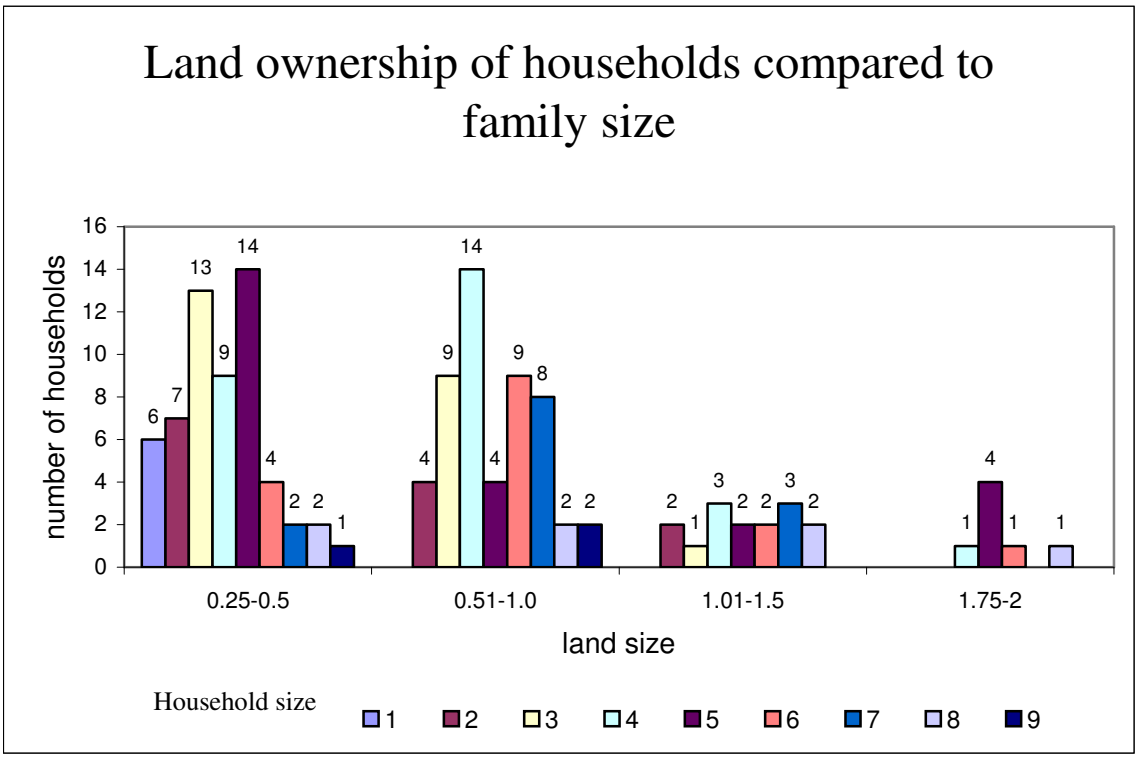
After the redistribution four hectare of land was set aside as a reserve land that will be distributed for newly established households in the future. However, the redistributed of this land fund was over in 1992-93. These days there is no more land left for new applicants. The peasants of the area are aware of the shortage of land but they still apply for land believing that there could be a new redistribution.

The proclamation of 1996, which was issued by the Amahara Regional state for reallocation of the possession of rural land stated that, "The provision of this proclamation should not apply to

areas freed from the Derg regime before 1991, since the redistribution of land has already been accomplished." Therefore, newly established household heads that were not included in the 1991 land redistribution are forced to utterly depend on sharecropping. They also contracted land from the KA or other institutions like schools. As the redistribution of 1991 entitled land ownership to children who were above the age of 18, all the rest below that did not get land. As the Derg conscripted all children who reached the age of 18, most parents hide the real age of their children. The 1991 land redistribution did not take this fact into consideration. Thus, even though most of the children were actually 18 years of age during the redistribution, they did not get land, as the list did not endorse their age. Moreover, it is not only newly established households who depend on sharecropping and contract. There were also returnees from resettlement and land short households. Out of the total sample households, 82.9 per cent own less than 1 hector of land. Out of these, 29.8 percent of the households depend on sharecropping even if they own land. Therefore, newly established households had to compete with these households who have a well-established social network, capital and know-how. The new land reform of 1996 left the former out of the legal possession of land. As a result their food security is threatened.

In order to mitigate the problem of landlessness, the local government provided common forests to individuals particularly newly established households. Mesfin (1991, 112) confirmed that, " Much of the land that formerly served as grazing land, especially in Wollo, is now either reallocated for reforestation or is closed for vegetable rehabilitation." The common forest is often found on sloppy mountains and contains some indigenous trees. A household is entitles to a certain (not identified) amount of land. He (not often she) keeps the forest out of the reach of livestock and human beings. He in turn can cut and take the grass inside the common forest. He

can also plant trees of his choice in the enclosure. The grass is used to feed his livestock (if has one) or to generate income. He however cannot cut the trees without the consent of the Department of Agriculture. Hitherto, no household head benefited from the trees, since this mechanism has been implemented. The provision of common forest to household heads gave them a new means of livelihood through the sell of grass. However, it restricted other households from having access to grazing areas, which in turn reduced the number of livestock they owned. Even though most households of the area believed that owning small ruminants, particularly goats, could result in sustainable livelihood, shortage of grazing land is a straight jacket. Moreover, the minimum time of tenure that a household can hold the common forest is not specified. Thus, most households that plant trees in the common forest allocated to them do not certainly know whether they have enough time till the trees are mature enough for harvesting. In other cases such as the Mizhi country, Zimbabwe, tenure for wooded land ranges from 30-50 years, and the land can often be passed to children (Postel, 1989). The owner ship of common forest did not create a distinct class that live on sell of animal fodder because firstly, the grass that is obtained from the common forest is not enough to establish oneself as such. Secondly, the other households are not rich enough to depend on purchased fodder for their livestock. Thus, the provision of common forest is just a temporary solution that did not tackle the real problem of landlessness.



Source: Field survey, 2001

3.4. The question of new land redistribution.

In Denka, land redistribution had been carried out in two different governments. The land redistribution that was carried out by EPRDF in 1991 prevailed in sub-kebele 02 and 03. In the other sub-kebele, i.e. 01, the land redistribution that was carried out in 1983 still exists. As it has been discussed earlier, the land redistribution of 1991 did not take family size as the criteria of land redistribution. Moreover, all households that have more than two children who are under 18 will get only 12*50 m^2 additional land. Most of the children did not reach the age of 18 (or others hide their age) during the time of the redistribution. Upon marriage thus, they have to depend on sharecropping. Due to this fact, most households who support fresh redistribution reside in the area where the 1991-land redistribution prevailed. However, new land redistribution in this part of the research site is out of the question, as the 1996 land reallotment proclamation forbade land redistribution in areas freed from the Derg regime before

1991. The reason given for this action is that the land redistribution was fair and it took the interest of the peasantry into consideration. On the contrary, however, newly established households are looking for new land redistribution. In terms of land size most of the households that support a new land redistribution own less than 0.75 hector of land. Most of the female-heads of households who favor new land redistribution reside in sub- kebeles 02 and 03.

The households that are in favor of fresh land redistribution include, households who felt that the land redistribution in 1991 was unjust, newly established households, households who have problem of land shortage, ex-soldiers who returned to the area after the demobilization of Derg's army, returnees from resettlement, households who own infertile land and households whose extended family live with them.

The reasons these households give for supporting new land redistribution vary. However, there are some generally stated rationales. Some of them believed that, the land redistribution of 1991 was unjust, as it did not take family size into consideration. Most household heads who have more than two children got an equal amount of land with households who own two children in the 1991 land redistribution. As a result most households have shortage of land. Ex-soldiers of the Derg claimed that the redistribution was carried out in their absence, thus they got small and infertile land. Other households claimed that their land becomes infertile because of erosion. They inferred that although land degradation is a general problem in the area, theirs is exposed to erosion, as it is located on a mountainside and sloppy areas. Some also have land at the periphery, which is exposed to pests. New land redistribution may give them a better land. Newly established households, who reside in both the pre- and post-1991 area, are the most conspicuous group who demand fresh land redistribution. Those households who reside in

the post-1991 land redistribution area want new land redistribution, as most of them did not get land in their own name. Thus, they can get access to land through new redistribution. These households, who live in the pre-1991 land redistribution area, may get 0.25 hector of land by way of marriage endowment. However, the size of land is not enough to support their family. Thus, they support new land redistribution with some reservations. The proclamation of 1996 on land reallotment stated that new land reallotment was necessary in order to do away with the "phenomena of two system of land possession in the region by placing the same with a fair system of land possession." In the kebele association, there are two systems of land possession, that of the Derg regime and that of the EPRDF. Newly established households and land short households in the post-1991 land redistribution sub-kebeles feel that, they should be included in any new land redistribution in sub-kebele 01 where the 1983 land redistribution still prevails. The households in sub-kebele 01 including the newly established ones resented this idea. As a result a new land redistribution that would take place in sub-kebele 01 will result in a serious conflict amongst residents of sub-kebele 01 and sub-kebeles 02 and 03, which might in turn result in increasing food insecurity. The local government is aware of the prevailing tension and thus it has no plan of land redistribution in the foreseeable future (personal communication with the *Woreda* administrator).

New land redistribution is disfavoured by those households who have enough land compared to their family size, households in the decline stage of the developmental cycle who do not have children and who live by sharecropping out their land and some households who own "excessive" land through the 1983 land redistribution. The two major reasons for disfavouring new land redistribution include, the limited size of the “land fund” and population increase. These two factors are interrelated. Increase in population affects the size of land to an extent

that it can no more support a household sufficiently. The other reason includes sceptics of households about the amount of land they would get if there happens to be new land redistribution. There is also a traditional saying that, land redistribution intensifies the infertility of the land and reduces yield. The proponents of this traditional belief disfavoured new land redistribution. Most households who own land argued that the only lands that can be redistributed amongst landless and land short households are lands that are reverted to the kebele association whenever previous owners of the land die with out leaving inheritors and those lands that were forest land but ceased to be so after they were deforested during government change in 1991. These lands are not enough. Thus, new land redistribution might include their land, which they disliked. In any case, the local government has no future plan of new land redistribution in the near future (personal communication with *woreda* administrator).

Most of the households in the area do not favour resettlement as a solution for land shortage and landlessness. Alemneh (1990,170) reported that, "In Wollo nearly all the peasants interviewed were emphatic in their response that they did not wish to be resettled." A decade after Alemneh's research, the response of peasants in the study area is negative towards resettlement. More than 80 per cent of the interviewed households responded that they do not want to be resettled any where be it in region three or elsewhere. Besides the well studied reasons for their dislike of resettlement including, health problems, death of family members, poor working condition, desire to reunite with family members and homesickness (Ibid,) the lack of land upon return to their native area and increasing ethnicity problem contributed to peasant's dislike of resettlement.

Table 3.1. Household's response to new land redistribution and resettlement

	Yes			No		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Is new land redistribution necessary?	37	16	53	59	22	81
Is resettlement necessary?	17	5	22	79	33	112

Source: Field survey, 2001

3.5. Other means of access to land

Shortage of land, possession of more than enough labour and draft power compared to land size, owning infertile land and inability to get land upon establishing ones own household are the major reason for leasing in land. Land shortage is a major problem in the study area. Most of the households (82.9 per cent)* possess below 1 hector of land. Out of these percentage 43.3 per cent have between 0.25-0.5 hector of land. Households that returned from resettlement sharecropped in land after they possess draft power. The land that belonged to these returnees was distributed to other households as additional land when the former left for resettlement areas. Some of the households whose land was located at the periphery got land at the center. This land belonged to households who went to resettlement. Therefore upon return from resettlement areas, the returnees got infertile land that is exposed to pests. Moreover, land degradation worsened the situation. Households that possess oxen (often a pair or more) sharecropped in land from either oxen less, female-headed households, old /sick or absentee households. Whenever labour is short in the former households, they can easily attract it from those households that lack draft power or they can hire labour.

"Labour-rich" households can sharecrop in land whether they have draft power or not.

* The percentage was calculated from the size of land households possess. The size of land does not include land that is sharecropped in.

Wherever they own oxen, they can use the labour within the family and whenever there is lack of draft power, they can use one of the arrangements used to access draft power in the area. Those households that have enough land compared to their family size can also lease in land. They do so when they have sufficient draft power or labour. Teferi (1998) argued that labor in Tawa, Southern Wollo, plays a crucial role in enhancing household access to draft power and land and facilitate money earning through off-farming activities when enterprising household heads manage it in a proficient manner.

Newly established households often lease in land because of two major reasons. Firstly, the land size they get from their parents (if they have their share allotted during the redistribution) is very small. Secondly, if the newly established households are residents of sub-kebele 02 or 03, they have to depend on sharecropping whenever they are not included in the 1991 land redistribution. Even if they have a share in the 1991 redistribution, it is only 12*50 $m^{2.}$ which is hardly enough to support their household. However, in order to lease in land these households should possess oxen in one of the mechanisms used in the area or they should have labour which enables them to access draft power.

Most of the households that leased in land have larger family size. They lease in land in order to increase the produce they get. As the yield per hector is continuously decreasing, increasing the land size is one of the strategies of maximizing yield per hector. The other strategy is intensification.

Sharecropping relationships are not only entered between individuals. Instead, households also enter into a sharecropping relationship with the KA and the school found in the kebele association. The group that sharecropped in these lands include newly established households

that do not own land through redistribution, returnees from resettlement, ex-soldiers of the previous government and other households that wanted to increase their land holding. In the sharecropping arrangement the household will get 2/3 of the produce while its counterpart gets a third of the produce. Often the household does not give the share of its counterpart in kind. Instead, the former would bargain on the price of the grain and purchase it by paying money instantly or in instalment. The households preferred the latter arrangement because the household head can keep the money for other immediate and more pressing purposes. Moreover, the payment can be put off to other times when the household head can conveniently make the payment. Households preferred to enter into a share cropping arrangement with the kebele association or a school as the ratio is 1:3.

It is important to look into households that lease out land in order to have a complete picture of the access to land. Households lease out land for reasons, which vary from household to household. However a general trend can be traced along all households. The major reasons for leasing out land are shortage of draft power and labour. Whenever both draft power and labour are lacking, most households are forced to lease out their land. If a household owns draft power and lacks labour, it is likely that it will attract labour from other "labour rich" households. "Labour rich" households on the other hand can access draft power in a *wonfel* or *limena* arrangement. These oxen less households who use these arrangements are obviously disadvantaged. As the *wonfel* partner owns no oxen, his contribution will solely be his labour, which is a third requirement for cultivation. The remaining 2/3 requirements are oxen. Therefore, the labour owner will work one day (a third) on his land while he should work two days (2/3) on the oxen owner's land. Households who choose *limena* arrangement to access

oxen are likely to get oxen if they contribute labour whenever there is *jige* or other works even though they knew they might not be able to get the labour of the oxen owners by organizing *jige*. Most of the returnees from resettlement lease out their land, as they have no draft power. Although they might have some money when they arrived to their native area, they did not get land immediately. As they feel that they would get land sooner, they did not lease in land or did not buy oxen in order to engage in farming. Instead, they were forced to buy grain in order to feed their family. When they got land, they had to lease it out until they can have draft power either by selling some grain and buy ox or enter into *ye arba* or *yerebe* arrangement.

Sickness and old age are other reasons for leasing out land. Old and sick household heads who do not have children, whose children are engaged in other occupations (other than agriculture), whose children live far away from them or whose children should support their own household have to depend on sharecropping. Newly established households who get land but not oxen as a marriage endowment and thus who cannot enter into a *mekenajo* arrangement lease out their land. These households lease out their land whenever they cannot enter into a *wonfel* arrangement for some reason. Household heads that are engaged in other activities other than agriculture usually lease out their land. Most of the landowners, who reside in the town of wuchale (sub-kebele 03) do lease out their land, as they are not farmers in the first place. A third of the female-headed households in the sample got land in the 1991 land redistribution even though they reside in Wuchale town. Female-headed households constitute the largest percentage of land leasers (20.9 per cent). The major reason for leasing out land is lack of male labour. They, however, do not give land in sharecropping if they have child/children who is/are old enough to cultivate the land unless there is shortage of draft power.

3.6. Impact of land shortage

Land shortage is pointed out as the most important constraint against attainment of food security. Shortage of land is often related to population growth, which indeed is the most important factor. Population increase stimulated the demand for land while the carrying capacity of the land is limited. In such cases land becomes a scarce resource (Basehart 1973, 70, Netting, 1969). In Denka the number of households had been 463 in sub-kebele 02 and 03 just before the 1991 land redistribution. However, there were 250 new applicants for land. The 1991 land redistribution reallocated the same amount of land that has been occupied by 463 households to more than 800 households. This action intensified the scarcity of land. In Denka, the 1991 land redistribution is an additional cause of land shortage. "Rural land" as per the definition of the 1975 land reform proclamation is land outside the boundaries of a municipality or town. Rural land can be provided to "persons who reside within the area [PA] but do not have work or sufficient means of livelihood" (*Negarit Gazet,* 1975, No.26, 96). Despite this definition, the 1991 land redistribution provided land to residents of Wuchale town, which is a municipal town. Most of the people were not dependent on agricultural land before 1991. The recent redistribution included these people because areas, which were under the control of the DERG, had encircled Wuchale. As a result, the people of the town could not engage in petty trade as the town was locked out. They could not bring in or take out supplies. Thus, the reform included the people in order to give them a means of livelihood and to enlist their support.

The land shortage has its own impact on the existing social organizations and arrangements of access to land. Ideally newly established households tend to establish their own separate residential, economic and consumption units (Yared: 1999, 4). Teferi (1998, 33) also noted that, "Most married couples in Tawa leave their parents homestead for a new one as son [sic] as

possible, since they want to be seen as strong household not in their fathers homestead but in their own." Netting (1993, 66) also inferred that, “In Swiss alpine community of Torbel, the autonomy of the household, which has its own dwelling, barns, store house, cellars, livestock and diverse mix of fields is emphasized by the separate post martial residence correlating with the establishment of an independent enterprise.” The same used to be the case in the study area, Denka KA. However, there is a significant change in recent years. Presently, there are newly established households that are forced to establish their houses with in the father's *bota* land. Some of them even live with the husband's household of origin, sharing production and consumption for more years after the first year of their marriage. The major reason for such a change is related to the dwindling 'land fund' compared to the increasing population size. Though, at the moment, there is a son building his house in his fathers *bota* land, his brothers will soon pursue the same trend as there are no solutions in the foreseeable future. Consider the following case:

> Ali (case 7) has two sons who got married in 1990. Both the children have a 1 *gamad* land each, as they are living in sub-kebele 01, which is in the pre-1991 land reform area. However, they both built their house within the *bota* land of their father.

Out of the total sample households, 11.5 per cent of the newly established households fall into this category. The phenomenon is most significant in parts of the research area where the 1991 EPRDF land redistribution prevail (see cases, Fisseha: case 6, Yemer: case 5). As Teferi (1995, 34) noted these newly established households, "…are represented by their fathers in PAs or to put is in another way, "a new domain" which stands between the already contrasting "domestic" and "public" domains, is in the making." Whenever such households want to take a credit from the Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI), he (not often she) should do so

in his father's name as he lacks the collateral (see case 6, Fisseha). The name of these households is not even found in the taxpayers list. This phenomenon also altered intra-household relationship between fathers and sons. Kabeer (1997, 263) argued that different members of a household have different and possibly conflicting preference. Decision-making will also occur through a process of bargaining and negotiation. In Denka, however, fathers have possessed the lion share in decision-making and they are the powerful counterparts in the process of bargaining and negotiation not because they make the major economic contribution but because they possess the major means of production, land.

The existence of such households, added to the existing land shortage, brings change to sharecropping arrangement. Sharecropping was and it still is the commonest means of access to land. The share of products between sharecropping counterparts varied according to distance and fertility of land. The furthest the land from the homestead and the less fertile the land, the less the landowner gets. Moreover, both the landowner and the tenant contributed seed. The tenant also contributed labour and oxen. Hoben (1973, 138) confirmed that the tenant should contribute seed; oxen and labour and then the tenant would get from one half to three quarter of the harvest. In Ankober too Weissleder (1965, 110) reported that the sharing (of yield) is often half and half, in poor and unproductive location and the ratio of division may go to 1/5 to the lord and 4/5 for the tenant. The peasants of the study area used to share crop with the *nech lebash* and other landowners based on the arrangement that the tenant would get 2/3 while the landowner would get 1/3 of the yield. This arrangement also existed in the Italian period and for some years after the 1975 land reform.

However, as land gets less abundant, this arrangement changes. The arrangement became half and half for both the landowner and the tenant. Factors such as distance and fertility became less important in the division of out put. Later on only the tenant started to contribute seed. At present, the landowner is asking for more advantages, as land is becoming in short supply. The tenant used to take the stalk and the straw after threshing. The landowner would solely get the grain. These days, however, the landowner is asking for half of the stalk and straw. Some landowners have gone to the extent that the tenant has to pay tax for their land. Most of the households do not lease out their *wojed* (land closer to the homestead) land. They used it to plant crops of their preference, particularly *Teff*. These landowners are now demanding the tenant to plough their *wojed* land for free, which is called *gulema* (free gift). Landowners are aware of the demand for land, which is progressively growing over time. Therefore, they are now in a better position to bargain and to get the best out of their land. The negotiation and bargaining is now taking a market form in which the less supply of land instigated more demand and an increasing return.

Conclusion

Some researchers argued that since the 1975 and subsequent land reforms of 1983, 1991 and 1997, land failed to differentiate households. Ababe (1997) argued that, "… as long as administrative based land distribution remains intact, land ownership *per se* become a weak factor with which to differentiate households." In the same vein, Ege (1999, 42-43) also argued that, " Access to land become in theory a right of every peasant…. Access to land becomes cheaper." By implication Ege confirms that, as land is cheaper and easily accessible, it can hardly differentiate households.

It is true that households that own land through administrative based land redistribution cannot be differentiated as they got the land on criteria that is beyond their decision making power. Presently, there are households that do not own land and that will not own land through administrative based land redistribution. They do not own land because they were not old enough to own land in their name during the administrative based land redistribution. They will not own land in the future because the 1996 land reallotment proclamation promulgated by the Amahara Regional State states that no land redistribution will be carried out in areas that are freed by EPRDF forces from the Derg before 1991 and where land redistribution had been carried out. Part of the research area fail in this category. In the remaining part of Denka, new land redistribution will hardly be carried out because of fear of conflict amongst residents. On the other hand, access to land through resettlement is rejected by 80 per cent of the interviewed households. Moreover, most of the households of the area do not use chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, in order to increase their output. Instead, they depend on increasing land size so that they can get more land from a larger plot of land. Whatever the case is households that do not have land should have one, as it is a crucial resource to maintain the viability of the household. Therefore the remaining resort to access land is sharecropping. Sharecropping arrangements involve relationships between people. Therefore, they involve bargaining and negotiation that can benefit one of the counterparts and that becomes detrimental to the other. In the case of Denka, landowners benefited in the negotiation for land as they own the more demanded but severely abundant resource, land.

CHAPTER 4

The Role of Livestock and Labor

Introduction

Peasant households utterly depend on cultivation of crops and raring of animals for their livelihood. In order to carry out both activities a household should have land. Unless otherwise a household that considers it self a peasant farmer has land, it can hardly cultivate. As a result, most peasant cultivators try to access land in different ways. However, this does not mean that all peasants that own land cultivate it. Instead, the chief handicap of poorer households, declining households and female heads of households is the inability to fully utilize their allotted plot of land. The reason behind their handicap is the need of other production factors other than land; most predominantly, livestock and labor.

Livestock is the most important asset, without which peasants fell below the subsistence level faster than usual (Mesfin, 1991). It is a means for cultivating land, a "bulwark against destitution in case of calamities" (Yared: 1999, 77) and a means of showing inter-household differentiation (Ababe: 1997, 82).

Labor is another important factor of production. It is significantly crucial in agricultural tasks. It can also be used to access other important factors of production such as land and livestock, particularly draft power. Some researchers argued that, whenever there is a good management of labor by household heads, it could bring about economic differentiation by accessing other household resources (Teferi, 1998). In any case labor cannot be identified in isolation from other household resources. The mere ownership of labor in the rural parts of the country can hardly make a household viable, as it cannot be exchanged in the market for an adequate

amount that can sustain the household for a longer period of time. The labor market is limited to certain period of time in a year and the remuneration is limited to a few amount of money that can solely supplement the income of the household. Moreover, in areas where land is abundant and population density is low, family income is found to vary directly with the labor resource of households. When population density rises, however, the land scarcity limits the productivity of labor, the relation between family income and family size decline in importance (Barlett 1980, 550)

The subsequent chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, an attempt will be made to discuss the different mechanisms of access to livestock, the role of livestock in economic differentiation and the relationship of land and livestock. In the second section, a discussion of the different mechanisms to access labor, the role of labor in economic diversification of household and the relationship of labor and economic differentiation will be made.

4.1. The role of Livestock

4.1.1. Access to livestock

Livestock are a crucial factor of production that augments the ability of households to cultivate their land properly and on time. However, all households do not possess livestock. Most of the households in the study area do not indeed possess the determining means of production i.e. oxen. Their major aim is therefore, access to an ox. Ownership of a pair of oxen is taken as an indicator of attainment of independent and self-reliant household (Yared 1999). The following table shows ownership of livestock and other animals.

Table 4.1. Kind and number of animals

Kind of Animals	Number of animals owned by households										
	None	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Oxen	61*	25	46	2							
Cows	75	44	12	3							
Calf	101	20	12	1							
Heifer	108	22	4								
Sheep	119	2	5	3	1	3	1				
Goats	108	5	7	7	5		1		1		
Donkeys	123	4	7								
Woyfen (Bull)	120	12	1	1							
Hen	66	11	14	20	7	9	3	1	2		1
Beehive	127	5	2								

* Refers to number of households

Source: Field data, 2001

As it can be discerned in the table most of the households do not own livestock particularly, oxen. Abebe (1997, 91) noted that, "That the ox plough requires a air of oxen meant that those with either none or only one have to depend on others to execute such crucial agricultural practices as land preparation, sowing, and threshing. The availability or lack of a pair of oxen determines the level of income of households and the degree and mechanisms of dependence of peasants on others, which plays a decisive role in conditioning the way in which households enter into social and economic relations and in their livelihood. Therefore, they use different mechanisms to access livestock be it oxen or otherwise. It is worth discussing the different mechanisms because households that do not own livestock, particularly draft power, can utilize these mechanisms and access land and labor. The availability of such mechanisms enables households to support their household despite scarcity of draft power.

Wonfel: this arrangement is made between a household head that has oxen and another household head that has not. The latter is expected to cultivate the land of the oxen owner for two days and his own plot of land for one day. The arrangement of the working days is reckoned on the basis of the input the two households contribute. The oxen owner contributes two third of the input i.e. a pair of oxen while the labor owner contributes a third of the input i.e. his labor. The *wonfel* arrangement benefits households who cannot farm their plot of land themselves because of old age, sickness, physical handicap, lack of labor or lack of male labor in female-headed household. Occasionally, households that own more than a pair of oxen use the arrangement in order to cultivate land that is sharecropped in. *Wonfel* benefits most households that do not own draft power but that possesses enough labor. As the arrangement needs physical strength on the side of the oxen less counterpart, newly established households often use this mechanism (see case 1: Endris). However, it is not restricted to these groups of households as most of the other households (45 per cent) are oxen less. The oxen less households in this relationship can be at a disadvantage if the oxen owner breaches off the relationship unexpectedly at a period of high intensity of work. The intensity of work at the oxen less side is often constrained as it has access to draft power every other day.

Ribbi: as the word indicates, this arrangement involves reproduction. A household will give one or more of its livestock to another household for various reasons. Some of the reasons on the side of the "*ribbi* givers" include lack of herds boy/girl, lack of fodder compared to the size of livestock and engagement in other activities or occupations other than agriculture. Most households who live in the town of Wuchale including those who own land in the kebele association give their livestock to households who are farmers (see case 4: Ali Shibeshe). On

the other hand, households take livestock in *ribbi* arrangement when they have adequate labor but no livestock and when they have better access to fodder. Occasionally households who own one cow take another one in order to increase the probability of having a calf. The arrangement between the "*ribbi* giver" and the *ribbi* taker" can be done verbally or in written contract. The "*ribbi* taker" is often recruited based on the social network and proven quality of hard work exhibited. The sharing of off springs can be done in a lottery system or through a special arrangement. The lottery is drawn when the animal gives the first birth. In the next birth, the offspring goes directly to the other counterpart who lost in the first lottery. For animals that give birth to two offspring, the partners will draw a lottery to take one each. In most of the cases the "*ribbi* giver" leave his share with the "*ribbi* taker". Unless a special arrangement is concluded, the sharing of offspring is made after the animal becomes older.

The arrangement is the major strategy to access draft power in two ways. First a household can wait until the calf grow up or second, it can sell the calf and buy a *woyfen* (bull) or weaker ox by adding some more money from other sources such as credit or sell of grain.

Ye arba: the arrangement involves giving ones ox to another household for a certain period of time in exchange for a payment of grain. The household head that takes the ox should take good care of the ox while it is with him (not often her). He should feed it properly, give it water, take care of it when it is sick and he should not over use its labor. Failure to do so will result is the discontinuation of the relationship. Moreover, the reputation of the "*Ye arba* taker" will be ruined.

A household gives its ox/oxen in *ye arba* arrangement for various reasons. Inability to farm ones cropland because of physical feebleness caused by age or sickness, lack of labor, unwillingness to use the *wonfel* arrangement, owning three oxen, are some of the reasons. Those households that have physical disability often give their land in sharecropping and their ox/oxen in *ye arba* arrangement in order to maximize the return they get in grain. Those households that own one extra ox over a pair give it in *ye arba* arrangement in order to reduce the need for fodder and in order to increase the availability of grain in their household. The other households that enter into *ye arba* arrangement are those that have one ox and disfavored the *mekenajo* arrangement which has time constraints in the work.

The amount of grain the ox owner gets used to be two dawellas[*] (4 quintals) of grain. However, as the productivity of the land decreases, the amount of grain paid for the *ye arba* arrangement proportionally decreased to 1 dawella and 10 quinna[**]. Whenever there is chronic food shortage in the area, the payment made to the ox owner in the *ye arba* arrangement can be put off to another time. The local people call this action *quinna sekela* (lit. hanging the grain container called quinna) until a good harvest returns. Even after a period of food shortage the arrangement can continue if the *"ye arba* giver" feels that his counter part is taking good care of the ox.

Mekenajo: The *mekenajo* arrangement is made between two household heads that own an ox each. As the households contribute an equal amount of input, they plough their land in an equal turn. They will exchange their ox in a day or two based on the period of intensity of work. Two household heads that access an ox each in *ye arba* arrangement can also enter into a *mekenajo*

[*] 1 dawella =2 quintals
[**] 10 quinna = 1 quintal

arrangement. The partners in a *mekenajo* arrangement share none of the output they obtain from their field. The *mekenajo* arrangement can have some constraints on agricultural tasks in times of intense work. Households can hardly prepare their land at the right time. This constraint has an impact on both households.

Wonfel-Mekenajo: in such a relationship, a household head that owns three or more oxen will give an ox to another household head that owns only one ox. The ox of the former, unlike *ye arba* arrangement will not permanently stay with the latter. The "ox giver" enters into such an arrangement in order to avoid the *ye arba* arrangement for fear of improper care from the ”*ye arba* taker". In return for the ox, the "ox giver" is entitled to get one day of labor from the "ox taker" while the latter is entitled for two days labor. The reckoning of the working days is based on the fact that the "ox taker" contributes two third of the input necessary for cultivation i.e. labor and an ox while the "ox giver" contributes a third of the input i.e. an ox. The arrangement is the converse of the *wonfel* arrangement.

Most of the aforementioned mechanisms except *ribbi* are used to access draft power instead of other animals. The reason is related to the crucial role oxen play in the viability of households. Oxen are so important that it is used as a hallmark to differentiate between poor and rich households. When peasants of the area are asked to stratify households into poor, medium and rich, ownership of oxen becomes the first indicator in stratifying households. Households that own two pairs of oxen are rich and those households that own a pair of oxen are medium. However, owning less can be taken as one more indicator of peasants' poverty in Ethiopia. Furthermore, with only the meager crop production of households, they can hardly meet their subsistence requirement, let alone their numerous cash obligations if their income is not

supplemented with availability of livestock (Mesfin, 1991). Moreover, draft power is a critical input into crop production and access to more land. It is a crucial input in crop production as plowing at the optimal time has a marked impact on crop yield (cf. Dessalegn: 1994, 75-76). Households without livestock rely either on the aforementioned mechanisms or sharecrop out their land. Both strategies have their own disadvantages. Dependency on the different mechanisms of access to draft power reduces efficiency of households while dependency on sharecropping arrangements reduces the yield they could get had they themselves cultivated the land.

The success of households also depend on the ownership of livestock particularly oxen. Whenever, a household head owns a pair of oxen he (not often she) can sharecrop in more land. He is then able to buy small ruminants like sheep and goats, which can be exchanged easily. If he/she owns small ruminants lack of labor can hardly become a problem, as he/she can employ labor by selling a goat or a sheep. He/she can also organize a *Jige* with the money he/she gets from the sell of a goat or sheep. A household head that owns two or more pairs of oxen is more advantageous. He can choose the best lands owned by female-headed households or declining households and increase the household's crop production. If there are children who are old enough to plow, then the ability of the household to become food secure is more guaranteed.

The role of livestock is not solely limited to the provision of draft power. Livestock also provides supply of milk and butter, power for transportation, production of saleable offspring and it is a vehicle for saving and investment. In fact the key role of livestock is to provide the household a means for saving. Most households of the study area invest on either cows/heifer or sheep/goats if they do not own an ox. Out of the total sample households sixty-one of them

are oxen less. Out of these number fourteen households invested on cows and heifer and nine households invested on sheep or goats (three of the households belong to the group that own either cows or heifer). Those households who bought cows expect to possess an ox most recently either through reproduction or through the sale of a calf and some more grain.

4.1.2. Land and Livestock

Land and livestock are very much related as they are both a crucial production factors and as the number and type of livestock households own is directly related to the size of land they own. Moreover, the availability of grazing area affects the number and type of livestock households own.

Dessalegn cited in Yigeremew (1999, 212) argued that the progressive diminution of cropland, shortage of fodder and insecurity of tenure made investment in oxen non-profitable. Female-headed households do not however invest in farm oxen as the culture of the area forbids females' cultivation of land. In the sample household 60.5 percent of the female-headed households preferred not to invest in oxen. Other households invest in both oxen and other livestock whether they have larger plot of land or not. More than 50 per cent of the sample households in the area own one or two oxen (18.7 per cent own one ox and 34.3 per cent own two oxen). Those households that own two or more oxen do not all have excessive land holding. In the sample household out of the total number of households that own two or more oxen 36.9 per cent owns less than one hectare of land. Most of these households also own other livestock. In this case, the impact of land size in the ownership of livestock is less exaggerated because most of the households sharecrop in land. Female-headed households that own a pair of oxen and own less than one hectare of land do not sharecrop out their land. Instead they make use of the *Jige* or *wonfel* arrangement in order to cultivate their land. However, the

impact of land on ownership of livestock is not totally insignificant. Most of the households that own more or equal to five *timad* ($\geq$ 1.25 hectare) of land possess more livestock compared to those households that own less than that size of land.

The impact of land on livestock is not only related to the number of livestock a household owns. Land also affects the availability of animal feed. Land shortage in general is a major problem in the area. Grazing land in particular is very limited. Most of the land that was restricted for grazing was converted into cropland due to population increase. Mountainsides are enclosed as common forest enclosures that are currently owned by newly established households. The common grazing land called *benne*, which used to be accessible to all households is either enclosed as common forest enclosure or it is converted to cropland. Consequently, households are forced to restrict their livestock in a strip of land along their cropland, which they left for this purpose. The strip of land left along cropland is considered as the main grazing land. Besides, mountainsides are alternatively used as grazing area particularly during cropping seasons. The following table shows the area where animals graze and the source of fodder:

Table 4.2: Animals grazing area and source of fodder per percentage of households.

Grazing area	**Percentage of households**	**Source of fodder**	**Percentage of households**
Animals grazing along mountainsides	8.2	Grass on grazing land (Land strip found along cropland plus restricted grazing area)	31.3
Animals grazing in restricted grazing areas only	2.2	Grass from cut and carry	9.2
Animals grazing along cropland only	62.4	Hay	3.4
Animals grazing along cropland plus mountainsides	9.4	Crop residue	2.3
Animals grazing along cropland plus in restricted grazing area	4.7	Grass on grazing land plus grass from cut and carry plus hay plus crop residue	4.6
Animals grazing along cropland plus animals fed in homestead	3.7	Grass on grazing land plus hay plus crop residue	2.3
Animals grazing along cropland plus along mountainsides plus in restricted grazing area	1.2	Grass on grazing land plus hay plus grass from cut and curry	2.3
Animals grazing along cropland plus along mountainsides plus animals fed in homestead	8.2	Grass on grazing land plus grass from cut and carry plus crop residue	1.2
		Grass on grazing land plus crop residue	1.2
		Grass on grazing land plus grass from cut and carry	24.7
		Grass on grazing land plus hay	15.1
		Grass from cut and carry plus crop residue	1.2
		Grass from cut and carry plus hay	1.2
Total	**100**	**Total**	**100**

Source: Field survey, 2001

Shortage of grazing area and the subsequent shortage of fodder resulted in land degradation. Informants attested that before the 1975 land reform, the major means of maintenance of the fertility of land was laying the stalk of sorghum and corn on the cropland so that animals will feed on the leaves. The stalk will remain on the cropland for longer period of time until part of

it is decomposed. Presently, however, the stalk will be collected following the yield as it is exchanged as source of income and as a means of fodder in the household during the most pressing season.

Conclusion

Households of Denka can be subdivided in to rich, middle and poor household. As per the peasants ranking, rich households are those households that have two or more pair of oxen, two or more cows, donkeys, small ruminants, heifer, bull, etc. They will also have a store of grain that can be consumed all year long without shortage. They can also lend grain to food short households. Middle households are those households that can feed themselves through out the year with out shortage. They will have a pair of oxen, a cow, some donkeys, and small ruminants. Poor household can hardly feed themselves for six months. They will have no oxen of their own. However, they can have an ox in *ye arba* arrangement. They can also own a cow in *ribbe* arrangement.

Presently, however, the ranking of households based on ownership of livestock can hardly be possible. Shortage of land in general and lack of grazing area in particular, make livestock raring an impossible task. Mountainside that used to be grazing area is now enclosed as common forest enclosure. Most of the households therefore do not increase their livestock beyond the carrying capacity of the grazing area that is often found along croplands. As oxen are the most important livestock, most households restrict themselves to at most a pair of oxen and some other small ruminants. Those households who own more than a pair of oxen would give the extra one in *ye arba* arrangement to other households in order to maximize grain access and in order to reduce consumption of fodder. As almost all households reduce the

number of their household due to shortage of grazing area, ownership of large number of livestock can hardly become an indicator of wealth in the contemporary situation. However in the coming years wealthier households might be differentiated by their ownership of camel (see the next chapter for details).

4.2. The Role of Labor

Alexander Chayanov, consider labor as one important factor in forwarding the theory of dependency ratio. He predicted that intensity of labor would be determined by the ratio between consumer and workers (Barlett, 1980a). The higher the dependency ratio, the lower supply of household labor become; and the lower the supply of labor, the weaker the household's enterprise (Donham, 1994).

Teferi (1998) argued that labor in Tawa, Southern Wollo, plays a crucial role in enhancing household access to draft power and land and facilitate money earning through off-farming activities when enterprising household heads manage it in a proficient manner.

The household as a production unit mainly depends on the labor of its members. Almost every member of the household except the very young and the very old has to participate in the different tasks, which are considered to be suitable for that particular member. The tasks can be allocated based on either sexual or age difference. In the study area there are some tasks allocated to men or women. Younger children are often the helping hand in the household. However, male children will take over plowing, as they get older while female children take over activities related to their age.

Gender difference can be manifested in male plowing, harvesting, and threshing and in female taking care of children preparation of food and management of food at household level. The male household head is mainly engaged in cultivation of the cropland. He is also the manager at the household level. Thus, he allocates tasks to each member of the household. The household head is responsible for provision of food and clothing to the household members. He is also responsible to keep the harmony of the household. The head is the boss around the household. For instance, although he discussed the sale of major grain and livestock with his wife, he often makes the final decision. Conflict between the husband and the wife arises whenever the woman sells a larger quantity of a major crop (like *teff* without the consent of her husband). Female-heads of households take over all the responsibilities of the male head of a household except plowing, harvesting and threshing.

The role of woman in the household includes teaching her daughter/s all female related works, preparation of food and management of food items, provision of food for children, participating in food-for-work programs in order to free the male for cultivation of cropland, sell of fire wood in order to substantiate the income of the household. She can sell hen, butter and eggs without the consent of her husband. The woman is also expected to help in weeding and in the preparation of the threshing area called *wudema*, in a labor accessing mechanism called *wonfel.* As hired labor that can support the woman's household task is almost absent in the area, the woman is the most burdened. Her burden increases with decrease in the economic status of the household. In such cases, she has to subsidize the income of the household by participating in income generating activities. The major income generating activity in the area is sell of firewood that need extra effort in collecting the firewood in the first place and carrying it to the market. It takes 3-4 hours walk to and from the market. If there are no female children who are

old enough to cook food at home, the wife has to cook food upon return from the market or before she left for the market.

The availability of child labor particularly in the peak periods of cultivation and weeding is crucial for the productivity of the household (Yared: 1999, 82). Children of the study area start to participate in different activities in the household as young as eight years old. The task of both younger boys and girls at this age is often restricted to looking after small ruminants usually with their elder siblings. As they become older they will take full responsibility of taking care of all livestock including cattle. As grazing land is restricted to mountainsides and along cropland, the task of children in this capacity has become difficult. They have to keep a closer look on the movement of their animals in order to avoid their entry into a nearby common forest enclosure or crop field. During the harvesting season livestock has to graze on mountainsides. As children get older, they take over or assist in cultivation of land, weeding, harvesting and threshing. Intensity of weeding is essential for the productivity of the household. Weeding is labor-consuming activity. Thus, it needs utilization of more labor. One way of summoning labor from other households is *wonfel*. As *wonfel* is an arrangement of labor access whereby friends or peer groups come together to plow, harvest, thresh or weed, having children is advantageous in summoning more labor. As *wonfel* is age-biased, a household head cannot summon the labor of children from other households. Each child in the household might organize *wonfel* simultaneously. Therefore, having more children might help to access more labor. *Wonfel* partners do not often exceed three, thus, organizing *wonfel* by one member of the household and by more than one member of the household makes a difference. Therefore, having children is an advantage at this point. Children can also be hired out in order to bring in money. The case of Ali can be a case in point.

> Ali's son [case4] was employed as *mindegna* (hired labor) in a wealthier household for a year and earned 200.00 Ethiopian Birr. As Ali did only have one ox at that time, he bought a bull, which was not strong enough to be used as draft power, but can be ready within a year, with the money. After a year the household owns a pair of oxen, which increased the efficiency of the household.

Most of the households in the area do not often hire labor now days. Those who hire labor are rich households who have small ruminants to be sold and who earn money by selling coffee beans, *chat*, eucalyptus tree, sugar cane and fruits. Households who take credit from ACSI or from other creditors and who cannot repay their debt hire out labor in order to obtain money for the purpose (see Case 5: Yemer).

Households depend on *Jige* whenever there is work that needs more labor. *Jige* is organized for agricultural tasks (plowing, harvesting. threshing, weeding) or for other works such as wedding. The *Jige* organizer prepares a feast that includes *Tella* (local beer) or *Bukri* (non-alcoholic drink) and home made bread. The number of people involved in *Jige* is often between the ranges of 10-15. Informants claim that *Jige* and wo*nfel* are continuously increasing owing to the land degradation in the area. They inferred that with the decrease in the fertility of land, the work on cropland increases. In order to get more yield households have to prepare the land three to four times and weeding has to be performed repeatedly. In order to do this, households need more labor and more oxen. Households who do not have draft power organized *Jige* for plowing while those who own draft power organize *Jige* for weeding. More endowed households who are able to access more land through sharecropping organizes *Jige* for both plowing and weeding. These households can easily organize *Jige* as they have the resource to do so. Female-headed households organize *Jige* for plowing. As *Jige* involves reciprocity female-heads of households reciprocate by participating in weeding.

Jige can also be considered as a means to access oxen because people who participate in *Jige* organized for the purpose of plowing come with their oxen. *Jige* is organized for a day. Therefore, the ability of the organizer to get the best out of the day's work is crucial.

Households, who failed to organize *Jige* because of scarcity of resources, revert to another mechanism of access to labor, which is called *lemena* (lit. begging). *Lemena* is a means of access to labor whereby "labor rich" households help "labor short" households. Whenever a friend, neighbor or kin requested the labor of his/her counterpart, they will help him/her in agricultural or otherwise tasks. *Lemena* does not involve preparation of feasts by the person who request the labor of his counterparts. However, a household head who request for labor in *lemena* arrangement must have a very good relationship with his neighbors, friends and kin groups. He/she must provide assistance whenever the latter needs it, he/she must share whatever is available in times of need particularly in times of food shortage. Poorer households who do not possess draft power extend their labor to rich households and in return they will get draft power in a *lemena* arrangement. Thus, *lemena* can also be used to access draft power.

The aforementioned mechanisms ease the lack of labor in households. Almost all mechanisms except *mendegna* (hired labor) cannot however, solve shortage of herds in the household. Most of the households depend on the labor of their children as herders. Those households in the area that do not have children could rarely revert to hired labor, as the income of most of the households does not allow them to do so. Therefore households that do not have herd's boy/girl do not have much livestock except a pair of oxen if they have one. In the sample households, twenty households have no children. Out of the twenty households, three quarter of them have either no livestock or they have one or two oxen. Animal diversification is practical if there are children that can look after the livestock.

The availability or lack of labor in the household affects crop diversification. A household that diversifies its crop production to *chat*, coffee or sugar cane needs more labor because of the nature of these plants. These plants need a closer and continuous follow-up. They are mostly planted in the homestead *(wojed*) land. Labor accesses through the different mechanisms are often used in the farmland instead of the homestead land. Therefore, households that diversify to these plants need to have extra-labor (mostly children) who can free them from other agricultural tasks on the farmland so that they can focus their full labor and attention to these plants. Consider the following case:

> Awel (case 9) is the most successful household head in the area. He has planted *chat,* sugar cane, coffee, different fruit trees and eucalyptus tree. He earned a good sum of money by selling the products from these plants. He has four sons and four daughters. They are not married. Two of the sons are old enough to plow. Thus, they take over the whole production of grain. Awel is solely engaged in coffee, *chat* and sugar cane production.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the need for labor can be fulfilled using the abovementioned different mechanisms. However, there are some activities that cannot be fully carried out using the labor accessing mechanisms. Some of them include the need for herds' boy/girl and labor needed for diversification of crop on the homestead land. In view of the progressive decline in the economic status of households in the area, the use of hired labor is scarce. Therefore, it is mandatory to depend on labor in the household or in mechanisms of labor transfer from one household to another.

Economic theorizing of the household is coached in terms of decision-making. There are, however, divergence in conceptualizing intra-household relations between those who deny conflict in the household and those who accept the existence of conflict. The first consider the household as having a joint welfare function which is based on either altruistic consensus within the household based on interdependence utility functions or else based on absolute but benevolent dictator who heads the household and ensures altruistic decision-making outcomes. Others challenge the preceding view and base their analysis on game-theoretic bargaining models. They argued that since different members of a household have different and possibly conflicting preference, decision-making will occur through a process of bargaining and negotiation (Kabeer, 1997: 263). The ethnography of intra-household relationship of household members is more complementary with the first group of theorizing than the second.

CHAPTER 5

Coping strategies of households

> "The position of the rural population is that of a man standing permanently upon the neck in water, so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him."
>
> (R.H. Tawney)[*]

The Northern part of Ethiopia in general and Wollo in particular is a drought prone area. Wollo has not been a surplus area for quite a long period. Its arable land had been used up by continuous and unsustainable ways of productions. Moreover, it had been hit by two major famines[2] and many more droughts. Its existing situation is not also encouraging. Land degradation, population growth and land shortage worsened the condition of the peasantry. As Dessalegn (1997, 58) put it, "Wollo in brief is a land of humble potentials densely inhabited by millions of small and hardy peasants who have for centuries practiced what they know best namely subsistence agriculture." Therefore, their livelihood is intertwined with risk, which stands against their main purpose of maintaining the viability of their household. Borrowing from the definition of Smith and et al. (2000, 1946) risk can here be defined as "uncertain consequences, and in particular exposure to potentially unfavorable circumstances." They can hardly produce enough to support their family through out the year (Mesfin, 1991). Due to this fact coping strategies are very important in the life of the Wollo peasantry. Coping strategies

[*] Quoted in Mesfi Woldemariam (1986)

[2] Famine is defined by Mesfin (1986,9) as, "a general and wide spread, prolonged and persistent, extra ordinary and insufferable hunger lasting for several months and affecting the majority of the rural population over a more or less extensive area, resulting in total social and economic disorganization and mass death, by starvation."

denote a range of household directed activities, which exploited a stock of assets, when food is scarce or expensive (Duffield, 1991). Coping strategies are not new mechanisms that appear in times of crises. Instead they are "modifications and extensions" of what are essentially the normal conditions of subsistence (Ibid.) Coping strategies can be group directed; in this case however, they are not communal. Different households utilize different coping strategies based on their incomes and their assets. Some wealthier households have more assets, better access to credit and good social support than poor households. Thus, they are in a better position of survival in times of food shortage than less endowed households.

Different researchers have different perceptions regarding the ability of households to cope with different calamities. Dessalegn (1991: 86-87) argued that peasants are resourceful and skilful in the area of environmental control and soil conservation. They possess a very good knowledge of seed varieties, which enable them to change their seeding plans in response to climatic change. They also possess a good knowledge of store management. Peasants on the whole are aware of the environment degradation and are able to protect the environment and employ different strategies. Mesfin (1991: 77-78) inferred that peasants are powerless in the socio-economic and political sense, which they have no role in the creation and they are at the same time powerless in “the realm of nature”. Peasants are entirely dependent on natural forces in their crop cultivation. They do nothing except preparing the field in improving the “given condition”. As Mesfin contends, “in every case it is natural conditions that largely prescribed and set the pattern for the peasants’ economic performance. The peasants themselves confirm this except that they replace natural forces with God”

Despite these different arguments, many researchers are drawing attention to the greater efficiency of small farmers, both in productivity per land unit and in the use of scarce resources (Barlett, 1984:6). In such a manner, Getachew (1995: 263-276) argued that households in Kembatan-Hadiya have three interrelated coping strategies. These include first, coping strategies, which are related to the customary rural institutions, second, coping strategies that focus on alleviating food insecurity including access to land through various mechanisms, involvement of peasants in the market, crop and livestock diversification, and finally the cooperation of institutions such as households themselves (intra-household), households and the community (inter-household), the market and the state in maintaining the survival of the household. Yared (1999) who studied peasants in Wogda, Northern Shewa, described the various ways in which household heads maintain viability of their households. These include crop-patterning, livestock as a source of cash, seed management, and non-agricultural income earning and expense management. In the same vein, Webb (1994, 56-57) argued that the pattern of coping is dependent on the pre-crisis characteristic of households. He further discussed that households progressively narrow their options of coping as conditions worsened. In such an attempt they first turn to risk minimization which include saving, investment, accumulation and diversification; then as conditions become worse, they would move to the second step which is risk absorption and finally they would turn to risk taking to survive. In patterning their coping strategies, the economic status of households is crucial. Wealthier households have more assets, better access to credit and other social support and more non-farming income than do the poor. They are better able to protect their level of consumption during drought related food crisis.

The research site is found in one of the food deficit areas of Wollo. Food insecurity[1] has become a reality in the life of many households. There is "transitory food insecurity" at the household level almost every year. Moreover, food shortage that chronically affects most of the households existed every four year. Out of the total sample households 73.9 per cent are food insecure for most of the year. About 40 percent of the households are food insecure from four to five months. The following table shows months of food insecurity in the sample households.

Table 5.1. Food insecurity of households in 2000/01-harvest year

Months of food shortage	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of Households	35	-	2	9	22	34	13	8	8	2	-	1	-

Source: Field Survey, 2001

In an attempt to investigate the coping strategies of households, Webb's (1994) approach is adopted. Webb has divided coping strategies into risk minimization, risk absorption and risk taking to survive. In the following sections each of the coping strategies will be discussed from the point of view of the households in the study area. However, before a full-fledged analysis of the coping strategies the causes of food insecurity in the area will be discussed.

5.1. Causes of food insecurity

In dealing with coping strategies it is appropriate to discuss why the life of households in the study area is entwined with food insecurity and risk. The major factors that result food insecurity are land degradation caused by landlessness and shortage of land unfavorable climatic condition and shortage of draft power.

[1] Food insecurity is defined by Reutlinger, S (1987) as "lack of access by all people at all times to sufficient food for an active and healthy life."

Land degradation is defined by United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP: 1993, 133) as, "… a loss or reduction of land productivity as a result of human activity." Land degradation includes either degradation of soil or vegetation or both. The cause of land degradation in the area is directly related to land scarcity. Landlessness or shortage of land forced newly established household heads and/or households whose family size increased after land redistribution to cut trees that cover mountainsides and plow it. As the forest cover shrunk, rainfall run off increased, contributing to flooding and soil erosion. Moreover, households cultivate lands like mountainsides that are not covered by trees and that are exposed to erosion, which cause land degradation. This activity is instigated by land scarcity of households compared to the number of people who need land for the subsistence existence of their household members. The government change in 1991 contributed to deforestation in the area. For instance, Aromba *got* that is found in sub-kebele 02, was mostly covered by forest. However, the people of the area following the take over of EPRDF forces in 1991 cut down the trees. Impact of soil erosion and landslide are easily observable. The researcher has observed the impact of Inchene River in sub-kebele 01 and 02. The river eroded coffee land; washed away number of coffee plants and exposed their roots to sunlight. Erosion and deforestation also resulted in landslide. The retreat of walkways from their previous location to mountainsides reveals the impact of landslide. Many croplands became useless because of landslide while some other croplands are in use despite their exposure to landslide.

The peasants of the area are aware of the land degradation in the area. In explaining the degradation, older people compared the yield obtained presently and in the past. Three or four decades ago, the output of the land was enormous, albeit less intensity of work. Presently, however, peasants have intensified their work. They spent more time and labour in ploughing

and weeding; harvest on time and try to reduce pre- and post-thresh wastes. Most households plough their cropland three to five times and weed it from two to four times using *wonfel* or *jige* arrangement. However, the output is less than the minimum requirement of the household.

Another major cause of food insecurity in the area is unfavourable climatic conditions. Climatic conditions are very crucial for households, as most of them are dependent on rain fed agriculture. Subsequently, most of the interviewed households responded that erratic rains coupled with the absence of *belg* rains contributed to food shortage in the area. Erratic rain i.e. the untimely resumption and discontinuation of rainfall and long dry months after land preparation and planting, is one of the major factor. Another important factor that contributed to food insecurity in the area is the absence or irregularity of *belg* rains. Ever if there is *belg* rain, it either comes late or stops early. As a result households rarely depend on *belg* rain. As the amount of seed needed is less, *teff* is almost the only grain sown in *belg* for fear of absence of rain and the subsequent loss of seed. However, whenever there is adequate *belg* rain, the months of food shortage are reduced at least by three months i.e. July, August, and September. Otherwise there will be shortage of food in the so-called "starvation months". Dessalegn (1991, 47) observed that, "Since *belg* is absent in the study area [Ambassel] peasants hardly carry on all year."

The diminution of land size and the lack of draft power are another major factors that result in shortage of food. In an attempt to increase productivity households depend on ownership of more land. Therefore, more endowed households tend to maximize their land holding through different mechanisms of rent. The average land size of households is summarized in table 5.2. The diminution of land size is mainly a result of population increase. The increase in population can be observed in the increase of the number of households who need land from 463 to more

than 800 in 1991 land redistribution in just part of the KA. Furthermore, according to the 1994 census, Denka houses a total of 948 farming households (CSA, 1994, 189). Presently, however, there are 1458 households residing in the same KA. Population increase, Boserup (1965) cited in Barlett (1980a, 553) contended resulted in the trend of transition from extensive land use practices to shorter fallow periods, greater attention to soil fertility, change to crop with higher productivity and increased labour investment. There is a trend of increased labour investment in the research area. However, there is almost no fallow period. Even though there is an awareness of land degradation in the area, households make little effort to maintain the fertility of the soil. The most well-known and well-researched reason for this is tenure insecurity. Households could have used chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides in order to compensate for the shortage of land and the infertility of the soil. However, such strategies are often too expensive for most farmers and may render subsistence food production uneconomic. Therefore, almost all households in the research site do not use chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides. Moreover, peasants of the area claim the soil type and the climatic condition of the area is not conducive for chemical fertilisers. Households do not also shift to crops that give more yields on a small area. Instead, they shifted to less productive but drought resistance crops, as the area is drought prone.

Table 5.2. Average land holding per household

	Average land size in hectare/household
Ethiopia (1997/98)*	0.98
Amahara federal state (1997/98)*	1.0
Ambassel *woreda* (1999/2000)**	0.67
Denka Kebele Association (2000/01)***	0.9
Sample Household (2000/01)****	0.87

* Source: CSA. 1998. *Agricultural Survey 1997/98(1990 E.C.): Report on Land Utilization*, Vol. IV. Addis Ababa: CSA.
** Source: Survey done by Ambassel *Woreda* Agricultural Department, 1999/2000.
*** Source: Compiled from Denak kebele association taxpayer's list.
**** Source: Compiled from field survey.

Dessalegn (1997, 75-76) argued that lack of draft power inhibit peasants from performing their agricultural activities at the right time, which resulted in the reduction of yield. The same is true in the research site. Those households that do not own ox/ oxen are amongst the food insecure households (for detail see the chapter on livestock and labor). The average number of draft power held by households in the area is 0.54 oxen, while a pair of oxen is needed for an effective cultivation of land. However, households compensate for the lack of draft power through the different oxen accessing mechanisms.

In order to overcome food insecurity households utilize different coping mechanisms that are discussed in the following sections.

5.2. Risk Minimization

Risk minimization involves measures of investment, accumulation and diversification. This measure is taken in order to maintain the viability of the household members and to avert food insecurity. Peasants often try to avoid risk without undue economic and social cost because risk is an undesirable state of affair (Smith and et al, 2000). In the ensuing sections, the role of crop diversification, livestock diversification and market will be discussed. In dealing with risk and diversification, it is worth noting the relationship between the two. While risk is an important reason for peasants to diversify their income, it is not the only one and in many cases it might not be crucial. Other important reasons for diversification might include economic status of households, the existing heterogeneous ecosystem and the entrepreneurship of household heads and its members (Mohammed Salih, 1992).

5.2.1. Crop Diversification

Households try to minimize the risk of food insecurity by engaging in different activities within the agricultural sector. On of them is crop diversification. Instead of engaging themselves solely in the production of the major food crops, households diversify their production to other non-food cash crops. Some of these cash crops include *chat,* coffee, eucalyptus tree, sesame, some fruits like banana and orange, sugar cane, etc. However, this does not mean that other crops are not convertible to cash. Everything that is produced can become cash crop in time of necessity. Most peasants sell *teff,* as its price is good. Most of the cash earned by most households comes from this single crop. In times of necessity however, even sorghum can be exchanged.

Enterprising peasants produce *chat (catha edulis),* coffee, eucalyptus trees, sesame, sugar cane and fruits like banana, orange, etc. Entrepreneurship though the major factor, it is not the only

one. Availability of water and labor are also important. Coffee, *chat,* and sugar cane need water for their growth and reproduction. They can hardly be planted depending on rainfall alone. They need water through out the year. Thus, the availability of water through out the year, be it irrigation or otherwise (like well) is mandatory. These crops particularly *chat* and coffee needs intense work. The roots of both plants should not be exposed to the sun; therefore soil should be put around the roots of each plant. *Chat* has to be grafted once a year. The harvesting also needs careful handling of each plant. The saleable leaves are collected by hand, which needs more labor. Even when there is water for irrigation, labor is needed for digging and managing the canals.

Though water and labor can constrain diversification, some enterprising household heads use all their effort in order to cultivate these plants and they have succeeded. Consider the following case:

> Awel [case 9] planted coffee in 1994/95. The coffee was harvested and it was sold for 400.00 Birr in 1999/2000. In 1998 his neighbors and himself irrigated their *wojed* land by digging a 3-kilometer canal and bring water from Inchene River. Awel then planted *chat* the same year. In 2000, he harvested the *chat* and sold it for 500.00 Birr. He also planted eucalyptus tree that he sold for 400.00 Birr for a grinding mill constructed nearby his home. He leased land in from the nearby elementary school and planted sugar cane. He used the wastewater from the community tap to water his sugar cane.

Households become rich or at least sustainable whenever the household member especially the head has a good vision. Households who do not depend only on the main food crops become self-sufficient through out the year. They often plant coffee, *chat*, sugar cane or eucalyptus trees that can bring in more money than the main food crop. The former are grown on the *wajed* land for three main reasons. Firstly, these plants especially coffee, sugar cane and *chat* need a closer

follow-up i.e. they should be watered continuously, dug around in order not to expose the roots for sun light and it should be grafted. Secondly, they cannot be grown on the main farm (*berha meret*) as it is needed to grow the main food crops i.e. sorghum and *teff*. Even those enterprising households do not yet totally depend on cash crops and on the purchase of food crops. Third, if the crops were far away from the homestead they would be exposed to theft. Sesame is another crop that is used as a source of income. Some of the households of the area inter-crop sesame with sorghum. These households include both poor and rich. However, the rich households benefited more from its production. The price of Sesame is unpredictable. It is sometimes expensive and other times it is cheaper particularly in *meher*. In such cases poor households have to sell their produce with cheaper price, as they need the money for other purposes such as tax, purchase of clothes, etc. The rich households, on the other hand, will not sell their yield at a cheaper price. Instead, they will hold back until the price goes up.

5.2.2 Livestock diversification

Households attempt to increase their viability by increasing their asset. Cattle fattening, goat and sheep raring and most recently the use of camel in order to earn money have become a means of increasing the viability of the household. Some endowed households sell *chat*, coffee, sugar cane or eucalyptus trees and use the money to purchase goats and sheep. Other households that own strong and big ox might sell it for a very good price and buy a less strong ox with a cheaper price. They also buy goats and sheep with the remaining money. However, the most important source of money for such activities is credit from the Amahara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI) and from the service cooperative in the kebele association (KA).

Most households including female-headed households take credit from ACSI at an interest rate of 12.5 per cent. Even though most of them claimed that the interest rate is too high, they do not hesitate to take credit. Most households give cattle fattening as a pretext to take credit, as it is the most acceptable reason. Indeed some households fatten and sell cattle for a good price

> Fisseha [case 6] took credit from ACSI and bought two oxen, fatten and sold them with an attractive profit. He repaid the credit and used the money to buy food during the 1998 short but severe period of food shortage.

Other households, on the other hand, use cattle fattening as a pretext to get credit. They instead use the money they get from credit for more pressing needs in the household. The case of Ali's son can be a case in point.

> Ali's son [case 7] took a credit of 600.00 Birr from ASCI for cattle fattening. He bought an ox for 300.00 Birr. He used the ox as a draft power as he had shortage of draft power. He used the remaining money to buy grain. He stored the grain till it became expensive. He then resold it at a good price. He then paid his credit. In the next harvest he sold *teff* for 80.00 Birr, added the profit from the sell of the grain and bought another ox. Currently he has a pair of oxen.

The service cooperative particularly the shop is another source of credit. The interest rate is 5 per cent. The creditor should have an ox as collateral or she/ he should have some one as his or her guarantor. The failure of households to repay the principal with the interest results in the sell of ones ox or the sell of the Guarantor's ox. Whenever the collateral (ox) cannot be possessed because of death or exchange, the output from the cropland of households will be sold at a market price in order to reclaim the debt. In 2000/01 most of the households that took credit previously were unable to repay their debt. Thus, a committee comprising members from the police force, religious leaders, *kire/ider* leaders (judges as they are locally called) and the social unit at the KA level was formed. The task of the committee was to force people to pay

back their credit. Most households paid back the debt by selling their ox, goats, sheep, grain, etc. Some sold their sole ox and entered the *wonfel* arrangement. Consequently, most households refused to take credit from the service cooperatives in 2001/2002. It is after a concrete promise from the service cooperative that it will not force households to repay the debt unexpectedly that some households started to take the credit. The credit from the service cooperative is used to purchase sheep and a goat, as the credit from this source is small.

Sheep and goats are another exchangeable livestock. Households preferred goats to sheep and other livestock for various reasons. Goats can graze on mountain sides and tops with less danger of felling down. They can also browse on both grass and leaves. Moreover, the gestation period of goats is only five months and its maturity period is between seven and eight months. The Muslim community (the most predominant) preferred goat for its meat. For these reasons, most households preferred to invest on goats.

The lack of grazing area and fodder hinder the ability of households to increase the number and kind of their livestock. These problems plus the general destitution of households caused by land degradation make most households to fell below subsistence level. Some other households on the other hand, devised another mechanism to maintain the viability of their households by adding camel into their stock.

The people of the area claim that camel started to be seen in the area since 1982. They preferred it because it can carry up to two quintals. It can also carry long plants like sugar cane with more ease. Moreover, it is essentially a bush browser. On the contrary, some household heads claimed that camels are not fed well, as there is no *kikita*, which is their major diet. They also

attested that camels have communicable disease that is not yet identified by the local population and thus has no local herbal medicine, the major source of remedy for diseases related to the livestock. The people also claim that camels eat *kinchebt*, which is used as a fence in most homesteads, which occasionally resulted, is conflicts between households. In any case, camel is becoming one of the most important livestock in the area.

The price of camel is not affordable by most of the households. It price ranges between 1200.00 and 1400.00 Birr. Therefore, it is the rich households that can afford to purchase camel. Those households that diversify their crops to chat, coffee, eucalyptus tree, etc. can purchase camel. In actuality too, it is these households that are purchasing camel.

Some other households who are frustrated by the output they get from agriculture and by the lack of fodder for their livestock purchase camel by selling their strongest ox and by obtaining additional money either from credit or from the sell of crops like *teff*. The Amahara Credit and Saving Institute (ACSI) acknowledged the households diversification to camel and extends credit for the purchase of camel. Most of these households do not all together abandon crop production. Instead, they depend on *jige* arrangement for plowing and weeding as they have the resource to organize *jige.* They can also alternatively hire a helping hand who can take good care of the camel and who can use the camel to earn money for the household. Consider the following case:

> Awel (case 8) and Yemer (case 6) are two of the well-endowed households in the area. Awel got a good sum of money from the sell of coffee, *chat* and eucalyptus tree. He bought camel, which he used to transport sugar cane to the market. He earns extra money by transporting grain and goods using the camel. Though Yemer planted coffee and eucalyptus tree, they are not mature enough for sell. He also attested that, even though he sharecropped in three plots

> of land from female-headed households in 2000/01, the return was not satisfactory. Therefore, he sold one of his strongest oxen for 540.00 Birr and took credit of 600.00 from ACSI. He also sold some *teff*. He then bought camel in order to increase his income by transporting goods using camel.

Camel can be disinvested for a very good price whenever there is a need to do so. Informants claimed that a camel that is bought for a price of 1300.00 Birr could be sold for 1200.00 Birr two to three years after its purchase.

5.2.3. Off farming activities- the market

The availability of market is crucial for the effective operation of coping strategies. Without markets most of the exchange-based strategies cannot work (i.e. the sale of assets, petty trade, etc.). In the absence of markets coping strategies could well be reduced to living off stored food, the collection of wild foods and donation of food items. In other words, without markets, the effectiveness of coping strategies is greatly reduced (Duffield, 1991).

Off- farming activities include a variety of activities, which mostly include exchange of peasant products for cash. It also includes a form of barter that particularly involves small items like spices and salt. Most of the households of the area do not involve in such activities as weaving, tannery, pottery and a permanent form of trade.

Unlike their male counterparts who go to the market on the market day i.e. Saturday, most females go to the market almost every day. Most of these women who go to the market in days other than Saturday sell firewood. They belong to the poorer households and to female-headed households. For them the market is a vehicle used to augment their income. The market however does not "act as a productive factor" (Dessalegn, 1988). Most peasants except those

who diversify their crop production to *chat*, coffee, eucalyptus tree and sesame, do not produce high value crops for the market. Off- farming activities are however important in order to obtain cash that can hardly be obtained otherwise.

Most women and men are engaged in off-farming activities, particularly petty trade, as the market is closer to their residence area. Women buy grain in cheaper markets such as a market called Gerana (3-4 hours walk from the KA) and sell it in more expensive markets like Wuchale market. Some other women, who have more cash, buy grain from other households in the market and sell it to middle men right away. Households prefer to sell to these women instead of to middlemen, as they trust the former. In *meher* these women get a profit of 15-20 Birr per quintal. Those women, who could not engage in either of the above activities, make malt and sell it in the town of Wuchale. Malt is profitable whenever there are holidays. Most people who are engaged in the sell of *tella* buy malt from the market in order to reduce the time taken to prepare it. Moreover, barley is not abundant in the area, which enables women who are engaged in the sell of malt to gain profit. Women also sell eggs and hens during religious holidays. Most women, who are from poorer households, are engaged in the sell of firewood, which they collected from the Mille riverbank. Most of them live in sub-kebele 01. Female-heads of households are engaged in such activities particularly in the sell of firewood. As it has been discussed earlier parts of the paper, most of the female heads of households live in the town of Wuchale. These households are petty traders. Most of them are engaged in the sell of *tella*. In a household, women also sell grain but only in a smaller quantity that is necessary to purchase consumer goods, which the household needs. The researcher has tried to observe what women sell and buy through an observation of a woman's activity in the market. The woman sold a small amount of *teff* for 35.00 Birr. She bought frankincense for 0.25 Birr, spices for

0.25 Birr, potatoes for 0.50 Birr, onion for 0.25, kerosene for 1.00 Birr, griddle for 11.00 Birr. Unlike the very short time spent to buy vegetables, she spent almost a quarter of an hour bargaining over the price and looking for the best quality when she bought the griddle. Then, she partly bartered *teff* for peas and partly paid in cash. In the meantime she greeted most of the traders and other people who came to the market to purchase and sell. Generally speaking, women have equitable part in financial decision-making and the power this confers only if they contribute as much or more income than their partners (Masini, 1991). In Denak however, women's involvement in the market does not make them influential in the household. Their role does not go beyond management of the household resources. Their income is perceived not as a primary economic function but as an extension of their social role as helpers to the husband and provider of family care.

Men particularly exchanged livestock including oxen, small ruminants and other cattle. Men also sell larger quantities of grain. There are not much households that are solely engaged in the trade of livestock. Those households that are engaged in the trade of livestock buy ox in one market and sell it in another more expensive market. However, these households constitute a very insignificant portion of the total households. The sell of oxen during good years is related to the household's need to increase the efficiency of the households in relation to draft power. A household might sell an ox that can bring in a good sum of money and buy two less expensive and less strong oxen in order to maximize the efficiency of the household in crop production. A strong and bigger ox can also be sold whenever its consumption of fodder is beyond the household's capacity to supply it. A household can also sell a weaker and older ox whenever there is money from other sources such as sells of coffee, *chat*, sesame, etc. or whenever there is remittance from children. In such cases, the money obtained from the sell of an ox and other

sources can be enough to buy a strong and young ox. Men also sell sheep and goat instead of women.

The sell of grain particularly *teff* is the sole, major source of income for the household. Almost all households, except some who reside in towns, do not use *teff* for home consumption. Whenever it is in larger quantity, men are responsible for the sell of *teff*. Women also sell *teff* if it is in smaller quantity.

Some enterprising households are engaged in the sale of *chat*, coffee, eucalyptus tree, sesame, and some fruits. These households are by no means trying to meet the demand of the market and they do not consider themselves as traders functioning in the demand-supply equation. They are essentially engaged in the sale of these cash crops in order to fulfill their cash need and by doing so to maximize their ability of access to food from the market. However, they are becoming more endowed than other households, which are not engaged in the business.

The researcher has done a survey of what men and women sell in the market days. The survey was purposely done during a period when there were no holidays. Twenty men and the same number of women were involved in the survey. The result is presented in a tabular form.

Table 5.3. Items sold at market by both sexes.

Item	Number of men	Number of women
Grain*	11	4
Hen	1	6
Firewood	0	5
Butter**	0	4
Banana	1	1
Sheep/goat	5	0
Leather (raw)	2	0
Total	**20**	**20**

* *Teff* and Sorghum
* * A very small quantity of butter is bought/sold in the market, which is used as hair oil.

Source: Field Survey, 2001

In almost all case, men control most of the exchangeable items that could generate a good sum of money. Such control over income generated from the market further augment the role of men as the main providers of the household's income. On the contrary, as women do not have control over exchangeable items, their position in the household is limited to management rather than control of resources and decision on their utilization.

5.3. Risk absorption

The main objective of households in the research site is the ability to guarantee the food security of their households. Food security includes availability, access, utilization and asset formation (Kifle & Yoseph: 1999, 61). Most households strive to make food available by

engaging themselves in food production. As subsistence farmer, household heads of the research site, attempt to sufficiently provide the major food crops to their household members through out the year. However, this might fail for various reasons. In such cases, they might try to access food through purchase. The availability of money is a major factor in accessing food through the market. However, cash is a scarce resource within the peasantry. Thus, asset creation is here very important which includes coping strategies such as cash credit, borrowing in kind, sell of livestock, tools, and personal possessions and dependence on food aid particularly food-for-work or cash-for-work. The following section deals with asset creation

5.3.1. Cash credit

Cash that is obtained through the sale of either food crop or cash crop is scarce in the area. Its availability also varies from household to household. Most households in the area are cash short households. Thus, whenever food is short because of ecological and other factors, households hardly revert to access to food through the mechanism of the market. Households of the area are subsistence producers. The lack of surplus production for the market contributes to the lack of money at the disposal of households. Thus, whenever there is even "a ripple" of food shortage, most households depend on credit. Those households that diversify their crop production or livestock are the only resilient households.

There are two types of credit in the area which are called *be kitel* (lit. meaning while still green) and *arata* (usury). The first source of credit is called *be kitel.* It means that the food short household will take money from moneylender who could be town dwellers or rich house holds in return for the yield which the lender will take during harvesting time. The food short households often take the credit in July and August, which are considered as the highest period

of food shortage. Some households also take such credit in May and June that are considered as moderate food shortage months. During these months food short household have nothing to sell in order to obtain cash. They could not sell their livestock, as the shortage of food during these months is a transitory one. Thus, they take the *be kitel* credit. Accordingly, the moneylender will give the food short household money equivalent to the amount of grain the latter would pay during harvest. The moneylender will often give 1 Birr for 1 *tasa* (approx. 1 kg) of grain. The moneylender will not accept cash as repayment during harvest. Instead the lender will collect grain and sell it for a market price during harvest, which often is, much more than 1 Birr/ *tasa* (1 kg). The household head that took credit would loss the amount of money he could have earned had he (not often she) sold the grain at a market price.

The second source of credit is called *arata* (usury). It means the creditor will give money to the borrower at exorbitant interest rate. *Arata* is not accessible to all households whenever they want. The *arata* giver does not openly extend loans to all households because they fear that they could be excluded from food-for-work or cash-for-work activities as rich households. Moreover, as the people of the area are dominantly Muslim, *arata* givers can be stigmatized as the religion forbids usury. Therefore, a household should have a very good social network in order to get cash from *arata* givers. *Arata* can also be obtained from merchants who live in the town and who are often Orthodox Christian. Here again, the borrower should be trust worthy i.e. he/she should have a good track record of paying credit on time or he/she should approach the *Arata* giver through reliable social network. Often poor households do not get credit from merchants particularly in period of chronic food shortage.

5.3.2 Food Aid

Food aid can be grossly divided in to two. The first is free food aid and the second is food aid granted through household's participation in labor-intensive public work. Food is often freely granted during famine. During periods of temporary food shortage in certain areas, food for work is often utilized as a means of food transfer. The study area is considered as one of the "food deficit" areas (Dessalegn, 1985). Moreover, 73.9 per cent of the sample households in the study area are food insecure. Over 40 percent of the sample household are food insecure for four to five months, with in a year. Land degradation and erratic rainfall make households vulnerable. Most households are thus, dependent on food aid through the food-for-work program aimed at integrating conservation and development to both rehabilitate the land and boost crop production (Postel: 1989, 34).

As there is no famine in the area, free food grant is impractical. Moreover, government policy for donation does not allow free food grant, which can result in dependency syndrome. Consequently, food-for -work is the most palatable means of assistance for households of the area.

There are four organizations that provide food aid through food-for -work program. These are Amahara Development and Rehabilitation organization, Ethiopia Red Cross Society, UN-Food and Agricultural organization (FAO) and Ethiopian Evangelical church-Mekane Yesus (EECMY). The criteria for participating in food-for-work-program are related to the economic status of the people. Households that do not own livestock and that do not have food through out the year get priority. Households who own small number of livestock and who are food insecure follow this group. Those households that have small ruminants, draft power and

occasionally cows and donkeys and town dwellers whose spouses have a monthly salary are not eligible for the food-for-work program. Family size is also another criteria to categorize households, which are included in the food-for-work program. Accordingly the first category includes household who have 4-5 members included in the food-for-work program. The second category includes households whose two members are included in the food-for-work program. The third category of households includes those households who have only one member include in the food-for-work program. A person in the household who is included in the food-for-work program has to work five days per month in order to get 12.5 kg of grain per day. Most households depend on food obtained from the food for-work- program usually in the food short months of May, June, July and August. Most of the food is consumed at home instead of being exchanged.

Participation in the food-for-work program does not however excluding rich households. In most instances, rich households participate. A case in point can be Yemen (case 6) who takes part in food-for-work program. Rich households who participate in the program use the food wage for organizing *Jige*. As it had been discussed some where else in the paper, possession of more land guaranties food security of households. Consequently most households that are able to access land do so, using different mechanisms, predominantly share cropping.

These households do not solely use the labor of their household. Instead, they organize *Jige* for the task of plowing and weeding. Their involvement in the food for-work-program augments their ability to organize *Jige* easily. The fact that wheat is the food wage and homemade bread is the feast prepared for *Jige* makes organization of the latter palatable.

5.4. Risk taking to survive

Households narrow their options of coping from risk minimization by increasing their assets to risk absorption by trying to assess food items through the market or food aid. However, when they are faced with severe natural calamities, households further narrow their options to risk taking to survive. These coping strategies are the last resorts to maintaining the household even at the risk of complete loss of assets. However not all households go to risk minimization to risk absorption then to risk taking to survive. The trend depends on the availability of assets to households.

5.4.1 Sale of animals, diversification of food items to famine food and reduction of consumption.

Households modulate to sale of animals, reduction of consumption and diversification of food items to "famine food" whenever they could not get money from other sources such as credit or whenever there is no food item granted by donors or the state either in a food-for-work program or free grant.

The sale of animal in this case is a means of exchanging livestock for money so that food can be accessed through purchase. It is an inevitable action by households that are food insecure. Their shortage of food is not thus just a seasonal shortage of food but one that goes beyond. In such instance, households are forced to sell their livestock one after another to buy food with the money. As in all cases of risk absorption strategies, "risk taking to survive" strategies are correlated to economic status. Rich households can easily cope during food insecurity through the sell of their livestock. Poor households that do not own livestock, on the other hand, are vulnerable to food shortage, as they do not have animals that could be disinvested. Thus they obviously shift to reduction of consumption and dependence on "Famine food." The pattern of

sale of animals varies from one household to another. During the 1983/84 famines, that can be an example of severe food insecurity in the area, different households devised different patterns of sale of animals. Consider the following cases:

> Ail (Case 7) had a pair of oxen, two cows and two donkeys in 1983/84. During the famine, he bought grain, particularly barley from areas not affected by the Famine. The money for the purchase of grain was obtained from the sale of livestock. He sold his livestock in the following order. He sold the cows first. Then he sold one of the oxen followed by another. He did not sell the donkeys until all the other animals are sold. The reason behind these actions is related to their use to carry grain that is purchased from a far away place.
> *Aba* Seid (case 8) had a pair of oxen, a cow and calf, two heifers, and two donkeys in 1983/84. During the famine, he sold the pair of oxen for 150.00 and 200.00 Birr each and two donkeys for 45.00 Birr all in the listed order. He did so, because he felt that if he sells the most expensive livestock first, before the famine became worse, he would get more money. In the meantime either the weather would become better or food aid would arrive. However both did not happen and thus, he sold all his livestock before food aid arrives.

Even though most of the literature asserts that households sell livestock according to their importance to the household this general trend might occasionally be violated as per decisions made by households. Most households refrain from selling oxen first. However, in both of the above cases, oxen were in the first list of exchanged livestock, for reasons given by each of the household heads.

In 1983/84 most of the households depended on “famine food” in order to subsidize the grain that were purchased from the market. Mostly children collected the “famine foods”. Other members of the household also collected wild foods. The most prominent “famine food” in the area was a shrub locally called as Antariya. The shrub was the main source of food because it can survive without rain for a long period of time. The shrub was boiled like kale/cabbage and eaten with *injera* or bread. The other wild plants that were eaten by households included Aluma and Meka. It is the leaves of Aluma that was eaten. Aluma was not conducive for all people.

Some people who ate Aluma got sick, mostly stomach upset. Meka is a banana like fruit. It can be stored for a month after it is collected. All the food that is bought by the household head and that is collected by the children and elders was given to the wife who was responsible for the distribution. Other researchers also observe the role of women in this capacity. Getachew (1995, 268-269) for instance, confirmed that in Kembata and Hadya women play major roles in times of famine and transitory food scarcity. The children were the first to eat. Then as the husband had to travel in search of food, he would eat second. The wife is the last to eat.

Reduction of consumption is a coping strategy used even in periods when there is no chronic food shortage. Households reduce their consumption in the "starvation months" i.e. July, August and September. It is the degree of consumption that varies during chronic food shortage such as the 1983/84 famine, households consumption will be severely reduced to consumption of small amount of food once a day. Occasionally, elder members of households might not eat for more than a day.

Conclusion

As it has been stated at the introductory part of this chapter, coping strategies denote a range of household directed activities, which exploited a stock of assets, when food is scarce or expensive (Duffield, 1991). In coping with food scarcity all households do not go through the same pattern of strategies. Their coping strategy depends on the asset they own. Those households that own more stock of assets might have a better chance of survival in times transitory or chronic food shortage. Consequently, most of the households attempt to accumulate assets, so that they would be less vulnerable in times of crises. In accumulating assets, households can either diversify their crop production to easily exchangeable crops;

diversify their livestock to animals that need less grazing area and that can generate more income like camel or the might involve in the market in order to maximize their access to cash. Households that cannot depend on the above strategies will resort to cash-credit or food aid. Other on the other hand can revert to sale of livestock (if they have one), divert their consumption to famine foods and they would reduce their consumption.

In alternating from one strategy to another, initial assets are essential. It is based on the assets they own that households choose between strategies. The well-endowed households might not directly revert to dependence on famine foods or they would not reduce their consumption. Instead they would depend on their assets as far the assets can carry them on. The converse will happen to poor households.

Under the contemporary situation, households that diversify their crops to *chat*, *teff*, fruit trees, eucalyptus trees, etc.; households that diversify their animals by incorporating camel into their stock and households that involve in the market are well-endowed and wealthier households. Since these households have more cash, more grain in store and more access to credit be it from ACSI or from individuals, they can cope with periodical food shortages more competently. Such households do not also revert to unfavorable credit such as *arata* or *be kitel.* They will not sell their livestock particularly their draft power in order to maintain the viability of their household. They will not also revert to reduction of consumption or famine foods, which will reduce their physical capacity to involve in production when the crises are over. Moreover, as they have the resource they can access more land through sharecropping. In doing so, they can either use the draft power and labor of their household or they can organize *jige.* In most cases, more land would generate more output. On the other hand, households that do not diversify

they would become poor because they entirely depend on degraded land, population increase and land redistribution decreased their land size and they do not lease in land to increase their land holding and they utterly depend on the main harvesting season (*meher)* as the short rain season (*belg*) is almost absent. As these households cannot feed their household through out the year, they take credit in *arata* or *bekitel* arrangement, which has a detrimental effect on the income of the household. Whenever, credit is not available or whenever they cannot repay the debt, they would sell their livestock (which most probably is their draft power). Loss of draft power will have a long lasting effect on the livelihood of the household.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The livelihood strategies of households of Denka depends on the existing social, political, economic, ecological and demographic conditions. Households devise different strategies in order to cope with these conditions. Furthermore, household resources are crucial in the livelihood strategies of households. Land, labor and livestock play a pivotal role in coping with crises or in the mundane activities of life.

Land is the most important production factor for rural households. Its priceless importance is understood not only by the peasants themselves but also by the different governments. Almost all governments past to present controlled land in order to built clients. For this reason the provision of land is always attached to duties and responsibilities that are attached to the land user. By the same token, the land tenure systems in Wollo were all attached to duties and responsibilities. Each and every individual that used the land whether *gabar, nech lebash, chisegna, kitch zemach, etc,* should dispose their duties and responsibilities in order to have a continuous land use right (for details refer Shiferaw, 1995).

After the 1975 and subsequent land redistributions the government tightened its control over the land use right of households. In order to facilitate this purpose it established peasant associations with full-fledged administrative, executive and judiciary rights. One of the major duties peasants associations carried out as of 1976 was land redistribution. The 1976 land and subsequent land redistributions reduced the land holding of households to the present land size

that is mostly less than one hectare. The small size of land coupled with land degradation and unfavorable climatic condition reduced the output households gets from their land.

Moreover, the existing land fund cannot accommodate the increasing number of households in the area. Therefore, newly established households, returnees from resettlement, demobilized derg soldiers and land short households are forced to depend on sharecropping arrangements. In comparison to the number of households that demand land, the sharecropped land is in short supply. Consequently, the importance of land intensified. This trend in turn altered the sharecropping arrangements in favor of landowners, so much so that, the latter are able to negotiate the return they get from their land in their favor. Furthermore, newly established households are not members of kebele associations most probably because they do not own land in their own name. Most of them do not also own livestock particularly oxen. As a result they cannot get such services as credit that are provided by the kebele association for they are not members and they have no capital that can be used as collateral. In order to get credit and other services from the kebele association and from the *Woreda* administration office, they depend on their parents (specifically their fathers). Moreover as there is shortage of land even for the construction of their houses, newly established households are compelled to build their houses in their parents' homestead. The more newly established households depend on their parents' in more things than one, the more will become the decision-making and bargaining power of the latter and the less the negotiation power of the former.

The abovementioned trend would most likely be intensified in the future due to the following reasons. Firstly, the 1996 proclamation of the Amahara Regional State on land reallotment closed future possibilities of land redistribution in the post 1991 land redistribution area.

Secondly, fear of conflict between residents of sub-kebele 01 and sub-kebele 02 and 03 over who should be included in new land redistribution if there happens to be one in the pre 1991 land redistribution area curtailed the possibilities of new land redistribution in sub-kebele 01. Finally, there is a general resentment towards resettlement, which could have facilitated access to land in other parts of the Regional State or the country. Government initiated resettlement programs that do no take the consent of the local people will hardly be successful.

Shortage of land and population increase has a significant impact on livestock raring. Shortage of land intensified the scarcity of grazing land. Scarcity of grazing land in turn restricted households potential to increase the number and type of their stock. Thus, households focus solely on oxen instead of other animals. Households that own two or more oxen and other ruminants are those that have larger plot of land or that leased in land. Generally speaking however, most of the households can hardly have larger number of livestock. Therefore, earlier parameters to differentiate households based on the number and type of livestock is no more applicable in Denka. Currently, well-endowed households started to include camel into their stock. This novice inclusion might in the final analysis play differentiating role between the households.

Contemporary differentiation of households in the study area is based on diversification: diversification in crops and animals and to some extent involvement in the market. Households that diversify become more successful in attaining food security. They become more successful in possession of more assets. They also become more successful in coping with crises such as natural calamities. As the case histories of selected households show, diversification needs

foresight, entrepreneurship, and commitment. More access to labor and availability of natural resources (such as water) play a pivotal role in diversification.

Coping strategies are taken as "modifications and extensions" of what are essentially the normal conditions of subsistence. In periods of crises households narrow their options to the most stringent coping strategies. The ability of households to cope depends on their income and assets. Wealthier households have more assets and thus they can cope with crises much more successfully. Poorer households, on the other hand, immediately narrow their options to the most stringent coping strategies such as sell of animals, reduction of consumption and dependence on famine foods.

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GLOSSARY

Abgars-	elders who are followers of the Muslim religion
Awraja-	the second smallest district in the Ethiopian government that includes several *Woredas*
Belg	season of short rain (usu. March to April)
Benne	common grazing land
Berha maret	land that is used as the main cropland and often found far away from the homestead
Bota maret	land allotted for homestead and home plot
Bukri-	non-alcoholic drink brewed at home
Chika Shum	Governor of the smallest administrative, *got,* during the Imperial Period
Chisegna	tenant
De'ema	land given to *abagars* for their sustenance
Gabar land	it was a kind of free hold in which the owner paid all legally prescribed taxes to the government
Galla maret	*maderia* land that was held by the state but given to individuals for the service they provide to the state
Geber ferash	the act of confiscating land held by the peasantry whenever he failed to fulfill duties to *gult* holders
Got-	sub-unit or core of a local community
Kebele association-	the lowest administrative unit in the rural part of Ethiopia
Ketch zemach	peasant soldiers who held land in lieu of salary before the coming of the *nech lebash*
Maderia maret	land given to peasants or paramilitary troops in return to the service they render to the state
Mofer metaya	payment made in cash to *ababedris* and later to *nech lebash* before the beginning of the next harvesting season
Nech lebash	Paramilitary forces recruited from the peasantry in order to augment the regular force

Semon land	land held in the name of the church and on which the church collected all taxes
Tella-	local beer brewed at home which is alcoholic
Timad	measurement of land that refers to the size of land that takes one day to plow. The land size is often equal to 0.25 ha.
Wojed-	Land that is found closer to the homestead
Woreda-	lowest level administrative district of the Ethiopian government that includes several *kebele* associations.
Wudema	a piece of land prepared within the cropland which is used to thresh yield

Appendix 1

CASE HISTORIES

Case 1: Endris, 22

Endris is married recently. He is the eldest son of his family. He is now living on his father's *bota* land (place of construction and homestead). He has constructed his own house on the *bota* land. He established his own independent household. It is a custom of the area that a newly married boy and his wife will establish their own independent household one-year after their marriage. Upon establishing his own household, Endris got 1 *gamad* ($40*40m^2$) land as a marriage endowment. However, Endris did not get an ox because the father could not afford to give him one. The father himself does not have draft power. Endris' wife is from another KA, thus she did not get her share of land when she come to live with her husband. Neither did she get livestock as marriage endowment. Since there is no draft power the father entered into a sharecropping arrangement with another household. Endris however chose the *wonfel* arrangement because he has the energy to spend two days on his counter-parts land and one day on his own land. Endris' father and Endris himself want the latter to have his own *bota* land because the father has other sons who will likely establish their house in the same *bota* land. Unfortunately there is no more land for construction. Endris thinks that if there is a new redistribution of land and if he benefits from it, he will establish his own house. Otherwise he will stay where he is now, i.e. on his father's *bota* land.

Case 2: Hussien, 26

Hussien is married and a father of one child. After marriage he lived with his father for two years (though the custom is one year). The reasons for his elongated stay are because he is a good boy, his father needs support, and because then, there was no other child who is old enough to support the father. Now there is another child who is old enough to support the father and the father is also working.

Hussien has now established an independent household. He constructed his own house on the father's *bota* land. The father gave him an ox, some household utensils. Hussien got a third of

the grain he produced while he was working with his father. He also got his share of land i.e. one *gamad.* Since his wife is outside the KA she did not get her own share of land. Since he has an ox, he chose the *mekenajo* mechanism to plow his share of land and the land he sharecrops with a female head of another household.

Case 3: Aminat, 39

Aminat is a female household head. She has three children (1 boy, 2 girls) from her first marriage and two children (both girls) from her second marriage. Her first husband was a militia in the previous government. He died in 1978 E.C. After her husband's death she gave her land in a sharecropping arrangement. After some years she got married to the relative of her late husband as per the custom of the Muslim religion. Aminat's new husband has his own wife. But she is barren. He could not divorce her for fear of sharing his property including land. Thus, he took the option of marrying Aminat. Aminat too married him bas she need male labor for plowing her land. She felt the negative sides of the share cropping arrangement especially when there is less harvest. Her new husband ploughs her field and did not take grain from her. He only eats with her and fulfills all husband obligations. However, after some years they got divorced. She claimed that he was not strong enough to support the household. Moreover, her son is now getting strong to plough. She kept the two girls from her second husband with her. Her son is now engaged in farming the household's land. Though he is only 18, Aminat arranged a marriage with a girl from another KA. She claimed that if she had not arranged the marriage her son could have left her and migrates to town in search of a 'better' work. The couple is now living with Aminat with out establishing their own household though it is more than one year since their marriage. Aminat claim that as all her other children are girls they will marry-out and the only child that can inherit her homestead, farm and other properties will be her son. Thus, she wants him to stay with her. She has one ox and the son uses the *mekenajo* mechanism to plough his farm.

Case 4: Ali Shebeshe, 48

Ali heads a typical nuclear household. The household constitutes a household head (Ali), a wife (Yamerot) and five children (3 boys, 2 girls). Ali is a returnee from resettlement program in Wollega. In Wollega he was a member of peasant cooperative where the cooperative provided draft animal and farming tools. The farmer will plough his farm and give a share to the

cooperative. Due to the conflict in Wollega during the government change in 1991 and due to Oromo Liberation Front's (OLF's) subsequent attack on settlers he was forced to leave Wollega and come back to Limo (one of the *gots* in the KA, sub kebele 01) where he lived before the resettlement. He came to Limo with his wife and three children. The other two children were born after the family came back to Limo.

When Ali and his family came to Limo the land they own before they left for resettlement was distributed to other people who remained there. Thus Ali was given a land whose owners all died and there was no one to inherit it. He was also employed as a guard by the school, which is found in sub-kebele 01. His salary was paid by contribution from the community. Thus, the kebele administration decided to give him land in lieu of salary. Therefore, his land holding increased. He also ploughs the school compound, which he contracted for 150.00 ETB per year. He also has entered into a share cropping arrangement with another household. Thus these days Ali has four fragments of land. Three are found in a place called Mille (found along the Mille river), which is one and half-hour from his homestead. The pieces of lands are plowed by Ali himself and by his son who is old enough to farm.

When Ali and his family came to Limo, they had no oxen. Ali entered into *yerebe* mechanism with a teacher who is teaching in the school where he is a guard. The teacher gave him a cow. When the cow calved Ali begged the teacher to give him the first chance to take the calf. She let him take the calf. He sold the calf, adds some money by selling grain and bought an ox. Ali claimed that even if there is not enough grain to feed the family, he left some grain, which can last for 5-6 months and sold the rest. This is because owning an ox for the next harvest is important. Another ox is obtained after his son worked in a wealthier household for a year and earned 200.00 ETB. Ali bought a bull (not yet strong enough upon purchase, but can be ready in a year) with the money. Until the bull becomes an ox, Ali plowed in a *mekenajo* mechanism. Now, however, Ali has a pair of oxen. He also has his son to help him. Thus, they increased the amount of land they own.

The *ribbe* cow is still with Ali. It calved four times. The first calf Ali took, the second calf the teacher took, the third and fourth is still with Ali. The teacher and Ali will draw a lottery to take their share.

Case 5: Yemer, 26

Yemer is the only child of his family. He got married in 1989 E.C. He has two sons. His wife is from the same KA. Yemer and his wife are living with Yemer's parents. They have not yet established their independent household. The parents of Yemer are weak and old. The father is blind and the mother is old. Thus, they are entirely dependent on Yemer and his wife. The household owns a pair of oxen. Yemer bought one of the oxen. They own one *wojed* (one gamad) and one *berha* (three gamads) land. Since his wife is from the same KA, she got her own share of land when she got married. However, Yemer does not plow this land because it is too far away from their house. Thus, Yemer gave this land to the family of his wife in a sharecropping (*megazo)* arrangement. Yemer has sharecropped in two pieces of land. The first person he entered into a sharecropping arrangement is old, has no oxen and all his children are female. The other person is old, has no oxen and has no children because his wife (or himself?) is barren.

Yemer organized a *jige* for plowing in 1993 E.C. and got 6 pair of oxen. He used the six pair to plow his lands, which are found in different places. He prepared one big homemade bread (*mugera)* and two-genbo *tella* (local beer) for the *jige).* He sold *Teff* in order to arrange the *jige*. He arranged another *jige* for weeding. Hitherto he used the *wonfel* arrangement.

Yemer has planted 40 heads of coffee seedlings four years ago. It has now started to give yield. In 1993 E.C. he has planted 50 heads of coffee seedlings. He is planning to sell the coffee when it is harvested. In 1992, he took a credit of 800.00 ETB from the Amahara Credit and Saving Institute to fatten oxen. At that time everybody took the credit and oxen became expensive. Thus, he bought an ox for 600.00 Birr. He used the rest of the money to buy food grain. Unfortunately the ox died. He paid the credit by working as a daily laborer for 5 Birr/day during weeding season. The weeding was done by his wife and by *wonfel* arrangement. He also sold teff to pay the deficit.

Presently, Yemer has grain in store, which is enough to feed his household for the whole year. Thus he is not one of the food deficit households. Since the return from the 2000/01 harvest was low, he gaveup hope in agriculture. Thus, he decided to engage himself in trade using camel. For this purpose he sold one of his oxen for 543.00 Birr. He also took 600.00 Birr credit from ACSI. He added some money from the sell of Teff and he bought camel. He will not abandon farming completely. He will do farming by organizing *jige.*

Case 6: *Memere* Fisseha, 25

Memere Fisseha is married in 1990 E.C. He has a daughter. He has 1 sister and 2 brothers. He is the eldest son in the family. As he is a priest in St. Micheal church he earns a salary of 30 Birr/month. Fisseha was not yet 18 to get land in his name during the 1983 E.C. Land redistribution. Thus, he is now dependent on his parents' land and on sharecropping arrangements. His parents' household had 5 *gamad* of land before the last land redistribution. Now a days they hold 50*50m^2 *wojed* land and 50*50m^2 berha land. Fisseha's wife is from another KA (02), but she got her own one-gamad share of land. Fisseha goes to that kebele and farm the land. Although the officials in Kebele 02 protested against this arrangement, the parents of Fisseha's wife argued that the couple has no land in Kebele 01 where they reside now. Fisseha established his house in his father's *bota* land. He did now establish his own independent household by taking the one ox marriage endowment and a third of the grain he produced with his father. The father's household owns three oxen, two cows and a calf. He got a third of what he produced in a sharecropping arrangement with his parents, with St. Micheal Church and with another female headed household while the parents got 2/3. Fisseha claims that his father wants him to work with him by using the oxen of the parents' household. The reason for this is related to the father's sickness and the absence of another older child to carry out the farming. His younger brother is a student and he has no intention of engaging in agriculture in the future.

Fisseha plans to buy an ox by selling *Teff*. Previously, he took credit for cattle fattening from the Amahara Credit and Saving Institute in his fathers name. He could not take it in his own right because he has no collateral. He bought two oxen, fattens them and sold them with a good

profit. He returned the credit and used the profit to purchase food during the 1991 E.C. short but severe period of food shortage.

Case 7: Ali Nurye

Ali got married during the reign of Haile Selassie I. He married his first wife before the Italian invasion. Then, he had a *rist* land but after the Italian invasion he became *chesegna,* as his land was given to *nech lebash.* Then Ali started to sharecrop with the *nech lebash*.

During the land reform of 1975, Ali got 10-*gamad* of land in his own and his wife's name. Another 10-*gamad* was given to him as a share for his 8 children. In the 1984 G.C. land reform locally called *sirnekel,* he got 8 *gamad* of land.

During the national military service one of his children was forcefully conscripted into the army. But he escaped while he was in the *woreda* office. Because of this Ali's land was confiscated for two months-April and May. The months are high time months for crop cultivation. When Kebele administration returned the land to him, it was already late for cultivation. He tried to cultivate Sorghum but it was a total failure. Even though the Kebele association returned the farmland, it kept the *bota* land. When EPRDF took power Ali applied for his *bota* land and it was decided in his favor. However, the chairman of the kebele could not execute the decision with the "pretext" that there are other claimants. Since he cannot get his *bota* land through legal channels, Ali is planning to plow the land forcefully. When people oppose his action, he will continue to litigate while plowing his land.

When the 1984/85 famine started, Ali had a pair of oxen, two cows and two donkeys. During the famine, Ali's household depended on a shrub locally called *Antariya*. The shrub was the main source of food because it can survive with out rain. Other wild plants that were eaten by the household included, *Aluma and Meka.* It was the children who collected these wild plants. Ali traveled to places, which were not affected by the famine. He bought barley from those areas and brought them home using the donkeys. All the food collected by the children and bought by Ali was given to his wife who made the distribution. The children were the first to eat. Then as the husband has to travel in search of food to long distances, he will eat next. The wife is the last to eat. The money for the purchase of grain was obtained by selling livestock.

Ali sold the cows first. Then he sold one of the oxen followed by the other. He did not sell the donkeys until all the other animals are sold. The reason for this is related to their use to carry grain from far away places.

Two of Ali's son got married after the 1984 G.C. redistribution. Each boy got 1 *gamad* land and a third of the produce he accumulated while he was living and working with his father. Neither got an ox because of shortage of oxen.

One of the sons sold part of the grain he got from his father. He also took an amount of 600 Birr credit for fattening cattle from the Amhara Saving and Credit Institute. He bought an ox for 300 Birr and grain with the remaining 300 Birr. He resold the grain when it became expensive. He then paid the credit. The next season he sold *Teff* for 80 Birr, he added the profit from sell of grain and bought another ox. Thus, now he has a pair of oxen.

Case 8: *Aba* Seid

Aba Seid, 70, is married and has two children (male and female), two grand children from each of his children (male and female). Although he is a Muslim, a *sheik,* he has only one wife who is the mother of his children. Both his children got married before the land redistribution. His daughter is married off to another Kebele Association. After his son got married he started to live on his father's *bota* land, as he wants to help his father.

Before the revolution *Aba* Seid had a *rist* land. However, as it was small he also sharecropped in some land from a *nech lebash*. He had many livestock, which helped him to sharecrop many pieces of land. He also employed laborers (both male and female). During the land redistribution of 1975 and 1984 both the father and the son got their own plot of land. The son also got a pair of oxen from his father. As Seid got older his daughter gave him her daughter to live with him. When the granddaughter is old enough, Seid married her off to another KA. His son also gave him his son so that the latter can take good care of him. When his grand son was old enough to get married, Seid married him to a girl from another KA. The grand son established his own house on his grandfather's *bota* land. He started to plough with his grand father. Unfortunately before even it is one year, the grand son divorced his wife. Now he is living alone and working with his grand father.

Seid planted coffee, *Chat,* orange, eucalyptus tree, papaya, lemon, etc. on his *bota* land. He got extra money from the sale of coffee and *chat.* In 1977, the *chat* and coffee did not give yield. There was also a crop failure after it to some extent but before giving seed. Thus, even though men could not get any thing to eat, the stalk and the hay were used for animals. During the 1977 famine, Seid sold a pair of oxen for 150 and 200 Birr, a cow and a calf for 110, two heifers for 38 and 20 Birr and two donkeys for 45 Birr both. He sold his livestock in the listed order against the documented literature because he felt he would get more money by selling the expensive livestock first. He felt that while he sold his oxen and bought grain to the household, the weather would become favorable for the next harvest. However, rain did not come and Seid sold all his livestock. He or any member of

His family did not migrate or went to resettlement because, as the household live on the purchased grain, government assistance reached the area.

Case 9: Awel

Awel is 52 years old. He heads a household, which reside in Hijera *got.* He got married in 1972 (1964 E.C.) when he was 22 years old. He established his own homestead a year later. He got an ox (the ox died in the same year after he plowed the land he sharecropped in) and a third of the grain he co-produced with his father as a marriage endowment. Since Awel's father was a tenant he could not give him land as a marriage endowment. Thus, Awel leased in land from a policeman named Assefa Abebe who took land in contract from *Etege* Menen. Awel was a tenant like his father. He claimed that most of the farmers in the area he used to live, Ali Jebdu *got* were tenants. There were only two *gabbars.* In 1972-73 crop season he produced Teff, pepper and cotton on the four-gamad land he had sharecropped in. he then sold the pepper and half of the Teff and bought a pair of oxen. When the 1974 Revolution broke out he had a pair of oxen, two cows and four goats. The year the Revolution broke out Awel gave the landlord his share, unlike most of the tenants who refused to do so. He did this because he was not quiet certain about the success of the revolution. In 1976 peasant associations were established and the first land redistribution was carried out. The student campaigners established the peasant associations. Awel and his wife got five-*gamad* of farmland and one-*gamad* homestead land as their own share and one more *gamad* as they had only one child. As the first land redistribution did not dislocate previous landowners, most of them retained the best lands in the area. In 1982

Awel became the chairperson of the PA (then Limo-01) where he served until the downfall of the *derg*. He was surprised when he was chosen as the chairperson of the PA, as he was then only 32 years of age. A year later he actively participated in the 1983 land redistribution locally known as *sirnekel.* In this redistribution every member of the household got one-*gamad* of farmland. Awel confessed that there was bribe at the time, but he did not take any, as he is a religious man. In 1984 the famine locally called "*ye 1977 dirk*" struck the area. There was little rain in May, June and half of July in 1983/84. In half of July and August there was absolutely no rain. Those people who lost some land because of land redistribution related the famine with the land redistribution. Though the government introduced the resettlement program, Awel refused to go, as he was better off. Moreover, as he was a chairperson, he was supposed to coordinate the resettlement program in the PA. He claimed that most of those of those who went to the resettlement area were poor farmers who had no other option. During the famine, Awel had two children. He also had half *gudguad* (7.5 quintals) of Sorghum. He also had a pair of oxen, four cows, five sheep, about 10 goats and two donkeys. Since his father was rich, he assisted Awel's family. Therefore, Awel neither sold livestock nor slaughter them to feed his family. While his household members were feeding on the 7.5-quintal of sorghum he had in store, food aid arrived in 1983/84. In January 1985, Mekane Iysus Church provided aid to children. In May 1985, rain resumed. Awel sow *birke Teff* and he harvested four quintals. He sold he Teff as it was then expensive. He bought a cow with half of the money. He need not buy grain, as there was food aid. In 1986 there was an ample harvest, which was unheard of in the long history of the area.

In 1990 EPRDF forces controlled the area. They asked Awel to become a member of EPRDF, as he was influential in the area. He refused because EPRDF forces did not have full control of the area. He was also afraid that the *Derg* could regain control over the area. Because he refused to collaborate, EPRDF forces threatened to kill him. Thus, he escaped to the near by *Derg* controlled ***Woreda,*** i.e. Tewledere ***Woreda*** (Haik was the capital)**.** In retaliation, EPRDF forces took two pairs of oxen, two cows, two heifers, two *woyfen* (bulls), four calves, 12 goats and eight sheep. The *Derg* soldiers took two donkeys. Besides, ten quintal of Teff was stolen. His share of land (one-*gamad)* and another land, which belonged to one of the daughters, was confiscated. His daughter's share was confiscated as it was given to her from the land fund left by settlers. The EPRDF forces assumed that he as a chairperson used his power to give the land

to his daughter. He however had 30 quintals of sorghum in two gudguads (wells), which was not touched by anyone. When EPRDF took power Awel was imprisoned from May 1991- June 1992. His family lived on grain, which was under his wife's control, while he was away. When he was realized he returned to his family. As he had no draft power, he organized *Jige* to plough his farm. He got 30 pair of oxen. Both the homestead land and farmland was plowed. The family lived on the sorghum, which was in store until the next harvest. In 1994, he used the *ye arba* arrangement to access draft power. He also used the *mekenajo* arrangement. He sharecropped with female-headed households using these mechanisms. In 1994/95 he bought an ox. He also had the *ye arba* ox. In the same year, he planted coffee. The coffee was harvested and sold for 400.00 Birr in 1999/2000. In 1998 his neighbors and Awel irrigated their *wojed* land by digging a 3 km canal. Awel planted *chat* and sold it for 500.00 Birr. He also planted and sold eucalyptus tree for 400.00 Birr for the construction of a nearby grinding mill. Besides, he took a contract land from the nearby school and planted sugar cane for 30.00 Birr. He sharecropped land with three female heads of households. He now has four sons and four daughters. They are not married. Two of the sons are old enough to farm. Thus, they took over the whole production of grain. Awel is solely engaged in coffee, *chat* and sugar cane production. He owns two pair of oxen, one cow and four sheep. He does not want more cattle as there is no grazing area and as there is shortage of fodder.

He is now planning to construct a corrugated sheet roof house, which is often a sign of wealth in the countryside. He also bought camel. He preferred camel to cattle as the former can depend on *kincbet* as fodder and generate more income by carrying goods from place to place. It can also be disinvested for a good price if there is a need to do so.

Appendix 2

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Sociology and social Administration
Survey Questionnaire for household study in Danka Kebele Association

Direction

1. For questions with listed choices please check ✓
2. For questions followed by blank space (_____) you are requested to write your genuine and free opinion

Part I

Identification

1. Date of Interview_____
2. Name of enumerator_____
3. Name of *got* of the interviewee _____

Part II

Data related to household members

4. Name of household head _____
   - 4.1.Sex_____
   - 4.2. Age _____
   - 4.3. Religion _____
   - 4.4. Education _____
   - 4.5. Ethnicity _____
   - 4.6. Martial status 1. Single_____ 2. Married _____ 3. Divorced_____ 4. Widowed_____ 5. Widower_____ 6. Polygamy_____ 7. Monogamy_____

5. Other members of the household

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relation to HH head [a]	Martial Status [b]	Occupation	Education [c]

Code a

1. Daughter	2. Son	3. Wife	4. Father
5. Mother	6. Sister	7. Brother	8. Uncle
9. Aunt	10. Son-in-law	11. Daughter-in-law	
12. Brother-in-law	13. Sister-in-law	14. Father-in-law	
15. Mother-in-law	16. Grand father	17. Grandmother	

8. Others (specify)

Code b.

Use the choices in question 4 section 4.6.

Code c.

1. Illitrate 2. Read only 3. Read and write 4. Grade completed (specify the grade)

6. Have you ever been divorce?

1. No_____ 2. One time_____ 3. Two times _____
4. Three times _____ 5. > 3 Times_____

7. How many of your children (including dependents) go to school?

Male _____ Female_____

8. How many interrupted? Why?

Male _____ Female _____

_____

9. Where do you built your house?

1. On my own *bota* land_____ 2. On my mother's *bota* land _____
3. On my father's *bota* land_____ 4. On my parent's *bota* land _____
5. Others (specify)

Part III - Land- use

10. Do you own land for agricultural use?

1. Yes 2. No.

11. How do you have access to land? (Multiple answers possible)

1. Through redistribution_____
2. Share with father only_____
3. Share with mother only_____
4. Share with Parents _____
5. Share with relatives _____
6. Inherited from parents _____
7. Got it as *gulema* _____
8. Rent in cash/kind (contract) from KA _____
9. Contract from individuals _____
10. Contract from school/clinic/etc. _____
11. Share cropped in _____
12. Purchased it _____
13. Farm waste land/slopes/ without the knowledge of KA _____
14. Others (Specify) _____

12. What is the size of land owned?

Land size in *timad* or *gamad*	Land size in local measurement		Total number of household members
	Timad	*gamad*	
0			
1-2			
3-4			
5-6			
> 6			

13. Household land utilization

Use of land	Size of land	
	Timad	*gamad*
Farm land		
Homestead land		
Land with perennial crop only		
Homestead lad with perennial crop only		
Settled land		
Fallow land		

14. Do you share crop out/ rent out your land?

1. Rent Out_____ 2. Share crop out _____ 3. No _____

15. Why do you share crop out/ rent out your land? (Multiple answers possible)

1. Lack of draft animal _____
2. Lack of seed _____
3. Lack of labor_____
4. Sickness _____
5. Old age _____
6. Female headed household_____
7. Own extra-land _____
8. Engage in another activity (other than farming)_____
9. Others (specify) _____

16. How much grain or cash did you get from sharecropping out/ renting out your land last harvest?

_____

17. Why do you access land through share cropping/ rent/ contract? (Multiple answers possible)

1. I was not included in any of the redistributions _____
2. I did not get *gulema* land when I get married _____
3. I am a returnee from resettlement_____
4. Shortage of existing land _____
5. More than enough draft power for existing land _____
6. Excess labour to farm existing land _____
7. Excess labour and draft power for existing land _____
8. Others (specify) _____

18. In which land redistribution do you own the existing land?

1. 1983 _____ 2. 1991 _____

19. If the answer for question 17 is "1991" then
    18.1. How much land did you own in 1983 _____
    18.2. How much land did you own in 1991 redistribution _____
    18.3. How much land do you own presently (2000/01) _____
20. Is there a change in the amount of land holding since 1983
    1. No Change _____
    2. Increased _____
    3. Decreased _____
21. If "increased" what was the reason for increment?

_____
_____

22. If "decreased" what was the reason?

_____
_____

23. If "no change" why?

_____
_____

24. How much land did you give to your child/children as *gulema?*

Child/children	No. Of child/children	Amount of land	
		timad	*Gamad*
Male			
Female			
Others (adopted, fostered, etc.			

25. Did your wife/wives brought a share of land when you get married?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____
26. If "Yes" for question 24, how much? _____
27. Do you think new land redistribution is necessary?
    1.Yes _____ 2. No. _____
28. Give reason/s for your answer for question 26?

_____
_____

29. Did the land redistribution of 1991 solve the problem of landlessness?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____ 3. No Change _____
30. Give reason/s for your answer in question 29?

_____
_____

31. Is there a problem of land degradation?
    1. Yes_____ 2. No _____
32. List the reasons for land degradation?

_____ _____
_____ _____

33. What measures are taken to counter land degradation?

1. Terracing _____
2. Use of chemical fertilizer_____
3. Use of manure _____
4. Leave the land fallow _____
5. Crop rotation _____
6. Others (specify) _____

34. How many pieces of land do you have including the homestead land?
    1. One_____
    2. Two_____
    3. Three _____
    4. Four _____
    5. > Four _____

35. What advantage does fragmentation have in your area?

    _____ _____
    _____ _____

36. What disadvantage does fragmentation have?

    _____ _____
    _____ _____

37. To how many children did you give birth after you gave *gulema* land to your elder child/children? _____

38. Do you think resettlement is necessary?
    1. Yes_____ 2. No _____

Part III- <u>Crop production</u>

39.

Main Subsistence Crop		Main cash Crop	
Annual	Perennial	Annual	Perennial
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

40. Crop yield

Crop	Average yield in local measurement	Good year	Bad year

41. Are you satisfied with the yield you get?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____

42. What are the major constraint/s on crop production? (Multiple choice possible, choose from the rank list on the right side)

1. Low/ erratic rainfall _____
2. Land degradation _____
3. Erosion _____
4. Land slide _____
5. Flood _____
6. Shortage of input _____
7. Poor prices _____
8. Insufficient training on the use of inputs _____
9. Labor constraint _____
10. Shortage of draft power _____
11. Shortage of land _____
12. Pests _____
13. God's will _____
14. Old age _____
15. Sickness _____
16. Female headed households_____
17. Fire _____
18. Other (specify) _____

Rank

a. Extremely important problem
b. Most important
c. Moderate
d. Less
e. Not a problem

43. What crops/ other products are grown on the land around the homestead?

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

44. Who cultivate the homestead farm?

1. Women _____ 2. Men _____ 3. Both_____

45. Who is in charge of the yield?

1. Women_____ 2. Men _____ 3. Both _____

46. For what purposes are homestead products used?

1. Home consumption _____
2. Market _____
3. Others (specify) _____

47. Is horticulture practiced?

1. Yes _____ 2. No _____

48. If the answer for question 45 is "yes", what is produced?

_____ _____
_____ _____

49. If your land is small what mechanisms do you use to increase crop yield?

1. Produce crops, which give more yields on a small piece of land _____
2. Use Chemical fertilizer _____
3. Use manure _____
4. Intensify land preparation _____
5. Intensify weeding _____
6. Use improved seed _____
7. Diversify the type of crop _____
8. Use pesticide _____

9. Use traditional methods to avert pests _____

Part IV - Livestock raising

50. Number of livestock

Type of animal	Total Number	*Rebi*	*gulema*	Remark (no. Of *rebi* or *gulema* animals)
Ox/oxen				
Cow/s				
Heifer				
Calf/Calves				
Wayfen (Bull)				
Korma				
Sheep				
Goat/s				
Donkey/s				
Horse/s				
Mule/s				
Hen/chicken				
Bee				
Camel				

51. Did you get oxen or another livestock as marriage endowment?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____
52. If the answer for question 51 is yes, please list the livestock you get?
    _____

53. What are the problems related to livestock? (Multiple choice possible)
    1. Lack of veterinary services_____
    2. Animal diseases _____
    3. Lack of fodder _____
    4. Lack of grazing fields _____
    5. Others (specify) _____
54. What traditional methods are used against animal disease?

_____
_____

55. What are the source/s of fodder for livestock? (Multiple choice possible, fill the rank from the given ranking list)

Ranking list 1= very common 2= common 3= rare 4= nil

Source of Fodder	Dry season	Wet season	Rank
Grass on grazing land	_____	_____	____
Grass from cut and Carry	_____	_____	____
Hay	_____	_____	____
Crop Residues	_____	_____	____

Others (Specify) _____

56. Do you have Sufficient fodder supply?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____

57. If the answer for question 52 is "yes" , in which month/s do you have supply problem?

_____ _____

_____ _____

58. List some other plants that provide forage to livestock?

Crop	grass	vegetables	trees
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

59. Where do animals graze?
    1. On top/side of mountains _____
    2. Land reserved for grazing _____
    3. Around homestead _____
    4. Along farm land_____
    5. Others (specify) _____

60. If animals get fodder through free grazing, what is its impact? (Multiple choice possible)
    1. Impact on soil _____
    2. Neighborhood conflict_____
    3. Roaming into other people's fields _____
    4. Affect the water conservation work _____
    5. Loss of livestock because of felling from mountain tops _____
    6. Others (specify) _____

61. What are the common products of animals used by the household? (Multiple choice possible)
    1. Meat_____ 2. Milk_____ 3. Manure _____
    4. Leather/hide_____5. Draft power _____
    6. Others (specify) _____

62. Which animals are the most important in the household?

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

63. If you do not have sufficient draft power, what mechanism/s do you use to access oxen?

_____ _____

_____ _____

64. Which one is often used?

Mechanisms	Male headed HH	Female Headed HH

Part V- Household food consumption and food security, drought

65. Do you have sufficient food supply for your household members throughout the year?
    1. Yes _____ 2. No _____

66. If the answer for question 73 is “no”, then which months are food short months?

Level of scarcity	**Months**
Less food shortage	
Moderate food shortage	
Extreme food shortage	
No food shortage	

67. Who is the most affected member of the household during food shortage?
    1. Children_____
    2. Women/mothers _____
    3. Household heads_____
    4. Other dependents _____

68. How do you supplement food shortage?
    1. Purchase grain_____
    2. Borrow grain from other households_____
    3. Receive free food aid_____
    4. Obtain grain through food-for-work_____
    5. Others (specify)_____

69. If you purchase grain, where do you get the money from?
    1. Borrow from other farmers _____
    2. Obtain gift from relatives _____
    3. Selling livestock _____
    4. Working as daily laborer outside your area _____
    5. Working as daily laborer inside your community _____
    6. Petty trading _____
    7. Engage in cash-for-work_____
    8. Remittance _____
    9. Others (specify)_____

70. What kind of subsistence production are involved
    1. Double cropping _____
    2. Multiple Cropping _____
    3. Others (specify) _____

71. What constraints are there in relation to rainfall?
    1. Rains starting late_____
    2. Rains ending early in the season _____
    3. Extended dry spells between the rains _____

72. What the major drought/famine that occur in the area since 1977 E.C?

Drought/Famine	Year
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

73. At times of drought, what coping strategies do you use?
    1. Change in cropping and planting practices _____
    2. Sales of small stock _____
    3. Reduction of current consumption level _____

4. Collection of wild food _____
5. Use inter-household transfer and loan _____
6. Increased petty trading activities _____
7. Migration in search of employment_____
8. Sell of possession (jewelry, dwellings, HH utensils, etc.)_____
9. Sale of livestock (e.g. oxen) _____
10. Sale of agricultural tools _____
11. Sale or mortgaging of land _____
12. Credit from merchants or money lenders _____
13. Distress migration_____
14. Others (specify)_____

PART VI- <u>Off farming activities and labor accessing mechanisms</u>

74. Are there members of the household that are engaged in off-farming activities?
1. Yes _____ 2. No _____

75. In 2000 which members of the household participated in off-farming activities?

Off-farming activities	Household members	Period of the year they are engaged in the activity
Trade (sell of grain, livestock, egg, etc)		
Sell of liquor		
Selling malt		
Sell of firewood		
Weaver		
Pottery		
Blacksmith		
Food-for-work		
Cash-for-work		
Guard		
Daily labor		

76. In which labor access mechanisms are members of the household engaged?

Labor access mechanisms	Members of a household	Farming activities they are involved in [a]

Code a. 1. Plowing 2. Harvesting 3. Weeding
4. Threshing 5. Wedding

77. In 2000 how many *Jiges* have you organized?

Activities	Number of *Jige*	Months
Plowing		
Harvesting		
Weeding		
Threshing		
Wedding		

78. If you did not prepare *Jige* in 2000, what is the reason behind?

1. Old age_____
2. Sickness _____
3. Having small plot of land_____
4. Sharecropped land out_____
5. Having hired labor_____
6. Having enough labor in the household_____
7. Lack of resource to prepare *Jige*_____
8. Other (specify) _____

Appendix 3

Semi- structured questions

Land Reform

- What were the for land redistribution?
- During the land reform was the land given to all the people adequate?
- What measure did the people take to solve land shortage? What about the household?
- Did the household try to increase the land holding by incorporating some other land?
- Was land given on behalf of the husband? What happen to the wife? Does she get her own share?
- Who benefited from the land reform?
- What percentage of the people accepted the reform in1976 1991?
- What were the problems related to land reform during the *derg*?
- Was there land rental during the *derg* either cash based or kind based?
- Was there a problem related to land ownership, ownership security?
- Does the fact that land is in the hand of the government affect production and creates lenient care for land?
- What did your household do to upgrade the fertility of land?
- Did you own land during the imperial period?
- How much land is given to each household during the 1983 land redistribution 1991 land redistribution?
- Did the redistribution of land change some of the grazing land to farmland?
- Is there tenure insecurity problem in the area?
- Are there conservation mechanisms abandoned because of tenure insecurity or shortage of land?

Livestock

- What is the culture of the society related to oxen sell? Do you sell oxen? What about cow and other small ruminant?
- What is the relationship between those who own oxen and those who do not own oxen?
- What are the problems related to those household heads that do not own oxen?
- Can a household head own other animals with out having oxen? Where do animals graze? Is the problem of grazing increasing or decreasing? Why?
- Do households spend money on livestock purchase, care, etc? In what way?
- What are the criteria to enter into a *mekenajo , yerebe*, etc, arrangement?
- Was having capital (oxen, implements, etc) an advantage in having larger land?

The role of women

- What is the source of income for women?
- When does a woman become influential in the household?
- What are the qualities of good husband?
- When does the role and influence of a woman increase in the household?
- What is the role of woman in the household?
- How do you perceive the role of women? Is it a major one or supplementary?
- What roles do women play besides activities at home and in the farm? What affected these activities?
- In what way do women expend their off-farming incomes? Compare these with the expenditure of men?
- In which household does the role of women crucial? In a poor or rich household?
- Who at most is responsible for the well being of the household? In what way is the role of women and men different? Is there a significant division of labor? How is the division of labor changing over time?
- What are the decision women make?
  - task based
  - crop based

- size and type of commodity marketed
- distance of market(its impact on decision of women)

- What is the role of women in providing staple food?

Divorce

- What are the reasons for divorce? Often? Rarely?
- What is the prevalence of divorce before and after the *derg*? Does it increase r decrease? What are the reasons behind?
- What about its prevalence before and after EPRDF?
- What is the impact pf equal right of women during land redistribution? Does it increase or decrease divorce? Why?
- What is the impact of ownership of land on divorce?
- Who suffers because of divorce?
- What is the practice during sharing of property upon divorce?
- Is there an unmarried male in the Kebele Association (KA)?

Resettlement

- Do you support resettlement? W here should the resettlement by?
- Who was taken to the resettlement areas?
- Did they go with their family?
- What were the problems related to resettlement?
- Why did you come back from the resettlement area?
- What were the good and bad experiences of resettlement?

Differentiation

- Can labor market play role in differentiation?
- What is the impact of initial endowment on differentiation?
- What are the off-farming activities the household often engaged?
- Who is economically better? The newly established household, the expanding household, the expanding household or the declining household? Give a reason?
- What are the main problems of a poor household, a rich household?
- How is the workload related to the developmental cycle? How are newly established households affected? What about expanding and decline households?

Livelihood strategies during famine

- What are the good and bad years as per the perception of the peasants?
- Can you compare food security when there is belg rain or not?
- What are the first steps taken during food shortage?
- Did peasants of the area diversify their occupation or production?
- Which household is vulnerable to drought or famine? Why?
- Which drought affected every household in the community? Why?
- What measures did you take in order to reduce the probability of vulnerability of your household before and during the different famines?
- Who in the household migrate first, and then who follows?
- Which types of household in the developmental cycle migrate often?
- Who were the most vulnerable section of society in the 1983 and later famine and drought?
- Did you sale your livestock for cheaper price? Why what was the order of sale of livestock?
- Why didn't you save grain or cash?

Food-for-work

- What is the impact of food-for-work and cash for work on the life of the society?
- How is food-work and CFW applied?
- What are the selection criteria? Who is included and who is excluded?
- How is the food from FFW or the cash form CFW utilized?
- Which one is preferred? CFW or FFW?

Others

- State the kebele structure?
- From where do you obtain credit? How much is interest?
- What collateral is used during credit?
- What are the other sources of credit other than the Amahara credit and saving association?
- What is the most important expenditure of peasants?
- What are/were the different contributions made by the peasants?
- What do peasants sell?
- What do they buy?
- Are there peasants who are not members of peasants of peasant associations? Why?
- What is the source of income of KAs?
- What are the present tasks of KAs?
- What is the present structure of peasant associations?