THE RESPONSE TO AGRICULTURAL ADOPTION IN BORU LENCHA *KEBELE*, HITOSA *WEREDA*, ARSI

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a contribution to the investigation and analysis of the implementation of the government-sponsored agricultural extension programme in the particular case of Boru Lencha *kebele*, Arsi Zone of Oromiya State. The prior extension experience of peasants in the *kebele* induced them to seek participation in the programme. In the three years of programme life before the study was carried out, only 57 peasants were enrolled. The criticism raised by peasants of beneficiary selection eventually defined the focus and research problem of the study: the significance of the social context of the extension process, particularly the role and performance of the Development Agent. The literature on innovation diffusion and rural development programmes paid little attention to that aspect, though the issue of the socio-cultural dimension of development has become a focus in recent studies.

The dissertation is based on a survey of 35 of the 57 participating peasants. The interview aimed to investigate their characteristics. In analysis, the sample was classified into three groups defined by year of enrolment. The interview was supplemented by partial observations, informal interviews and group discussions that covered both participating and non-participating peasants as well as members of the *kebele* administration.

Analysis of the characteristics of the three groups revealed a heterogeneous composition. Each included peasants of varying personal and social characteristics. The Boru Lencha reality seemed to defy contentions concerning the willingness of the rich and reluctance of the poor to join innovation programmes. In each group, a core of peasants with similar characteristics was identified. The core in the first two groups consisted of elements from the local power structure. In the third group the core consisted of peasants unconnected with the local power structure.

The selection of beneficiaries was carried out by the Development Agent. In the selection as in many other instances when significant decisions were made, the DA exercised the wide discretion granted to him. The DA favoured members of the local elite with whom he enjoyed symbiotic relations and granted privileges to peasants with whom he established patron-client relations. Lack of accountability to the local community made a king out of the DA who was supposed to serve. It also compromised the objective of the extension programme: benefiting poor peasants. The interception of the benefits by the local power structure points to the significance to be accorded to the social context in development planning.

The top-down approach adopted in planning and implementing the extension package mitigated the relevance and effectiveness of the programme by ruling out listening to peasants. The DA trivialised peasant experience with chemical fertilisers, thereby obstructing a fruitful dialogue between planners and beneficiaries, thereby, once again compromising programme objectives. More flexible planning frameworks sensitive to local needs, problems and knowledge are highly recommendable.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY

Orientation

This dissertation is a contribution to the investigation and analysis of the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of development planning in Ethiopia. It consists of a case study, carried out in Boru Lencha *kebele*, of the socio-economic context of, and peasants response to the implementation of the agricultural extension programme adopted by the Ethiopian government as a tool for development. This chapter is intended to introduce the context and focus of the dissertation, the objectives of the study and the methods of data collection. Additionally, the chapter highlights the organisation of the dissertation and discusses the limitation of the study.

The Context of the Study

Agricultural extension aiming to diffuse agricultural technology among small farmers has a rather long history in Ethiopia. The successive Ethiopian regimes over the last four decades have adopted it as a crucial component of their agricultural development strategies and plans. The attention accorded by governments to agriculture and its

development through diffusion is attributed to the position of agriculture as the backbone of Ethiopian economy and the sector upon which the majority of the population depend for their livelihood. Nearly 89 percent of the country's population live in rural areas. Agriculture provides employment for about 85 percent of the labour force and accounts for nearly 45 percent of GDP.

Notwithstanding the extent to which Ethiopians depend on forms of pastoralism for their livelihoods, Ethiopia is commonly described as a country of peasants. The official emphasis on the peasant sector stems from its contribution to crop production in the country. Peasants account for over 95 percent of cultivated crop land and produce 90-94 percent of cereals, pulses, and oil seeds. About 98 percent of coffee, the major export crop is produced by the small holders (Ministry of Agriculture: 1992).

In Ethiopia, as in many other African countries, agricultural extension programmes are launched by government to promote socio-economic development. These programmes are envisaged to diffuse innovation to the small scale farmers and thereby "modernise" their traditional production systems. In their zeal to develop the so-called traditional sector, however, policy-makers and planners seem consistent in viewing the process of innovation diffusion as an essentially technical task. They require, and presuppose compliance by peasants to the "scientific methods" introduced by the package. By so doing, however, planners tend to gloss over intricate socio-economic issues concerning the planning and implementation of extension programmes. After four decades of

agricultural extension in Ethiopia, the majority of peasants continued to be poor and vulnerable, with only little evidence of improvements in living conditions.

The apparent failure of agricultural extension does not seem to stem from the conservatism or resistance of peasants to adopt new ways of doing things, as earlier studies used to justify failure. In Ethiopia, peasants seem generally eager to join the extension programmes and access some of the inputs. However little seem to be documented concerning the nature and dynamic of peasant response to agricultural extension packages in the country. Likewise lacunae exist regarding information on the socio-economic and cultural dimensions involved in the implementation of the packages. This study seeks to contribute, at least partially, to filling these information gaps with reference to a study of a peasant community in one locality, Boru Lencha *kebele*.

The Research Problem

Over the last three decades, Ethiopia has passed through three different and opposed political systems (of the Emperor, the Derg and the present EPRDF regimes). In spite of the apparent political instability in the country, there seems to be a fair degree of consistency regarding the attitude of the different regimes towards agriculture. They all claimed agriculture as the central issue of their rule and sought to develop it in

consistency with their political system from which individual policy such as extension programme emanated.

The extension package launched by the current government of EPRDF is claimed to be the most comprehensive and capable of changing the life of the small producers enduring abject poverty. In a show of commitment, the government provided rural communities with the necessary personnel, Development Agents (DA), and continues to procure basic material inputs. The launching of an extension package, no matter how comprehensive, cannot be assumed in itself as a solution to the problems of peasant agriculture. Two other, closely related issues, which comprise the problem of this study, have to be carefully approached to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the extension package. These issues are:

1) The response of peasants to the package and,
2) The impact of the social context in which the package is extended.

With reference to the case of the peasants in k*ebele* of Boru Lencha, the present study seeks to address aspects of these two issues. The decision to focus on this particular *kebele* was initially made on the basis of advice by officials in Itya town. They had an impression that Boru Lencha showed a fairly good response to the current package. The recommendation was immediately accepted when it transpired that the

recommended study area had experienced agricultural extension programmes since their initial inception with CADU about three decades ago.

The Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study is to contribute to the clarification of the socio-cultural dimensions in planning agricultural extension programmes in Ethiopia. In investigating the case of Boru Lencha *kebele,* moreover, the specific objectives are two-fold. The first is to explore the question of peasant response. In contrast to the concept of extension which conceives peasants as passive and obedient recipients of "messages and inputs", the study aims at exploring the ways in which Boru Lencha peasants attempt to exercise initiative and control over processes directly affecting their livelihoods. In this respect the study seeks to investigate, document and analyse the different responses by peasants. The personal and social characteristics of peasants are considered crucial in that analysis. The study will accordingly attempt to shed light on the relevance of these characteristics to the types of response farmers show in relation to the extension package.

The second and related objective is to document and analyse the social context in which agricultural extension is carried out. In this regard the focus will be on the interaction

between the Development Agent and the community of peasants. This focus is justifiable by the fact that the effective implementation of the extension package is invariably dependent on the role and performance of the Development Agent. However very little attention has thus far been accorded to the issue of the intricate and complex relations Development Agents enter into with the community. The study thus seeks to investigate and analyse aspects of the actual role of Development Agents and how and to what extent their conduct promotes or hampers the objectives they are supposed to further.

Methods of Study

Both the primary and secondary methods of data collection were used in this study. These include in-depth interviews, case studies, partial observations and visits to documentation centres.

Interviews were used in two ways: formal and informal. In the formal interviews, questionnaires were administered to the respondents while in the informal interviews exchange of views in casual spontaneous conversation was pursued without "dry" question. For the formal interview twenty open-ended questions were prepared.

Impromptu questions springing from the responses to the questionnaire were also dealt with.

The sample covered by the questionnaire consisted of thirty five peasants purposively selected on the basis of participation in agricultural innovation programme. While the main target of the interview was the head of the household, other members of the household also participated in the discussions irrespective of whether or not the questions were addressed to them. Spontaneous interventions were common from persons towards whom the questions were not directed. Notwithstanding the inconvenience of interruption, however, such interventions were sometimes helpful in shedding light on certain issues, such as the role of Development Agent.

Unlike the formal interview situations, the informal dialogues I made at *mahiber,* wedding, funeral, encounters, work place, evenings etc., have served to reinforce or obtain information which could not be elicited formally.

I have participated in two weddings. During feasting and dancing, I raised issues for discussion such as the advantage or the disadvantage of innovation inputs and whether the Development Agent was helpful or not in his work. Once the issue is sparked hot discussions followed in which opposed views surfaced. I also frequented public places such as St. Michael's Church and *tij* houses to observe aspects of social life in the

community and to listen to the conversations of its members. One *tij* house with a black and white television set was particularly popular with community members, and often packed with peasants during evenings.

Throughout my stay in Boru Lencha, I was guest of the Development Agent. He lived and worked in the same building, and this availed a good opportunity to observe closely aspects of the interaction between the Development Agent and the community of peasants. The close association with the agent, however, at times posed constraints on my ability to pursue free discussion with peasants. It was very clear that in the presence of the Development Agent, the peasants were reluctant to speak out their views on either the package or the role of the agent. I thus often had to make excuses to go out alone and visit prospective informants.

The Organisation of Study

The study is divided into six chapters, including this introduction. Chapter Two consists primarily of a literature review. It discusses the theoretical origins of agricultural extension in modernisation theory and highlights the different views expressed in relation to the process of innovation diffusion. The Third Chapter provides a historical background to agricultural extension programmes in Ethiopia. It thereby highlights the long experience with extension packages in Boru Lencha, which was part of the area

covered by the first extension programme served by the Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU). Chapter Four presents an overview of the study area, Boru Lencha *kebele*. It presents a brief background to some of the salient physical and socio-economic characteristics of the area and its inhabitants.

The findings of the study are presented and analysed in Chapter Five. The discussion focuses on the different responses of peasants and the relevance of the social context of the extension process (inclusive of the role of the Development Agent) to the understanding of the varied peasant responses.

Chapter Six, Summary and Conclusions, is a brief statement recapitulating the important findings and underlining the main conclusions reached.

Limitations of the Study

Several varied and complex limitations that constrained the scope of this study may be pointed out. Time and logistical problems are common to all research exercises in Ethiopia, and have served to limit the focus of this research too. While the issue of peasant response to the extension package may be assessed from varied angles, in this research the focus was limited to only two aspects: the general attitude of Boru Lencha peasants towards the extension package and the role of the Development Agent. The

survey covered only those peasants who joined the programme - which sufficed to deal with the modest objective of the research. A more comprehensive treatment of the issue extension package and its social context would have dealt with a comparative approach that covers a number of *kebeles*, if not an entire region. The case of Boru Lencha cannot be, and is not considered as representative of the Ethiopian peasantry or even the peasants in Arsi Zone. But it is my conviction that Boru Lencha is nevertheless part of that wider reality and may contribute a little clarification of some of the intricate issues involved. Within this partial fulfilment thesis, all I aim at is drawing attention to the need to investigate the social context of extension. If this thesis achieves that objective to any extent, the limitations of the study may well be the achievement of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

EXTENSION AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Introduction

In Ethiopia, as in the rest of the Horn of African, the population faces a general and serious problem of food insecurity emanating from the decline of the traditional agro-pastoral production systems. Efforts to rectify that insecurity, and to solve the problem of underdevelopment in general, focus on modernising these traditional systems most often than not through promotion of agricultural extension. This chapter seeks to provide a schematic review on the literature on extension as a tool of development. In view of the controversies over modernisation theory, no pretence to cover the extensive literature is made.

Extension As Modernisation

The problems of underdevelopment in the developing countries in general and Africa in particular prompted interest in rural development programmes. Over the last three decades, the concept of these programmes underwent refinements and virtual redefinition. Some emphasised the reinforcing of components or inputs, others stressed

development goals while a third group underlined the characteristics of projects (Cohen: 1987). But in spite of the seeming controversy, the ultimate objective remains unchanged: the transformation of the "traditional" production systems. Towards that transformation the diffusion of new technology and techniques, referred to as innovation, is considered a precondition. Extension is the term given to this process of innovation diffusion, which denotes both the service provided to the communities and the institutions facilitating and coordinating the service.

Third World governments now spend a larger share of their income on extension than higher income countries (Ahmed and Rutan, 1988). This is mainly due to the existence or the preponderance of small, resource-poor and illiterate farmers to be reached in isolated and scattered remote rural areas. Through extension programmes, governments seek to transfer technology to their traditional production systems and achieve their modernisation. Donors and UN organisations support the search of government through their development assistance. As a practice, the legitimacy of extension as a development tool seems uncontested. The theoretical legitimacy of extension does not, however, seem to be unchallenged.

The idea of extension as a development tool rests with modernisation theories. Based on the "pattern variables" of Talcott Parsons (cited by O'Brien 1979), modernisation theories contrast the structural features of social systems in developed and

underdeveloped countries. The former, assumed to represent modernisation or development, are believed to exhibit affective-neutrality, universalism, achievement and role specificity as orientations. The orientations in underdeveloped countries, in contrast, are said to be affectivity, particularism, ascription and role-diffuseness. Modernisation, according to this view, entails the adoption in developing countries of the structural orientations of the developed world (cf. O'Brien, 1979). It is in this sense that modernisation is commonly conceived as Westernisation.

Extension is thus an aspect of modernisation theory that views diffusion and acculturation as the means and ultimate objective of development planning. The basic policy recommendation of these theories is that development is achievable through the diffusion of the elements of modernity from outside. The diffusion of three types of elements is commonly held to be necessary: capital; technology including knowledge, skills and techniques; and institutions including organisation, values and world-view (cited by O'Brien, 1979).

Over the last three decades, modernisation theories were subjected to severe criticism according to Frank, (1967) and Amin, (1973), (cited by O'Brien 1979). The historical and international dimensions in generating the observed conditions in developing countries were articulately postulated. According to these critics, Underdevelopment can no longer be analysed solely in terms of factors internal to developing countries.

Instead they recasted underdevelopment as a consequence of a global process that produced development in one part of the world and underdevelopment in the other.

The critique of modernisation theory does not seem successful in influencing development planning in Third World countries. One factor is perhaps that the "historical background" to underdevelopment does not seem of immediate relevance to the task of solving the problems of the traditional production systems. Modernisation theory thus continued to provide the conceptual framework for planning integrated rural development programmes with extension playing a pivotal role in promoting development. The critique of modernisation theory boiled down to a critique of the approaches to extension or innovation diffusion and adoption.

Innovation Adoption

When human actors are involved in innovation, they could either operate within institutionally arranged (induced) or spontaneous innovation adoption, the former being operating in Boru Lenca. Through co-operation (negotiation) and struggle, constraints and opportunities right and obligations actors engage in maintaining, reproducing and changing social rules and institutional arrangements (Yeraswork Admasie: 1995) by bringing their respective resources into the arena.

Early writings on the problems of underdevelopment referred to dualism as the basic problem. Third World economies were assumed to consist of two, a modern and a traditional, sectors. The two sectors were said to lack linkages and operating with different institutional settings, technologies and values as indicated by Higgins,(1953) and, Boeke(1956) and referred to by O'Brien (1979). The traditional sector was accordingly projected as stagnant, subsistence-oriented and labour-intensive. The solution to the problems of the developing world, it was contended, rested with the transformation of the traditional sector through modernisation. McClelland (1961; 1968) wrote that entrepreneurial motivation (need for achievement) and behaviour as prime movers of economic and social development and advocated the transformation of values, through diffusion, as a precondition for the development of the traditional sector by referring to O'Brien (1979).

Modernisation was adopted by Third World government as the framework for their development planning exercises. The efforts to modernise peasant agriculture, however, seemed to have been unsuccessful. Explanations of that failure were formulated on social-psychological perspectives, which effectively blamed the peasants. The focus centred on the process of innovation diffusion and how peasant conservatism was an obstacle to the process of modernisation.

Among the prominent scholars of the early period was the agricultural economist Everett Rogers (1962) who popularised the notion that some cultures are more favourable to innovation than others. He went further to analyse the process of innovation adoption which, according to his social psychology perspective, consisted of five stages (awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined "innovation" as:

> an idea, practice or object perceived as new by an individual. It matters little, so far as measured by the lapse of time since its first use or discovery. It is the perceived or subjective newness of the idea for the individual that determines his reaction to it (Rogers and Shoemaker 1971: 16)

Rogers and Shoemaker went on to identify categories of adopters such as innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

The work of Rogers inspired many to research into the issue of the resistance of peasants to change and the categories of innovation adopters Lionberger, (1960). Anthropologists followed suit and began to highlight the cultural basis for the resistance of innovation (see Shanin, 1990). Such views seem to persist until recently. Mulugeta Mekuria (1994), for example, contended that Ethiopian farmers were reluctant to adopt simple recommendation such as high yield variety (HYV) and fertilisers and went to give the cultural reasons for rejection.

Haferkamp and Smelser (cited by Sztomka, 1993) view innovation as an aspect of change which they described as an evident feature of social reality which any social theory is bound to address. Nevertheless, anthropologists for a long time failed to deal with that issue, probably due to their static, synchronic functionalist approach. Barnett (1953) noted that inability to formulate a theory of innovation and attempt to advance one that defined innovation as:

> as any thought, behaviour, or thing that is new because it is qualitatively different from existing forms. Strictly speaking, every innovation is an idea, constellation of ideas (Barnett 1953:6).

Barnett associated the adoption of innovation with the marginalized and peripheral members of a society. Along the same lines Thomas Bargatzky's (1998) associated adoption of innovation with married women outside their community, travelling craftsmen, minstrels, travelling merchants, shipwrecked, beachcombers and soldier mercenaries.

The McGlades (1989) denounced Brown's (1989) invocation of attitude theory "which suggested that innovation adoption is affected by a person's beliefs about the attributes associated with and by his/her evaluation of these subjective attributes" as an approach

leaning towards psychology and personality. They accordingly proposed that adoption of innovation is highly circumstantial and is not the preserve of a particular psychological personality type.

The association of innovation adoption with certain personality types or value systems lost currency in recent years. Scholars dealing with the issue have instead developed a belief that in developing nations there exists a great rift between the poor and rich peasants, in the way they react to innovation. With such a belief Robert Layton (1989) wrote that in developing countries it is often those nearest the poverty line who are least willing to risk and adopt innovation, such as a new seed variety.

Putting the Last First

Current research on extension has moved away from the earlier psychological and culturalist perspectives which blamed peasants for their resistance of innovation. Emphasis has accordingly shifted to the type and relevance of innovation to peasants and the nature of the interaction between extensionists and local communities according to the views of Hoben, (1982), Bennet (1988) Bowan (1988); Horowitz, (1994)and Cernea, 1985;1995) as they are cited by Escobar (1997). Chambers (1989) is a leading scholar within the new paradigm. He criticises the top-down approach of extension programmes and the attitudes of extensionists, both of which tend to trivialise

farmers knowledge. Acknowledging the necessity of recognition and utilisation of farmers knowledge, he argues, does not necessarily mean that they do not need extension services. Rather, it points to needs to improve the interaction between extensionists and local people. It is accordingly asserted that;

> Two basic, nearly universal assumptions have, until the last few years, drastically reduced the effectiveness of agricultural development efforts around the world. The first is that the basic goal of agricultural programs should be to reach small farmers with a set of innovations that will increase an area's productivity, and that, having adopted this practices, the people will continually to farm at the new, higher level of productivity. This assumption is, in most cases, simply mistaken. The goal of agricultural program, therefore, should be to train and motivate farmers to teach each other the innovation learned from program staff and then to encourage them to improve on those innovations by themselves (Chambers, et al., 1989: 55-6).

The perspective adopted by Chambers and associates is an outcome of a re-evaluation of the cultural and social aspects of development that started to gain momentum since the 1970's. It redefined the role of social anthropologists in development. Culture - which until then had been a residual category, since traditional societies were thought to be in the process of becoming modern - became inherently problematic calling, for a type of professional capable of relating culture and development. The socio-cultural

dimension of development became an important part of theory building and project design (Escobar 1997: 499).

Escobar (1997) contends that the new sensitivity and recognition towards social and cultural condition came about because of the poor results of top-down, technology and capital intensive interventions. That is the reason why anthropologists who have to deal with development activities believe that significant transformation could take place, where social and cultural factors are taken as indispensable factors. In other words, culture should be viewed as an asset or a resource not an obstacle in the development process.

Cernea (1995) underscores the imperative of putting people first. Putting people first means considering the importance of their culture, even if what is brought to them is believed to be of absolute advantage to the community in question. According to Cernea projects have to be socially relevant and culturally appropriate to the people who are to benefit from them.

The Socio-Cultural Dimension

At one time development debate and criticism were between anthropologists and people from other (external) disciplines such as economics. In recent years, the debate

and criticism have become so intense that they turned out to be internal, among anthropologists themselves.

Internally development anthropology versus anthropology of development fight it out, the latter being the critique of both development and development anthropology. In the eyes of development anthropologists, the post-structuralist critiques are morally wrong because of the advocacy of non-engagement carried on by them in the world that desperately needs the input of anthropology according to Horowitz: (cited by Escobar 1997). On the opposite Little and Painter pointed out that the post-structuralists critique is an intellectual conceit of privileged Northern intellectuals which in no way responds to intellectual or political issue of the Third World (cited by Escobar 1997).

Escobar emphasised the necessity of taking into consideration the cultural make up of a society, when engaged in development activity. He said that an assessment of previous situation should be made. The implication of his emphasis is that if comprehensive positive results are wanted the socio-cultural complexities should be taken on board.

The socio-cultural dimension does not solely denote the values, resources, potential and constraints of beneficiaries. Though important these as they may be, a significant aspect of that dimension concerns awareness of the wider context in which the beneficiaries live. Attention is thereby called to the issue of the local power structures, which commonly intercept project benefits. The interaction between developers and local communities becomes part of that wider context. Regardless of the number of researches that have been carried in Ethiopia regarding these issues, particularly the

interaction between development agents and peasant communities many more studies need to be undertaken. With reference to the particular case of Boru Lencha kebele, this study seeks to shed light on aspects of the nature and implications of that interaction.

CHAPTER THREE

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN ETHIOPIA: AN OVERVIEW:

Introduction:

This chapter provides an overview of the experience of agricultural extension in Ethiopia. It provides background information on Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU, the first integrated rural development project in Ethiopia. As noted in Chapter One, Boru Lencha is part of the Arsi Region covered by CADU. Subsequent modifications of the extension programme during the Derg Regime and its latest reformulation by the current government will also be briefly discussed. The account highlights the objectives, activities, achievements and constraints of the extension programmes under each regime.

An Overview of Agricultural Extension in Arsi

Agricultural extension in Ethiopia can be traced back to 1950's. The Agricultural University of Alemaya with the help of Oklahoma University of USA started small and local extension work in Eastern Hararghe. This initial undertaking was made without noticeable or great involvement of central government. It was an isolated unilateral work but a precursor to later extension activity (MOA: 1987 EC).

The involvement of the Ethiopian government in agricultural extension initiatives began with the establishment of CADU in Chilalo, Arsi Region, which was a component of the Third Five Year Plan. That Plan is often described as the initiative by which the Emperor's government established and promoted capitalist agriculture in the predominantly feudal Ethiopian economy. The plan envisaged radical change within peasant agriculture involving a long term intervention in rural development. In the short-term, however, the plan focused on the formation of commercial agriculture to quickly increase income through agricultural exports (Stahl 1973:74). So, putting the peasant agriculture for a long term consideration, export oriented farming took high priority. The establishment of CADU coincided with the government intention inscribed in the plan.

The conception of CADU emerged in the course of negotiations between the Ethiopian and Swedish governments in 1966. In September 1967 the two governments signed the agreement by which CADU was established. In 1976, two years following the deposition of the Emperor, CADU was restructured to become ARDU, Arsi Rural Development Unit. The restructuring was due not only to the change in regime, but also to the far reaching changes taking root in the Ethiopian society and economy, particularly in respect of rural land property relations. By then CADU had completed two phases of operation and was being replanned to commence the third phase.

As a result of starting a joint activity with the neighbouring Bale administrative region, ARDU was changed to Bale-Arsi Rural Development Unit (BARDU). The policy of decentralisation of development areas forced BARDU's activity to be absorbed into the Peasant Agricultural Development Extension Project (PADEP) with the formation of a regional development unit called South-Eastern Development Zone (SEAD). In 1985 BARDU gave way to PADEP of SEAD. Until the change of regime in 1991, PADEP functioned as an interim arrangement that was eventually replaced by the current extension package programme drawn up by the EPRDF regime.

There is considerable debate regarding the continuities and discontinuities in the history of agricultural extension in Ethiopia during the different regimes. Reference to this issue will be made subsequent to a brief exposition of each of the phases or programmes which Arsi Region experienced.

CADU - Stated Objectives and Activities

The initial 1967 Establishment Agreement stated the objectives of CADU are;

- to bring about economic and social development;
- to give the population an increased awareness of and responsibility for development processes;
- to verify methods of agricultural development; and

- to train staff not only for CADU but for similar projects elsewhere

When the second phase took-off in 1971, the initial objectives were revised based on experience and challenges of CADU. The revised stated objectives of CADU were:

1. to achieve economic and social development throughout the project area;
2. to conduct project activities to ensure participation and assumption of responsibilities of the community;
3. to avoid adverse effects and increase opportunities for tenants;
4. to direct project activities towards small scale producers;
5. to increase financial resources of the region by increasing incomes of the local population;
6. to disseminate CADU's experience elsewhere in Ethiopia; and
7. to bring about integrated agricultural development in Ethiopia.

According to CADU publication of 1971, the programme activities included:

a. producing reasonable number of agricultural innovation;

b. transmission of innovations to farmers;

c. creation and improvement of marketing facilities;

d. provision of credits;

e. conservation of natural resources;

f. carry on studies on infrastructures, health, small industrial ventures and trade training

as well as training of staff.

The Impact of CADU

The activities of CADU had been both hailed and criticised. As a result of its introduction of improved seeds and fertilisers as well as livestock the individuals have benefited. The provision of credits, the expansion of co-operatives, the familiarisation of marking system, personnel training, upgrading of infrastructure and environmental conditions have enabled individuals to enjoy better standard of life. CADU has contributed to the influence of establishment of other integrated rural development schemes thereby magnifying the peasants role in economic development of an agrarian society. Such positive assessment was made by groups such as the joint Ethiopian - Swedish evaluation team, expatriate advisers, foreign aid officers and government officials. Professionals such as agricultural economists and economists taking into consideration the number of people involved in the project, the adoption rates of innovation, the increased yield of crops and livestock, the average income of household and cost-benefit analysis have judged CADU as being successful in its operations.

On the other hand the engagement of CADU was seen from negative point of views. The expression of dissatisfaction with the project's activity ranged from mild criticism to absolute rejection by trivialising the impact of the activities. Those who have believed that CADU could have done better work had it given priority to tenants and small holders and pressurised the government to prevent eviction could be categorised as moderate. Because with "ifs", they have accepted the achievements on conditions.

The extreme critics were of the opinion that it was impossible to achieve positive results under the then archaic regime. The majority of tenants, small holders and sometimes the middle peasants were devastated by CADU initiated work. According to them, CADU brought huge advantages to the absentee land lords, traders, provincial elite, surplus land holders and rich peasants. CADU simply created and aggravated socio-economic inequality. They stress that it was an expensive project not meant for the majority small producers and tenants. The achievements referred to according to these critics were illusory and false and therefore ought to be rejected.

The negative aspects of CADU were documented by a number of researchers. Michael Stahl (1973), for example, asserted that a total of 538 tenants were displaced through eviction in the area where he carried out his research. The golmassas[1] have confirmed the incident. Inguar Jonsson (1972), for another misgiving, has mentioned the insignificant degree of innovation touching few tenants, inadequate experiment in extension methods,

uncertainty in approaching social issues and inability to protect tenants as handicaps of CADU. Jonsson observed that because of CADU's influence large areas came to be farmed with tractors and combine harvesters which increased the insecurity of small producers. It should be noted that this developed distrust for CADU among the small producers in Chilalo.

The Objectives of ARDU

Like its predecessor CADU, ARDU benefited from both funding and support by Swedish International Development Authority. It is thus not surprising that ARDU reflected some similarities to CADU in objectives. The following were the stated objectives of ARDU.

1. to bring about economic and social development in Arsi region;
2. to evolve a methodology for replication of innovation elsewhere in Ethiopia;
3. to train staff;
4. to create means to increase financial resources;
5. to increase participation of target population towards sustainable growth; and to ensure the handing over of the responsibility for most of the major activities.

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[1] Community members selected for quasi-official positions to

ARDU considered itself as a logical inheritor and extension of CADU. Yet ARDU drew up further objectives of its own as a reflection of new concerns and interests. In announcing the objectives of ARDU, the programme officials usually stressed the failures of CADU. In their view, the drawbacks of CADU included lack of operational social development programme, preoccupation with "green revolution" to the neglect of cattle programme, creation of master-servant relationship with model farmer approach, emphasis on "traditional" agriculture and working with improper organisational structure (ARDU:1978).

The Impact of ARDU

The changed political environment which gave birth to ARDU led to the politicisation of the extension programme. The transformation in the land tenure system forged by the nationalisation and confiscation measures under the Land Proclamation was instrumental to that effect. One major preoccupation of ARDU was thus the promotion of organisational structures among the peasantry. Peasant organisations were viewed by ARDU as instrumental in both facilitating agricultural development and safeguarding the revolution. In the early day of the revolution more than 1,104 peasant associations with a membership of 256,384 households were organised in Arsi. Peasant associations became the focus of campaigns to raise political consciousness among the rural poor in promotion

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keep records on the mobility of rural people. They are normally middle-age men with above average land holdings.

of the struggle against landlords and all other reactionary forces so that favourable conditions for development would not be reversed. Over the years, ARDU built hundreds of socialist co-operatives and collective farms. Though the enthusiasm to primarily achieve socio-political gains was dominant, ARDU provided innovation inputs and engaged in the development of infrastructural activities which ostensibly added to the socio-economic advancement of the community.

The economic and technical performance of ARDU was relatively poor. This was partly be due to the instability whose cause was the revolutionary turmoil. The revolution could be held responsible for the general directions of ARDU. Excessive focus on co-operatives, the exile of experts and experienced personnel, direct interference by government, creation of political factions within management, high turnover of leadership, neglect of equipment and poor communication between extension workers and peasants were some of the salient documented reasons for the sluggish economic achievement of ARDU.

In his assessment of the ARDU's era, Alemneh (1987) noted that with no improvement in farming technology, high rate of population growth and diminishing farm size, agricultural growth in Ethiopia was inevitably minimal. His Arsi field investigation revealed that even after the agrarian reform, the effect of land distribution and peasants attitude towards land security were factors which significantly influenced their

productivity. The decline of ARDU was one manifestation of the erosion of the Derg regime, which was to be eventually deposed by the EPRDF.

EPRDF's Extension Programme Objectives

Following the footsteps of its predecessors, the EPRDF government seem to accord considerable attention to agricultural extension. Its Five Years Extension Programme has five main objectives.

1. to achieve food self-sufficiency towards healthy population;
2. to involve all rural population in innovation activity, particularly women and youth;
3. to make extensive production in raw materials to feed the national industries as well as for exports;
4. to protect and develop natural environment; and
5. to change the difficult life of rural women.

The EPRDF plan sought to institute a new extension policy as it deemed that all previous extension programmes suffered from obscurity, bad communication of innovation, inadequate participation especially of the youth and women(MOA, 1987).

Activities in the current EPRDF extension package include;

- production and distribution of selected seeds,
- provision of fertilisers, insecticide, herbicide,
- improvement of animal husbandry, bee-keeping, poultry,
- improvement of storage facilities, farming equipment and techniques, and conservation practices; and,
- demonstration and training.

An Assessment of the Ethiopian Extension Experience

As a pioneer of integrated rural development in Ethiopia, CADU operated with relative independence from government control. The management of CADU enjoyed autonomy in both decision-making and field operations. With the eruption of the revolution and assumption of power by the self-professed socialist military, ARDU lost the autonomy CADU enjoyed. It was incorporated into the politico-administrative machine of the Dérg. Nevertheless, the question of continuity and change between CADU and ARDU remains a source of controversy and debate. There seems to be many similarities between the two as differences to emphasise. In terms of operational orientation, CADU was capitalist while ARDU was socialist. The former sided with propertied section of the community while the latter concentrated on organising socialist collectives and worked for the revolution.

Though ARDU's stated objectives were similar to those of its predecessor, its activities were carried out in agreement with the socialist policy of the Derg. CADU and ARDU worked with ideologically opposed political systems from which all modes of relations emanate. ARDU reports (1978) indicated that the socialist transformation of rural society, though gradual and slow, was an essential process requiring an agrarian structure of collective production. That was the reason why a radical shift was made in extension strategy, from farmer approach to peasant approach.[2] ARDU's claim to be a logical inheritor of CADU is defied by its adherence to the revolutionary cause. The claimed differences are likewise defied by the similarities of the their stated objectives. In this regard Alemneh (1987)underlined that since March 1976 the emphasis of ARDU was in variance with its stated objectives. The current extension programme, with its claimed differences to both the CADU and ARDU phases, is still at an early stage to be evaluated. The views of peasants in the study area, Boru Lencha kebele, will be presented and discussed in the next chapter. But generally speaking, the current programme may entice an even more heated debate regarding its nature and relation to CADU and ARDU. Its emphasis seems to be in line with ARDU, focusing on the poor peasants. But the macro-economic liberalisation policy adopted by government may make it more similar to CADU, siding the rich. This is particularly so as it is anticipated that the subsidies to the inputs of the extension package would be lifted in the near future. By considering the

[2] The farmer approach of CADU is associated with benefiting resource rich peasants while peasant approach of ARDU is associated with working for the majority poor rural population.

response of peasants to the current package in the next three chapters, this study provides some insights into the working of the programme at this early stage.

CHAPTER FOUR

BORU LENCHA: INTRODUCING THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

The study area, Boru Lencha *kebele* (local council), is part of the Hitosa *woreda* of Arsi Zone, the Oromiya Regional Nation Sate. It is abutting Itaya, the capital and administrative centre of Hitosa *woreda.*

The present Boru Lencha *kebele* area is made up of an area covering three and half former autonomous *kebeles*, Wachu Mikael, Boru Wedecha, Gulale Hidi Biro and Badosa. In the recent rural *kebele* restructuring programme which created Boru Lencha, Wachu Mikael area was chosen as the administrative centre of the new larger *kebele*.

The constituent units of Boru Lencha show considerable similarities in ethnic composition, buildings and farming practices. Their topography is likewise more or less the same, except for Wachu Mikael. The latter differs from the rest in two features. One is that it is found on immediate sides of the motor-road cutting through the *kebele* and having vending kiosks. Secondly, it is an unconventional settlement area in a sense that it was built in blocks of houses during the "Villagisation" programme of the former regime.

Some peasants have electric power supply from the transmission line that passes along the road to Huruta *woreda* from Itaya town.

Boru Lencha is totally rural and solely inhabited by tillers of the land. The presence of government institutions is nearly nil. The only government units that are found in the kebele are the office of the executive council of the *kebele* administration and the office of the Development Agent. Even these do not fulfil the standard of being offices both functionally and physically with dilapidated single rooms made of mud. Though NGOs have come to penetrate into all parts of Ethiopia, there is not a single non-governmental organisation providing services or engaged in any sort of activity in Boru Lencha. Nor does the population seem to suffer from the general food insecurity of Ethiopians in other parts of the country. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general background on the physical features of Boru Lencha and a brief account on the community.

The Physical Setting

The flat plane of land of Boru Lencha stretches to the neighbouring Huruta *woreda*. There are no mountains or hills in the area. The altitude of Boru Lencha area is 1200 meters above sea level. The climate is *woina dega*(moderate) in general, though variations are observed in places. Slight variations in rainfall are noted and largely attributable to the small differences in elevation. The average annual rainfall is about

600mm. The average annual temperature is about 230c. The Badosa and Wachu areas of the kebele show some climatic difference.

In the western part of the Kebele a shallow valley is formed by Boru and Wdeecha rivers. In the north a rather rocky and rough terrain and in south an irrigated land is found along the edges of the rivers. A relative elevation of the land in some areas gives it a rather cool temperature.

Except in the eastern and southern parts, where the soil is of clay and sandy mature, the dominant type is black soil. The kinds of soil or the degree of the fertility of the soil are related to the elevation and altitude of the land mass of the area. The soil supports the seasonal growth of several crops by rain and irrigation. It grows mostly wheat but to a lesser degree other cereals and pulses are also cultivated. Some vegetables are grown during the dry season.

The Boru Lencha Community

The population of Boru Lencha is estimated as 7767 peeple by government officials in Itaya (Personal Communication). It consists of two main ethnic groups: Oromo and Amhara. The Amhara trace their origin to different parts of Shoa. They contend that their forefathers came to the area as members of Menelik's expeditionary force. As recent as 30

years ago, some individual Amhara were coming to Boru Lencha tracing descent to the earlier settlers. The late arrivals were supported to establish themselves by raising families and property and were thereby integrated into the community. The Amhara constitute the majority of the population in the *kebele*.

The Oromo in Boru Lencha relate a similar historical background as the Amhara. They too claim to be descendants of the invading army from Shoa led by Emperor Menelik. Unlike the Amhara, there are no relatively new arrivals. Though Boru Lencha is part of part of Oromiya Region (supposedly the homeland of Oromo), the Oromo are in the minority in this *kebele*. In cultural practices, the Boru Lencha Oromo are different from the surrounding Oromo of Arsi in that all of them practice Ethiopian Orthodox faith and speak Amharic.

The community of Boru Lencha is formed of the unity of its two ethnic groups that share much in common. They both came to settle in the area under the same circumstances. Their cultural practices are virtually identical although what they practice is usually associated with the Amhara. What is not clear is whether the Oromo minority has been assimilated into the majority Amhara culture or that the Oromo from the outset came over from Shoa with the same cultural practice.

Intermarriage between the two groups of Boru Lencha is common. Cultural similarity (or identity) and close proximity and intensive interaction over the years may explain the

widespread incidence of intermarriage. The degree of intermingling through marriage is so high that the two groups have become close kin. Members of the two groups speak Amharic, and all of these belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Not a single individual of another faith is identified in Boru Lencha. All community members stress their devotion to the Orthodox Church by seriously observing all rituals and following all recommendations of Orthodox religion. There are two churches dedicated to saints Mikael and Giorgis. About 27 clergymen are found in the two churches.

Aspects of Family Organisation and Housing

In Boru Lencha different types of family (nuclear, extended and compound) comprise households living in fenced compounds. A household may be comprised of old parents and their married and unmarried children, brothers, sisters, niece, cousins, all kinds of in-laws, labour hands and the poor. Old parents or other relatives do not necessarily live together or in the same compound with their younger relatives. Living together is optional as is building house near one's relatives.

Except for married couples who usually sleep on beds, the other household members sleep on the *medeb*, a structure made of mud which by day serves as a bench for sitting. The centre of the house in many homes serves as fire place or the stove area near which the bed is located. On the left to the entrance of a house, a little space is fenced for baby

animals to be kept and above this place, on the wall, is built a place to keep poultry. The wall and the pillar are full of hanging things such as cloths, bundles of maize, implements, plates, pictures etc.

The household compound is fenced by bushes of vegetation, thorn and roughly cut pieces of wood. The eucalyptus trees are planted along the outer circle of the fence. Inside the compound sections for humans and livestock are separated, but are usually close to each other. The very young animals are kept inside the house close to where people sleep.

The population of the livestock in Boru Lencha is about 13,000. The composition is made up of oxen, cows, goats, sheep and donkeys. The oxen and donkey population is considered superior to the rest. Poultry and bee-hive keeping are taken as auxiliary activities, not widespread and never considered indispensable activities.

Houses in Boru Lencha are differentiated by roof-type which is constructed of either tatched or corrugated iron. In some compounds both types are observed, while in others only one type is found. The tatched roof homes are circular in shape while the corrugated iron roof homes are rectangular with two or three compartments. Both have walls plastered with mud including the floor. Except for a few houses in which walls are painted, all houses in Boru Lencha do no have any sort of paint.

The places for sleeping, making fire, keeping poultry, teeing small domestic animals, keeping utensils and grain are close to each other. In houses with both types roofing material, grain and livestock are usually kept in the grass roof houses.

Household utensils in Boru Lencha consist of both indigenous pottery items and goods made of modern substances. Market available utensils are found to dominate in some homes while in others a combination of traditional and modern utensils are used.

Both inside and outside the compounds there are igloo, or dome-like heaps of chuff used as cattle fodder especially when grazing becomes difficult. In almost every compound dogs are kept. They are kept to guard from danger posed by man and wild beasts. There is constant concern over thieves breaking into the compound. The hyenas are numerous looking to snatch away livestock and sometimes even attack the occupants.

Social Solidarity and Co-operation

The Boru Lencha community demonstrates solidarity among its members in various social and economic fields. Co-operation is observed particularly in the fields of farming, house construction, finance, funeral service and religious rituals.

In their farming activity the peasants engage in a variety of reciprocal relations to assist each other. During the sowing season, an individual may ask some of his fellow *kebele*

residents to assist him by working on his farm for a day or two. It need not be consecutive days. At this time the host provides food and drink for the people who come to work on his field. Anyone may avail to himself such assistance and all are expected to contribute labour whenever it does not adversely affect their own farming activities. Reciprocity is an underlining principle sanctioning participation. This form of community labour is locally known as *jige* or *debo*, to which resort may also be made at harvest and threshing operations. Even with the availability of tractors and combine harvesters for hiring by some resource-rich peasants, this traditional form of community labour is utilised by all categories of peasants in Boru Lencha.

Community assistance is not confined to contribution in labour through *jige*. A poor peasant lacking a plough-ox may either hire or borrow one for ploughing. In case of hire a cash payment is expected, but the poor may also reciprocate by extending labour to the lender on his farm.

When someone is building a house, it is customary that community members give helping hand. The co-operation goes on until the essential framework of the house is erected. The process takes several weeks though intermittently. This is a *jige* or *debo* of a minor degree.

The people of the *kebele* actively participate in *idir*. It is a form of socio-economic co-operation in which *idir* members help one another mainly in funeral services *(lukso)*. The

community members establish *idir* in their neighbourhoods. A person may join more than one *idir*, to which monthly cash contributions are regularly made to an elected treasurer who keeps records of accounts. Every family without exception belongs to one of the 11 idirs in the area. Women have their own *idirs* in addition to being members to their respective family *idirs*. The resources of idir are used to cover the cost of funeral ceremony and the members provide work groups and utensils to prepare food and drinks during mourning days. *Idir* members stay at the home of the bereaved for three days to offer their condolence and services.

Social solidarity in Boru Lencha is also observed in the formation of rotating credit groups. A group of individuals get together and agree to contribute equal amount of money weekly or monthly. The collected money is given by lottery to one of the members. Everyone in the group similarly gets the same amount until the cycle is completed. In exceptional circumstances, justifiable emergencies are given priority and a member may not need to wait for his/her turn according to the lottery. It is customary that the member receiving the group payment invites the other members to drinks to strengthen friendship.

As followers of Orthodox religion, peasants in Boru Lencha often throw parties to honour some saints of their choice. Such parties are associated with some claimed fulfilment of wish as a result of mediation or interventions by saints. During such occasions guests are

invited to eat and drink. The preparation demands expense and labour. So those individuals who have such events enter into agreement to help each other particularly in work. It is holding *mahiber* celebration in which people co-operate to realise their commitment.

At weddings the community members co-operate to make the event successful. Though there is no association to this effect (as *idir*), voluntary help is widespread. Relatives and friends usually make contributions in cash and kind, and offer their labour and participate in various activities from the beginning to the end of the wedding.

The community of Boru Lencha, though co-operative in many fields, has also another side to itself. Paradoxical as it may be, it manifests individualism when family or individual interest is at stake. A brief exposition of some values emphasised by community members may shed some light on this apparent contradiction.

Community Values

As individuals and as a society the people of Boru Lencha in their everyday life seem to appreciate and dearly uphold some basic values guiding behaviour and social interaction. Exchange of greetings at any moment and place is important. Greeting involves exchange of information on one's health, the conditions of the family, the state of property,

including the animals. Respect for one another is highly expected. The community likes the characteristics of being sage. Itacious (sagacity) is considered an asset to society for what it discharges and contributes to social harmony and stability. Authority whether it emanates formally or informally has important place in the community. It is mainly associated with bringing order or giving solutions to problems arising in the society.

Religiosity in the sense of observing the basic teachings and regulations of Orthodox church is greatly revered and valued. Going to church, fasting, celebrating *mahiber*, respect for the clergy and supporting them by offers of money and food are some of the acts and behaviours that are given high regard. Not showing some kind of belonging to the Orthodox religion is a taboo.

Politeness, articulation in speaking (speech) repartee, boldness in safeguarding individual and communal interests are generally emphasised, especially when supported by education. Education is highly valued though literacy level is very low.

The discipline of *sira* (work, labour) is invaluably appreciated even by small children. In the other end sluggishness, laziness or sloth is frowned upon and condemned. Hard work and what is achieved through it is respected. It receives commendation from each member of society. Persons with high accomplishments through hard work are esteemed. As a result a person could be referred to as *wend,* which can be taken to mean he who has proven himself to be "a man" in the truest sense of the word.

The community greatly values *tikim* (interest, advantage). It does not matter whether it is attained in group effort or individually. Every individual endeavour is mostly associated with the advancement of *tikim*. When discussing issues of farming or any other activity, it is in everyone's mouth and continuously repeated in conversation. Though there are many areas in which communal *tikim* is upheld, individually sought *tikim* overrides the other. The looking for *tikim* is deeply implanted. I personally was asked on several occasions of the kind of *tikim* the research would bring to me or them. It can be said that *tikim* is the underlying condition for social co-operation. Co-operation is not taking place for its own sake, yet this does not cancel its being valued by the community. In other words, though the pursuance of individual interest is said to be stronger, no one can ignore and stay out of social co-operation organisation such as *idir* or *debo*. Tikim is particularly associated with farming, which remains the basic, if not the sole, source of livelihood for the Boru Lencha community.

Land Holdings

Boru Lencha has 2800 hectares of land most of which is used for farming. Except for human habitation and other necessary space for various purposes, virtually no piece of land in the *kebele* is left without being put to cultivation.

Officially, the *kebele* leadership is the highest decision making body with regard to land holdings. It engages in what is called *taria mafrese*, which literally means "pulling down the ceiling". It is a process of rearranging land holdings whenever found necessary. The community members sometimes make a donation from their personal holding for the purpose. The donation is known as *gulima*. Parents and other relatives give *gulima*, especially to the newly married. Those who receive such offer are expected to increase their holdings. The holdings of the old people, the disabled and the deceased are shared among their children and relatives.

Common land for livestock to graze is set aside. Some common land may be given away by agreement of the community when the need arises for a common good such as the construction of schools, churches, stores and clinics. Extension demonstrations take some land with the consent of *kebele* administration and affected individuals by the projects. Common land or open space is also used as cattle stand at dawn and evenings and also as threshing ground or for storing and keeping hay.

The size of land holding by members of the community varies. Land holding is intricate and takes different forms. Allotment, gift, inheritance, "lease", "purchase", share cropping and borrowing are some of the forms. According to the *kebele* administrative regulations, a married couple without children is entitled to an allotment of one *gemed* or *quert* (a quarters of a hectare). This would increase to 2 hectares when having two children. When family size exceeds four persons, the family may get 2.5 hectares.

Official allotments cannot, however, exceed a limit of 2.5 hectares of land, but individuals may take different courses of action to increase their personal holding.

The members of the community engage themselves in trying to acquire more land in addition to allotments. This is done by "lease" and "purchase" in most cases. The "transaction" in land takes place in broad daylight. The administration turns blind eyes to the illegal activity from government policy point of view.

Signs are observed on the edges of individual plots to demarcate boundaries, which are then jealously guarded. A plot is normally divided into a number of areas to be sowed with different crops. The size of area allocated to each type of crop in the farm varies according to need and other unforeseen factors. But it is common that most of the land held by individuals is used to grow wheat, which is the main cash crop and food. Some peasants plant eucalyptus trees on a small plots near their farms as well as near their homes. This practice is in response to the need for wood for construction and fencing of houses, making of farm implements as well as for fuel.

Aspects of Farming in Boru Lencha

The rhythm of social life in Boru Lencha is dictated, first and foremost, by the different seasons and requirements of farming. Festivities follow harvest, and the end of the long

dry season marks the beginning of relative deprivation and diligent work in land preparation. In this section, a schematic overview of aspects of farming in the area is presented.

The amount of land allocated to grow different types of crop vary from household to another. Also the kind of crops intended to be grown depends on the size of land holding. Crop rotation is practised to fulfil wants and at the same time to restore soil nutrients through alternating crops. While both the resource rich and poor peasants plant most of their holding with wheat (about 85%), the poor have less land remaining to them to plant other crops. However all households plant more than one crop. Wheat, maize, barley, *teff*, onion, lentils, peas, chick-peas, horse beans, *telba* (ligium usitaissimum), *nug* (guizo abissinica), sunflower, cabbages, tomatoes, potatoes, pepper, red beet and carrots are all grown in Boru Lencha kebele.

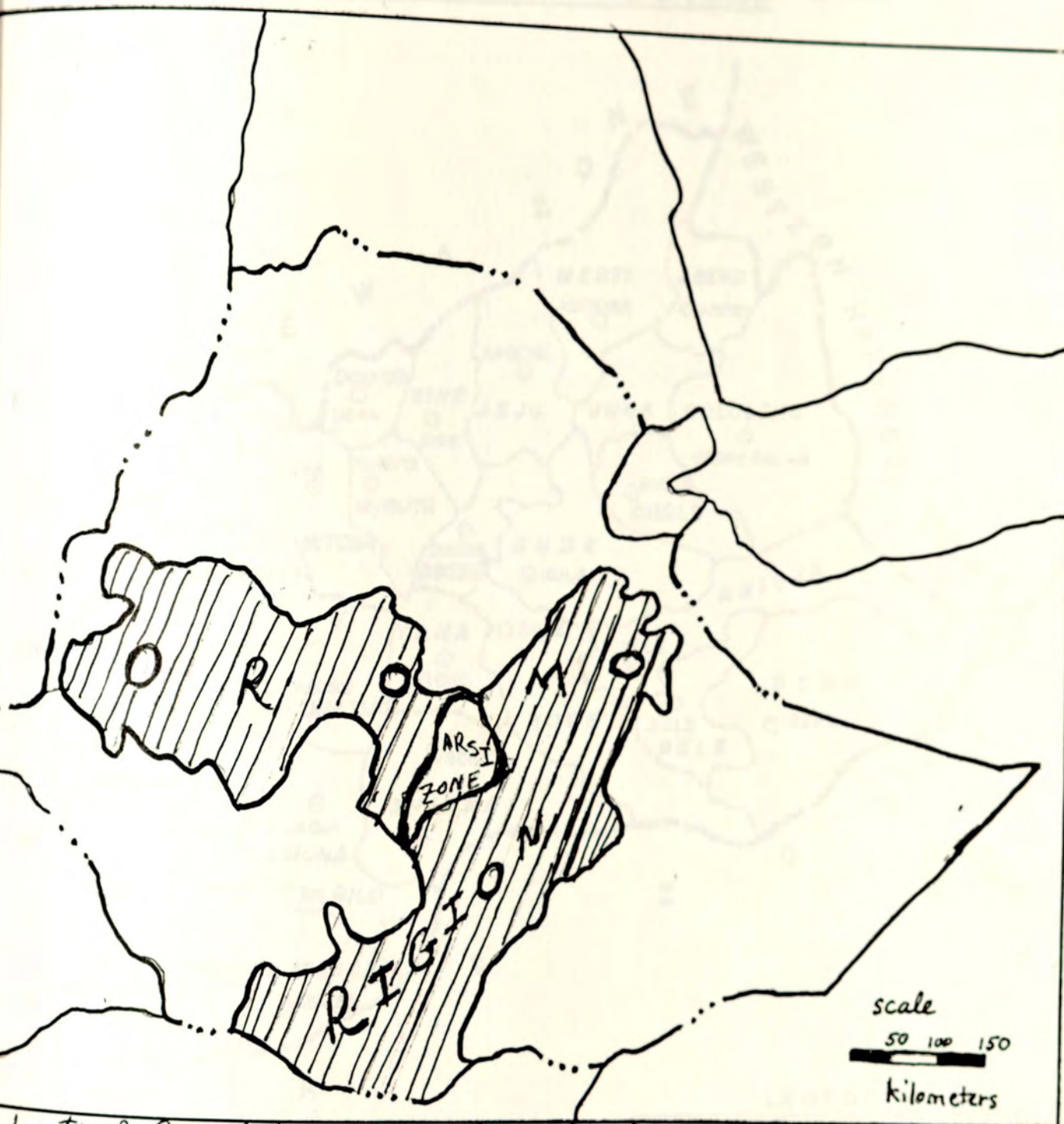
Boru Lencha has two rainy seasons: the short rains (*belg*) between February and March and the long rains, from June to September. The short rains are as significant to the peasant farming as the long rainy season. The *belg* helps the peasants in ploughing the cleared fields in order to smoothen and air the soil hardened during the sunny and hot season from December to March. Shallow and parallel ditches are made across the field to stop run-off water causing erosion in the forthcoming rainy season.

All cereal crops are sowed between June and August except maize which is planted earlier in March and April. Maize is usually planted not far from homes in place called *areda*. Pulses crops are sowed be ginning of July to September. Before each sowing of crops between March and September, preliminary preparation in clearing and ploughing is required. A second and even third ploughing may be required depending on the quality of the previous ones.

Agricultural operations are predominantly manual and labour-intensive, though a few resource rich peasants hire tractors and combine harvesters from Itaya town. Virtually all ploughing is done by oxen-pulled plough with iron-tipped ploughshare and the harvest with manual sickle. During such extensive ploughing and harvesting times, resort to *jige* or *debo* is widespread. The working group adopts a kind of division of labour in which some drive the oxen, some pick impurities (*qulgawalo*) and some others broadcast seeds. Though the work force is smaller than in *debo*, the same process is followed by household members who work on their own.

Peasants growing vegetables along the streams have more than one harvest. Though the volume of water in the streams used for irrigation decreases during dry season, the flow does not stop. In plots bordering streams the peasants cut openings at the edge of the streams and from there continue to make shallow canals to guide and carry the water to the vegetable plots. Where the terrain does not allow easy deflection, the water is hand carried in a relay system and poured into the canals.

Traditionally the community members sow their main fields by scattering the seeds. The amount of seeds for sowing is taken by estimation. When the crops begin to sprout out of the ground weeding is done manually or by turning over the soil (*kutkawato*) under the seedlings. For some farms weeding may not be necessary. Until the harvest season in January and February, the growth of crops is closely monitored so that necessary measures may promptly be taken. For difficult problems peasants may seek advice or assistance from the Development Agent. The role of this agent will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.



Location of Oromo Region within Ethiopia and of Arsi Zone within Oromo Region

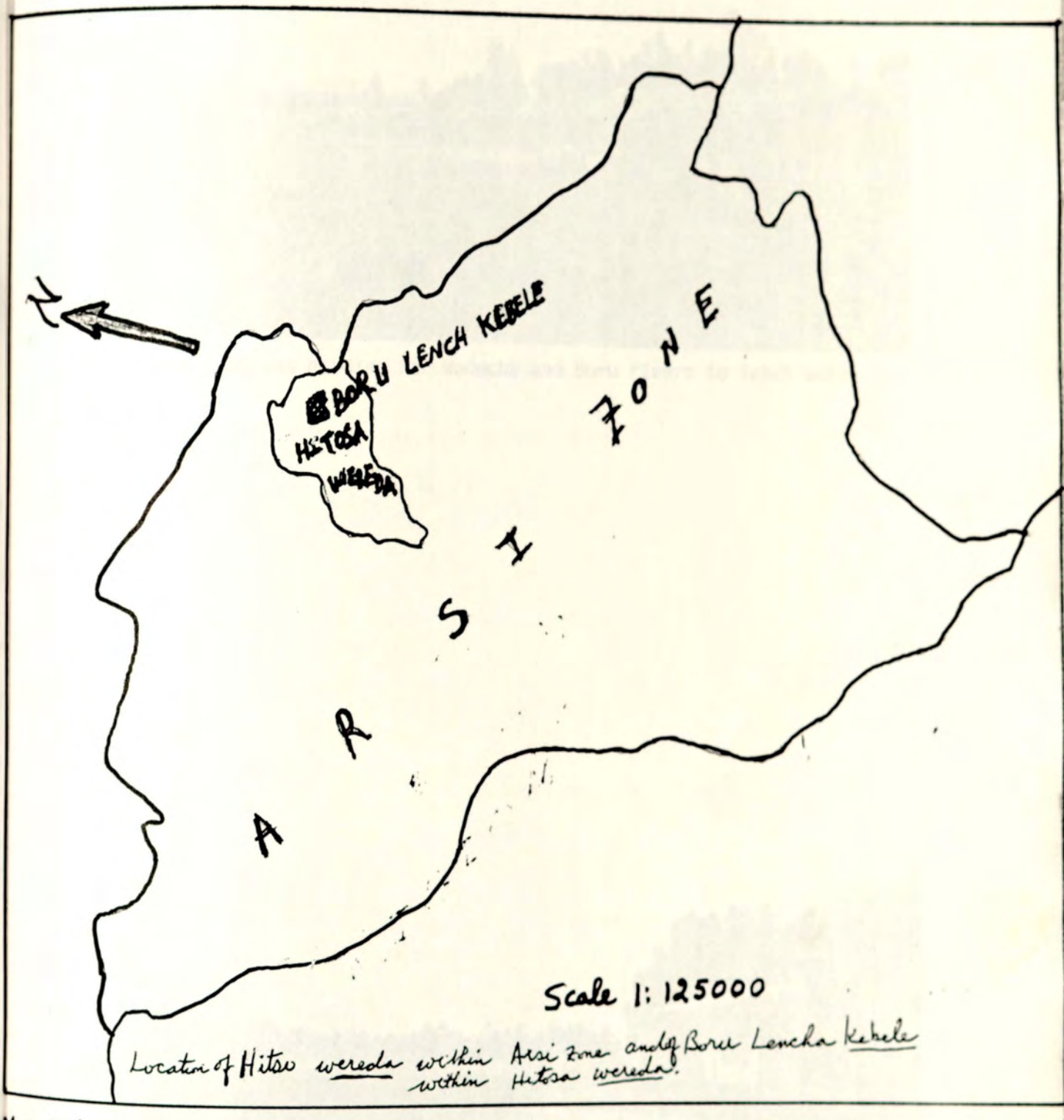
N°:1

: MNM Introduction to Ethiopian Geography

ARSI ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION – Zone

Scale 1:1250000

Map No 2



Location of Hitsu wereda within Arsi zone and of Boru Lencha kebele within Hitosa wereda.

Map No: 3

Source: Ethiopian Mapping Institute

Boru Lenchans heading for Wedecha and Boru rivers to fetch water.

Kebele administration (right) and DA offices

The store used by the DA's office

Fenced corrugated iron and grass roofed homes in a household compound.

CHAPTER FIVE

PEASANT RESPONSES TO AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

Introduction

This chapter is intended to present the findings as well as the analyses of the community responses to the process of agricultural extension in Boru Lencha. The discussion focuses on the introduction of the content of the extension package to the target population, the selected items of the extension package and the responses of different peasant groups. The analysis of the community responses is based on data generated by a survey carried out in Boru Lencha *kebele*.

The Introduction of the Current Extension Package

The current agricultural extension programme was conceived and planned by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, which also procures the inputs. The package is then passed down the administrative hierarchy to regions, zones, *woredas* and *kebeles*. In Boru Lencha the package is brought to the community through the office of the Development Agent (DA). The office is located in Wachu area of Boru Lencha. The DA works and lives in that office.

A seminar organised at the zonal capital, Assela, was attended by all DAs in the zone to familiarise them with the content of the new extension programme. Each DA was thereafter to introduce the new package to his respective community, through both general meetings with the community and personal contacts.

In Boru Lencha, the DA and the *kebele* administration called community members for a general meeting to be attended by the senior agriculturalists from Itaya town. The latter explained the nature, content and advantages of the new package to the gathering who listened attentively. It was explained that the package included provision of improved seeds of many types of crop, new farming methods and equipment as well as improved poultry rearing. It was also explained that the climatic conditions and nature of soil necessary to grow each crop, the kind and proportion of new inputs for increased productivity were described in detail in the package. A cautionary note was however emphasised that the adoption of individual items of innovation depended on several factors such as the economic, social, administrative and geographical conditions. Finally it was stated at the meeting that participation in the programme was voluntary and open to all though resources might not make it possible to include all peasants. Those peasants interested to join were asked to register with the DA as soon as the announcement to do so was made. Many questions were raised by members of the community following the general introduction to the new package.

The community members were encouraged in the general meeting to adopt a few items that are indispensable, important and compatible with the area's natural and social conditions. The Itaya Development Officer stressed the impossibility of including the whole community in the programme at the same time. A phased enrolment will accordingly be followed until the entire peasants in *kebele* benefit from the new extension package.

The Launching of the Package

The extension programme can be described as afield of struggle between actors in which the actors import their various resources and strategies. These could be power and knowledge which could of general social or specialized nature. In innovation diffusion while agents of change bring in their power and knowledge the community brings in its general social knowledge in the arena of contention .

Agriculture extension, and the advantages of innovation and improved agricultural technology, were not new in Boru Lencha. The area experienced extension programmes since their initial inception in the Ethiopia. Perhaps more than in any other part of the country, the peasants of Arsi with their decades of CADU-ARDU experience were eager to benefit from the current extension package.

Boru Lencha *kebele* is a fertile area that never experienced drought. Its soil is good for wheat cultivation as well as other crops. Above all else, thus, the peasants sought to access seeds of wheat as first priority. Second priority was for fertilisers followed by maize seeds.

Participation in the extension programme requires peasants to adopt and follow certain recommendations regarding some of the provided inputs. A few items, however, are left optional for adoption by the participating peasants. Upon admission into the programme, a peasant receives 50 KGs of urea and dap each and 75 KGs. of selected seed of wheat. Instructions as to how to prepare the plot are mandatory to the participants. Other items made optional for adoption were poultry, anti-weed, anti-insect chemicals and storage facility. A brief account on the implementation of the package may shed more light on the nature and content of the current extension package. The account to follow focuses on new farming techniques, anti-weed, improved poultry and improved storage.

New Farming Techniques

Participation in the extension programme entitled peasants to access inputs provided by government through the development agent. Each peasant in the programme, however, was required to avail a plot of 0.50 hectare for the application of the package under the strict supervision of the Development Agent. Though the DA would provide each

peasant with inputs commensurate with his total holdings, it is only in the "extension plot" (the 0.50 hectares) that he is obliged to comply with the prescriptions.

With the improved seeds brought by the package, new techniques of farming were introduced, the most important being sowing in line. The participating peasants are obliged to follow certain recommendation such as preliminary preparation of the plot to be sowed, the division of the plot into four equal parts for proper input application, sowing in line, etc. Though not all peasants followed strictly the words of the DA (see below), not a single peasant who adopted a completely different innovation item outside the package was identifiable. The peasants were keen to learn from the innovation brought by the extension programme. However as will soon be explained in more detail, the peasants nevertheless at times had reservations on some components of the package.

Variations were noted in the manner in which the extra-extension plots of the participants were managed. Variation was largely attributed to availability of resources whereby the innovation inputs could be adopted. Many participants could not afford to use innovation inputs on all their extra-extension holdings because of the cost it incurs. While most of the peasants in the extension programme were following each of the recommendations, a few participants violated some of the recommendations by for instance applying wrongly the seed and fertiliser. The violation resulted in bad growth

of the crops in such a way that it resulted in congested growth of seedlings on a spot, thereby contributing to the reduction of harvest. Those who broke the rules were mostly the older participants who afforded the cost of inputs. Their case might indicate the conflict of tradition and *tikim*. On the one hand, they wanted to apply proven traditional methods of sowing and, on the other, they did not want to forgo *tikim* forthcoming from innovation activity.

Anti-Weed

Anti-weed spray was adopted by fourteen peasants whose plots were overrun by heavy growth of different kinds of weeds. Anti-weed chemicals such as 24D and U46 are used to eliminate thin grass and broad leaf weeds that adversely affect crops. The application of these substances facilitated the healthy growth of the crops towards good harvest. But the irregularity in availability of the chemicals created problems for those who already knew the value of their application and for those looking forward to use them. However, some peasants have complained that U46 is not as effective as 24D which is more scarse than the former.

Poultry

Poultry was selected by seven participants, five rich and two poor peasants. The seven were given four chickens each by the DA with instructions as to how to maintain them in order to have best results. Their reaction with regard to the returns from this innovation activity was similar. All seven admitted that the improved poultry gave more eggs and meat. However six of these peasants believed that the product was not to the taste of household members to be consumed, and was therefore sold in the market for additional income. The adopters were also unanimous in the belief that the exotic breed needed much care than local breeds and were more susceptible to diseases.

Storage

Improved storage facility was adopted by twelve members in the extension programme. They were relatively wealthy peasants. They generally believed that the preservation capacity of the new storage facility was superior to the traditional granary. Their grains were more protected from mold, insects and rodents.

THE BENEFITS OF THE EXTENSION PROGRAMME

There would be no reason whatsoever why people would choose to adopt innovation to from which there is little chance of gain. Because benefits are found on two levels, a distinction must be made between perceived and real benefit (Yeraswork Admasie: 1995). The measurement of real benefit is beyond the scope of this study. Real benefit is important but more important is the perceived benefit with regard to this study. Real benefits and perceived benefit are related but there is no one-to-one correspondence between them.

The socio-economic impact of a new extension programme is difficult, if not impossible to assess. Several methodological issues arise in such an attempt. One basic issue is how to single out the specific consequences of diffused innovation from among the varied change factors operating in Boru Lencha. In as far as the livelihoods of the peasants in the *kebele* depend on farming, assessment of the impact may be pursued on the basis of the magnitude of change in production and productivity levels since the package was launched. It was noticeable, however, that the Boru Lencha peasants tended to emphasise the quantitative increases accruing from participation in the programme. They did not calculate the cost of the increased productivity, particularly as the inputs of innovation were provided on credit. In their view, the new package has brought immense benefits, and in the account to follow a brief discussion of some

salient benefits is attempted concentrating on basic items of life such as food, shelter, clothing education etc.

Food and Clothes

All participants in the extension programme agree that their production, and proceeds from crops have increased as a result of their joining the package. Notwithstanding differences in land holding and, by implication, income, all emphasised the food condition in their households has generally improved. Both the quantity and quality of food have become better. Compared to earlier times, household members consumed food until everyone was satisfied. The better-off assert that they have even begun to develop a new habit of having intermediary light meals (*snacks*) between major ones.

It was further explained that because of the kind of improved grain used to make flour, the quality in *injera* is better. The *wot* (sauce) prepared also became better. Traditionally the *wot* is made with cooking oil and other spices. Butter is expensive and therefore used only during big holidays to make *wot*. The consumption of which was only restricted to New Year, Easter, Christmas and few other occasions. With the additional resources which the extension package availed, the participants claimed, their consumption of both butter and meat increased appreciably, at least to once a month. The better-off started as a group to slaughter an ox and distribute the meat

among themselves in what is called *kircha*. Children were fed better. Women, particularly after delivery, were becoming more healthy because of improved feeding.

Improvement was also reported on the kind of clothes and shoes worn. Many participants could afford to buy wrist watches. Some of the better-off even travelled to urban places to buy overcoats, suits, dress for women and shoes of better quality than what was available in the local market.

Homes and Household Utensils

Building a home with corrugated iron roof is more costly and considered an indicator for improvement in standard of life. Many participants in the extension package thus enthusiastically pointed to the new roofs in corroboration of their statements regarding the impact of the package. In interviews it was clear that the number of corrugated iron roof was increasing including in the interior of the *kebele*. Changes in size and styles of houses were reported. The relatively resource rich started to use corrugated iron roof for human dwellings in whose corners they kept newly born animals, but retained their grass roof houses for storage and livestock.

Prior to the current extension programmes, traditional utensils had been gradually replaced in many households by glass, plastic and metallic utensils. The benefits of the

package accelerated the pace of replacement. Cooking pots, plates, cups, glasses, kerosene stoves, buckets, spoons, tins and bottles made up about 80 percent of utensils in the surveyed households. Though the number of tables, chairs, beds, cupboards was limited, it was nevertheless pointed out as an indicator of improvement. In some households electronic items (radios and tape-recorders) were acquired after joining the programme.

School Intake

One of the most significant indicators of the positive impact pointed out by the participants was the increased ability to send children to school. In Boru Lencha there are two, elementary and a junior high, schools. The schools worked on a shift system in which students attended class for only half a day. According to the directors and school records, the student intake in the elementary school rose from 310 to 570 students while in the junior high school the intake has gone up from 280 to 361 students. The increase in student population coincided with the years of higher productivity in agriculture as a result of extension activity to which the community explicitly attributed the increase of students. More parents were able to send their children to school. But it was noted that the increase was not confined to children from households benefiting from the extension programme. As will be explained later in the chapter, many peasants not

officially part of the programme managed to increase their income by replicating, on their own, the innovation activity.

The number of children at school-age but not attending school in Boru Lencha was still significant. Children worked for their households and many parents could not afford the loss of labour consequent on sending children for education (not to speak of the additional costs of schooling). Though the number of children attending schools increased, many pupils would be called by their families at the peak of the agricultural season.

Leisure Time

The participants claimed that, compared to earlier periods, they have more time for leisure and breaks for different purposes (entertainment, travels, visits, celebrations, etc.).

In addition to breaks taken personally and official holidays, the community has decided to make 12 more days of each month to be no work days which are holy saints days of the Ethiopian Orthodox. If contrary to the rules anyone engaged in work, he would be punished by paying 100 birr. On such days the members entertained themselves by drinking or travelling to visit and relax outside their *kebele*.

The Magnification of Benefits

The views of the beneficiaries from the extension programme on the accruing benefits have to be assessed with caution. Though in relative terms the improvements cannot be dismissed, they should be recognised as real only in the context of Boru Lencha where poverty is the order of the day.

The increase in production and productivity consolidated further the food security of peasants in Boru Lencha. But it should be stressed that the area never experienced famine before. The extension package availed some modest increase in income which enabled the participants to make some more spending on construction and consumer materials. However the accounts on improvement in the standard of life were highly exaggerated when compared to what was actually observed in Boru Lencha.

The contentions regarding "snacks" between main meals are a good case in point. The new snacks consisted of roasted grain (*Kolo*) of chick pea with watery and salty coffee, but blown up as a "big" new habit of improvement. As for the cloths, second-hand textiles were praised as good type cloths that they had never worn before. But for the Boru Lencha peasants these minor things mean an improvement to which they had no access before. To that extent, the reports of community members remain credible, explaining the keenness of all peasants in the kebele to join the extension programme.

In contrast to the positive views of participants, the local elite holds some negative view of the impact of extension on peasants. Though the elite did not deny the increased income, they believed that there was unjustified exploitation and wastage of resources in the *kebele*. They explained that as peasants produced more with innovation inputs, the benefits were disproportionately wasted by extravagant allocation of resources for rituals. The awareness about the existence of the problem led to the demands for the introduction of further innovation in other field. They wanted the exposure of peasants to an innovative way of managing time and resources. According to the elite, such exposure would sustain the results of innovation.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE EXTENSION PACKAGE

When the implementation of the current extension programme started in 1994, only a small group of peasants benefited from it. More peasants were annually included. By the time this study was carried out in 1997, a total of 57 peasants joined the extension programme. They comprise three groups of participants identifiable by year of inclusion in the programme. In all encounters with community members, all peasants expressed their wish to benefit from the package, and those not yet included in the programme were quite critical of their exclusion which in their view demonstrates corruption and discretion by the Development Agent.

Participation in the Package

The charge of corruption and discretion in selecting peasants for participation draws attention to the social context in which the extension package is implemented. Though never boldly stated in the presence of DA, that charge raises many questions that are often glossed over in research into agricultural extension packages. One such question concerns the credibility of the assertion of enthusiasm to join the extension programme by all peasants indiscriminately and without exception. Such a categorical assertion defies many widely held views in the literature on peasant response to innovation and the characteristics of adopting peasants. Relative wealth and education are thus commonly cited as two characteristics of early adopters, while poverty is generally conceived as a constraint to adoption.

Another question which the charge against the DA posits concerns the personal and social characteristics of those peasants who were included in the package and the circumstances of their inclusion. The household survey conducted reflected the characteristics of peasants in the three groups in the programme, and a brief discussion of some findings serve to shed more light on the issue.

Wealth and Adoption of Innovation

Boru Lencha community measures the wealth of its members by the size of land holding. According to the DA, the minimum land requirement for an average household (with 5.6 persons) to achieve self-reliance is 1.75 hectares. Based on this average, the DA characterises households owing more than 2 hectares as resource rich, those having between 1.75 and 2 hectares as resource medium and those with less than 1.75 hectares as resource poor peasants. The findings of the sample survey are generally consistent with the DA calculations. In the survey, the average holding is 1.95 hectares. Accordingly the analysis of the data defines peasants holding less than the average as poor, those holding between 1.96 and 2.50 hectares as middle and those having more than 2.50 hectares as wealthy peasants.

The comparison of the characteristic of wealth in members of the three categories of adopter suggest striking conclusions. It corroborates that the rich in Boru Lencha did not show exceptional enthusiasm in rushing towards adoption of new items. Neither did the poor show the tendency of being frightened of adoption of innovation or reject it completely. Though individuals of similar status might dominate the adoption rate in a group, representatives of all categories of peasant in Boru Lencha have adopted innovation and are found intermingled in each group of adopters. As such the assertions in the literature concerning an established pattern of adoption of innovation in developing countries (àlà Cancian and Hunter) seems to be challenged by the realities

of Boru Lencha. In our case, some poor even came first to adopt while the wealthy stayed behind. Members of the three strata have come to adopt simultaneously while others stayed away together. This shows aspects of the complexity of responses to adoption in Boru Lencha.

Performance and Adoption

Another characteristic emphasised in early adopters is performance. Between 1994 and 1996 the highest quintals of wheat produced on the extension guided plot was 37 and the lowest was 19 quintals. The difference in productivity on similar extension plots is difficult to explain in unequivocal terms due to the complexity of the underlying natural and personal factors. But in so far as Boru Lencha is a generally fertile area that experiences not crop failure due to variations in rainfall, a comparison of the performance of the three groups of adopter may not be unfounded. The comparison of the holdings and productivity in the three groups indeed reveals an interesting insight. The performance of the first group is the worst of all. The performance of the second group (Table 2b) is better than the first (Table 1b), while the third) group is the best in performance (Table-3b. One eschewed explanation is that performance got better with time because of lessons learned from the early groups of adopter. But such an explanation seems untenable precisely because if there are lessons to be learnt, the benefit should be evident in those who underwent the experience. A more plausible

explanation, which will be soon be discussed in more detail, is simply that performance was not a specific characteristic of those who joined the current extension programme at its inception in Boru Lencha.

Age and Education

Variations in age and educational attainment are also often posited as differentiate in the adoption of innovation. The results of the survey suggest a distribution among the three groups of age and educational attainment characteristics that impedes drawing categorical conclusions. The age of respondents in all three groups ranged from 20 to 70 years. Educational attainment also varied in all groups from illiteracy to high school. Active participation in the extension programme in Boru Lencha seems to transcend all differences in the personal and social characteristics among peasants.

The Recruitment of Participants

The three groups that joined the extension programme in Boru Lencha include peasants from different economic strata and educational backgrounds. What is conspicuous, however, is that the first group (Table, 1b) includes a core consisting of individuals of some kind of influence in their community. These individuals are either in the *kebele* administration or closely associated with it. Among them are members of *kebele*

representative council, executive council, local militia and the different committees in Boru Lencha. They are the resource rich with land holding of 2.5 to 5 hectares. Some have more livestock and means to additional income such as *tej* and tea places including remittance from children living and working elsewhere in Ethiopia and abroad.

The core in the first group belongs to what we may characterise as the local power structure. By virtue of their standing in the local community, they were able to join the extension programme at its inception. The intensity of interaction between members of this local elite and the Development Agent is common knowledge in Boru Lencha, and many important decisions regarding the programme are made by the DA in consultation with the *kebele* administrators. The symbiotic relations between the DA and the local elite are commonly noted by the peasants in Boru Lencha. One of the consequence of this symbiosis repeatedly pointed out by the peasants is the ability of the DA to have a plot of land allocated to him by the *kebele* administration. Another, according to the peasants, was the selection by the DA of *kebele* administrators and other elements from the local elite in the first group.

The first group does not, however, consist only of members of the local power structure. Some of the peasants in the group were both resource poor and illiterate. Again, the role of the Development Agent was emphasised by community members in

explaining the inclusion of these poor illiterate peasants. This second category consists of "clients", protégés either of persons in the local elite or the of the Development Agent himself. The clients of the DA are closely associated with him, providing services of various types. Some "help" the DA by carrying out agricultural operations in his allocated plot. The personal farm of the DA is known to be quite productive, and the magnitude of the proceeds from the wheat and onion grown there is often a source of debate among peasants in their private conversations. Some of the DA's clients, however, provide more personal services, some of which are characterised as immoral and unethical by the peasants. Conclusive corroboration of such an allegation was difficult in the course of the research. The observed willingness of certain poor peasants to become regular messengers for the DA, particularly in evenings, bringing drinks and other items testify that the DA did establish a form of "patron-client" relation with some peasants.

The close relations between members of the first group and the Development Agent seem to explain the favourable responses this group expressed in relation to both the merits of the extension package and the performance of the Development Agent. In the presence of the DA as well as in his absence, members of this group expressed only positive views.

The composition of the second group (Table 2a, 2b) is fairly similar to the first, including members of the local elite and the clients. But a few participants were ordinary community members who were apparently tactfully incorporated to reconcile them. These latter are not formally part of the local power structure. But they are known to be wise men, honest and articulate to whom community members resort for advice or settlement of disputes. The community listens to these informal leaders, and because of their criticism of the performance and discretion of the Development Agent they were selected in the second group.

Though the third group seems to show the same intermingling of personal and social characteristics, its core was found to be ordinary peasants unconnected with the local power structure. It was thus only in the third year of the extension package that the benefits of the programme started to reach the intended beneficiaries. The core of the third group consists of committed peasants, who view farming as their main, if not sole source of livelihood. Their commitment and dedication explains the impressive performance they achieved in their first year of participation in the programme.

The partial observations made in the course of the research in Boru Lencha *kebele* thus suggest prevalence of some peculiar dynamic underlying the recruitment of peasants to the agricultural extension programme. The significant determinant was not the willingness of the peasants to adopt innovation. It was rather the discretion, the

peasants would say the corruption, of the Development Agent. Whereas the poor peasants were eager to join the programme, the DA and the local elite seem to have coordinated the interception of the benefits of the extension programme.

The role of the Development Agent is not confined to the issue of recruitment of peasants to the extension programme. It is also found significant in mitigating the relevance and effectiveness of the package by virtue of his approach to the peasant community. Before dealing with the issue of the interaction, however, it is prudent to highlight first aspects of the position of the Development Agent.

The Development Agent

The Development Agent is a salaried government employee accountable to the agricultural branch office of MOA in Hitosa *woreda.* His duty is to advise peasants and solve problems related to their agricultural activities. He is the official channel of communication pertaining to agricultural matters between the government and the community he serves. He is the official to oversee the introduction and implementation of the extension package and any other directives by the government agricultural policy. His activities include granting credit to peasants, collection of repayments, purchase of grain from local peasants on behalf of government.

In carrying out his duties, the Development Agent seems to have wide discretion in decision-making in the course of his interaction with the peasants of Boru Lencha. When some of the participants in the extension programme are unable to pay back the loan, he is mandated to assess their reasons and suspend repayment to a future date.

Many community members in Boru Lencha raised questions concerning the professional qualifications and competence of the Development Agent. The DA disclosed to me that he underwent training for about six months, a qualification far less than the Diploma which persons in his position are supposed to have. It is this background which seem to explain the difficulties he experienced in his diagnosis of agricultural problems. This has been often been associated with inability and reluctance to answer some questions raised by peasants.

The question of the relations between the DA and the local power structure was already noted. The acquisition of a plot of land is one irregular act on the part of both. Another act of the DA causing dissatisfaction concerns arrangement for purchase of local wheat on behalf of the government. During the period of research I was able to observe one such arrangement.

The background to the purchase of local wheat was the policy of government to protect peasants from exploitation by traders. Government announces a purchase price and orders DAs in the country to buy from local producers. At the time of research, the announced price (200 birr per quintal) was higher than what the local traders offered to

the peasants of Boru Lencha. Instead of fairly distributing the benefit by placing orders to all, or many peasants, the DA collected the wheat from the harvest of his close circle of local elite and clients.

The dissatisfaction of the peasants in Boru Lencha with the Development Agent was not limited to issues of morality and corruption. Many noted that the DA only rarely visited farms along the main road of the *kebele* and neglected the rest of the community. To this effect they pointed out that the DA accorded attention only to members of the local elite and those in his service. The attitude of the DA towards peasants in the community was generally of superiority. He did not show any willingness to listen to them irrespective of the content of what they were trying to say. This complaint was even raised by some of the beneficiaries of the extension programme who emphasised the rigidity of the DA delivering the extension package. According to them, that rigidity constituted a serious constraint.

The Interaction with the Community

The participants in the extension package were required to show virtual military discipline and obedience. They have to abide by prescriptions concerning preparation of seed bed, use of disease-resistant improved variety seeds, optimum seeding rate,

sowing technique, proper fertilisation rate, method of fertiliser application, use of pesticide and herbicide, timing for weeding and harvesting and any other instructions issued by the DA. All participants in the extension programme were expected to comply with these instructions, including those whose entire plot was a mere 0.50 hectare. To some participants, rigid compliance with the dictats of the Development Agent were irrelevant and at times counterproductive. Disobedience in such cases inevitably ensued, with consequent conflicts between peasants and the Development Agent. Conflict over use of chemical fertiliser is a case in point.

The use of chemical fertilisers is part of the extension package. With liberalisation that lifted subsidies, the price of fertilisers rose steadily over the last few years. The Boru Lencha peasants knew and used fertilisers before the launching of the current extension programme. With the launching of the package, fertilisers were made available at below market prices and that constituted one benefit from the programme.

As the DA delivered the fertilisers in the package, the peasants resisted his instructions on the basis of prior knowledge and experience concerning the effects of urea and dap on the growth of wheat. From past experience they found out that applying less urea and more dap than what the DA prescribed was more useful to wheat farming. Part of the indigenous technical knowledge was urea resulted in unnecessary growth with tall weak stalk which could not stand hail, rain and wind. They therefore asked for a greater

supply of dap and less of urea. Instead of attempting to verify the credibility of the claims of peasants regarding the chemical, the Development Agent disregarded the request of the participants and continued to supply and distribute the unwanted material. The peasants had no option but to receive the ratios as before, but continued to use them according to their adapted way.

The community is almost unanimous in presenting the problems faced with regard to time and supply factors related to innovation inputs. Often peasants had to wait for a long time for inputs though they finished preparing the land for sowing. Though the supply is not solely the responsibility of the DA, no explanation for the delays was offered to peasants. Again, when supplies arrived, often they were far short of what the peasants were waiting for. Lack of explanation served to strain relations between Agent and peasants, who tended to ascribe the supply problems to corruption.

The Mitigation of Benefit

From the foregoing discussion, the role of the Development Agent in the extension process is clearly pivotal. The performance of the Development Agent in Boru Lencha seems to compromise the purpose of his post. In this concluding section, the attempt is to recapitulate and discuss aspects of the ways in which the Development Agent mitigated the benefits of the extension package.

At a first and general level, there is the question of alleged corruption by the Development Agent. The discretion exercised in selecting peasants to join the programme, discriminate purchase of wheat, acquisition of a plot and alliance with elements of the local elite were instances pointed out by the community as corruption. Instead of benefiting the poor peasants, the Development Agent assisted others to intercept the benefits of the extension programme. This raises a question regarding accountability, to which the community is not entitled in its interaction with the Development Agent. Consolidation of the extension programme thus requires measures whereby the community holds the agent accountable. Several methods may be recommended to that effect. But one realistic measure is to redefine the agent as an employee of the local community not of government. The community in such instance would have to pay the salary of the agent. Alternatively, the agent should be member of the local community, nominated by the community for training before assumption of responsibilities.

Equally important with the regard to the role of the Development Agent was the issue of attitude towards peasants. Though the DA was clearly under-qualified, he tended to deal with superiority and arrogance with the peasants. His disregard of the request of the community concerning chemical fertilisers not only deprived him the chance to learn something new, but also demonstrated bad public relations that compromised the

relevance and effectiveness of the extension package. The dialogue with peasants, if pursued to higher levels, could have served to reformulate the components of the package, at least in Boru Lencha, in such a way as to suit the local context. As noted in Chapter Two, however, the basic shortcoming of extension in developing countries is the disregard of peasant knowledge. The Ethiopian programme seems to present no exception, demonstrating a heavy top-down approach. Again, consolidation of the programme seems to call for a more flexible approach, one that would allow for listening to the peasants.

As far as the peasant response is concerned, it was obvious that the local community was very keen to join the programme. The myth that peasants feared innovation as such was clearly defied. But very few peasants were actually enrolled in the package, and most of them were not the most needy. What is at issue does not seem the response of peasants. It is rather the response of planners and implementers of extension who have to respond, and positively, to the enthusiasm of peasants to adopt appropriate innovation.

Table 1a: Table showing economic status based on land holding and the year of joining extension program of the first group of adopters.

*H.H	Age of H.H.H	Literacy	No of H.H Members	Land holding & Economic Status	Year of joining extension program
1	70	IL*	9	5 hect.RR*	1994
2	54	LCRW	11	4 hect.RR	"
3	42	3sG*	6	3.5 hect.RR	"
4	41	5SG	7	3 hect.RR	"
5	41	LCRW	5	2.5 hect.RR	"
6	36	8SG	5	2 hect.RM*	"
7	30	IL	3	2 hect.RM	"
8	31	LCRW	4	2 hect.RM	"
9	32	9SG	6	1.75 hectRM	"
10	27	12SG	3	1.50 hect.RP*	"
11	45	SCRW	9	1 hect.Rp	"

H.H.H Household (head)
IL (Illiterate Literacy campaign)
LCRW Read and Write
SG School Grad
RR Resource Rich
RP Resource Poor
RM Resource Medium
CIR Corrugated Iron Roof
GR Grass Roof
Both Both CIR and GR
> 2 hect. - RR
1.75 - 2 hect - RM
< 1.75 hect. - RP

Table 1b: Production of wheat on 0.5 hect. and the total annual production of crops on whole holding of the first group of adopters.

H.H	House Type	farming Equip. Type	Inn Produced Wheat on 0.5 hect.	Mixed Crops Produced All Holdings	No of Livestock s in H.H	Auxiliary business	Employ ment Income
1	Both	Traditional & Modern	21	129	13	None	None
2	CIR	"	26	117	7	Tej Place	"
3	CIR	"	27	105	9	Tea place	"
4	Both	"	24	94	12	None	"
5	CIR	"	19	75	5	"	"
6	"	"	26	65	4	"	"
7	"	"	24	69	5	"	"
8	"	"	26	74	5	"	"
9	GR*	Traditional	21	58	6	"	"
10	"	"	31	59	1	"	"
11	"	"	25	37	2	"	"

Table 2a: Table economic Status based on Land holding and the year of joining extension programmed of the second group of adopters.

H.H	Age of House Hold Head	Literacy	No. of House Hold Members	Land holding Economic Status	Year of Joining ext. Prog.
1	45	2 SG	7	2.50 hect.RR	1995
2	60	IL	6	2.50 RR	"
3	27	LCRW	7	2 RM	"
4	25	10LG	2	2 RM	"
5	32	LCRW	4	2 RM	"
6	35	LCRW	3	2 RM	"
7	35	11SG	5	2 RM	"
8	37	7SG	4	1.75 RM	"
9	41	4SG	4	1.75 RM	"
10	43	LCRW	6	1.75 RM	"
11	32	6SG	5	1.50 RP	"
12	35	IL	6	1 RP	"
13	45	IL	5	0.5. RP	"

Table 2b: Production of wheat on 0.5 hect. and the total annual production of crops on whole holding of the second group of adopters.

H.H	House Type	Farming Equip. Type	Inn. Prod. What on 0.5 hect.	Mixed crops Produced on All Holdings	Employme Income
1	Both	Tradition al & modern	27	71	None
2	CIr	"	28	102	""
3	CIR	Tradition al	38	112	""
4	Both	"	23	99	""
5	CIR	"	23	93	300 Birr
6	Both	"	24	89	None
7	CIR	"	23	82	""
7	GR	"	20	77	""
9	Both	"	21	75	""
10	GR	"	23	83	""
11	CIR	"	25	87	300 Birr
12	Both	"	20	77	None
13	R	"	26	56	200 Birr

Table 3a: Table showing economic status based on landholding and the year of joining extension program of the third group of adopters.

H.H	Age of H.H.H	Literacy	No. of H.H Members	Land holding & Economic Status	Year of Joining Extension Prog
1	18	LCRW	3	2.5 hect. RR	1996
2	23	4SG	12	2 hect.RM	"
3	18	LCRW	5	2 hect. RM	"
4	21	IL	6	1.75 hect. RM	"
5	16	IL	5	1.75 hect.RM	"
6	18	IL	7	1.50 hect.RP	"
7	17	LCRW	3	1.50 hect.Rp	"
8	24	IL	10	1.50 hect.RP	"
9	23	IL	9	1 hect. RP	"
10	24	IL	11	1 hect.RP	"
11	22	LCRW	7	1.50 hect. RP	"

Table 3b: Production of wheat on 0.5 hec5ts. and the total annual production of crops on whole holding of the third group of adopters.

H.H	House Type	Farming Type	Inn. Produced wheat on 0.5 hect	Mixed crops produced on All Holding	No of Livestock in H.H	Auxiliary business	Employment Income
	CIR	Traditional	24	170	5	None	one
2	GR	"	30	73	7	"	"
3	CIR	"	35	76	2	"	"
4	"		31	50	9	"	"
5	"	"	33	61	8	"	"
6	"	"	26	53	3	"	"
7	GIR	"	27	57	4	"	"
8	GIR	"	22	52	3	"	"
9	GR	"	22	34	5	"	"
10	"	"	20	29	4	"	"
11	"		26	26	3	"	"

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In Ethiopia, as in many developing countries, successive governments have launched extension programmes to modernise the peasant agriculture upon which a majority of the population depends. The current programme aims to diffuse improved seed varieties, improved farming techniques and improved livestock rearing. This study sought to contribute to the investigation and analysis of the social context of the extension process in the particular case of Boru Lencha *kebele*, Arsi Zone of Oromiya State.

The peasants of Boru Lencha experienced extension programmes since their inception in Ethiopia with CADU. That experience induced peasants to seek participation in the programme. When this study was carried out, only 57 peasants in Boru Lencha benefited from the current programme. Though the participants tended to magnify the positive impact of the programme, it was not in doubt that relative improvements were achieved with respect to food and clothing, housing and household utensils and, perhaps most significant, increased school intake of children.

The criticism raised by the peasant community of the manner in which the beneficiaries were selected eventually defined the focus and research problem of the study. The criticism drew attention to an important issue to which the literature on innovation diffusion paid little attention, especially in Ethiopia: aspects of the social context in which the extension programme is implemented and the way it is influenced by the role and performance of the Development Agent, the official responsible of the implementation

The study is based on a survey of 35 of the 57 peasants participating in the extension programme. The survey was carried out to investigate and analyse their personal and social characteristics, including age, literacy and educational level, size of both household and land holdings, number of livestock and house type. The survey was supplemented by partial observations, informal interviews and group discussions that covered both participating and non-participating peasants as well as members of the *kebele* administration.

In analysing the survey data, the survey sample was classified into three groups defined by the date in which they respectively started participation. Analysis of the characteristics of the three groups revealed a heterogeneous composition. Each group included peasants of varying personal and social characteristics. The Boru Lencha

reality seemed to defy widely held views in the literature concerning the willingness of the rich and reluctance of the poor to join agricultural innovation programmes.

In each group, however, a core of peasants with similar characteristics was identifiable. The core in the first two groups consisted of elements from the local power structure. In the third group the core consisted of ordinary peasants unconnected with the local power structure.

Research into the determinants of recruitment of peasants into the extension programme indicated the magnitude of influence exercised by the Development Agent in the process. The selection of beneficiaries was carried out by the Development Agent. In that selection, as in many other instances when significant decisions were made, the DA exercised the wide discretion granted to him. The DA favoured members of the local elite with whom he enjoyed symbiotic and/or strategic relations, and granted privileges to peasants with whom he established patron-client relations. The close relations between the DA and members of the first two groups is reflected in the positive views expressed by the latter on the role and performance of the former. It was virtually the case that defending the DA amounted to defending government policy. Though the third group achieved higher performance, they were unequivocal in their criticism of the DA despite their recognition of the benefits of the extension programme.

Numerous complaints were raised by peasants regarding corrupt and unethical practices on the part of the DA including access to a farming plot in the *kebele*. Some of the complaints were corroborated by observations in the course of research, such as the discretion in favouring his close associated in the purchase of wheat for government. Lack of accountability to the local community apparently made a king out of the DA who was supposed to serve. It also compromised the objective of the extension programme: benefiting poor peasants. The interception of the benefits by the local power structure points to the significance to be accorded to the social context in development planning.

The interaction between the Development Agent and the local community was not conducive to the furthering of programme participatory objectives. The DA demonstrated an attitude of arrogance and superiority vis-a-vis the peasant community. The top-down approach adopted in planning and implementing the extension package mitigated the relevance and effectiveness of the programme by ruling out listening to peasants. Though the government strategy emphasized the participatory nature of PADETES, participation in Boru Lencha tended to mean compliance with the instruction of the package. The DA thus trivialised peasant experience with chemical fertilisers, thereby obstructing a fruitful dialogue between planners and beneficiaries and, once again compromising programme objectives. More flexible planning

frameworks sensitive to local needs, problems and knowledge are highly recommendable.

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የኤክስቴንሽን መርሃ ግብርን እንቅስቃሴ በተመለከተ ለሚደረግ ጥናታዊ ምርምር ለ35 የቦሩ ፊንጫ ገበሬ ማህበር ተሳታፊ አባላት

<u>የተዘጋጁ ቃለ መጠየቃዊ ጥያቄዎች</u>

1. ዕድሜዎ ስንት ነው? የቤተሰብ ብዛትዎስ?
2. የትምህርት ደረጃዎ ምንድነው?
3. የኤክስንቴሽን መርሃ ግብር አባል የሆኑት በስንት ዓ.ም ነው?
4. እንዴትና ለምንድነው የመርሃ ግብሩ ተሳታፊ አባል የሆኑት ?
5. የመሬት ይዞታዎ ምን ያህል ነው?
6. ስንት የቀንድና የጋማ ከብት አልዎት ?
7. ከመርሃ ግብሩ ያገኙትን ጥቅም ቢዘረዝሩልኝ?
8. ከመርሃ ግብሩ ጋር በተያያዘ ያገጠሞት ችግር ምንድነው?
9. መርሃ ግብሩን ሲጀመሩ የፈለጉትና ያገኙት ግብአቶች ምንድን ናቹው ?
10. በመርሃ ግብሩ አከናወን ሂደት ውስጥ ችግር ሲገጥሞት እንዴት ነው የሚፈቱት?
11. የቤተሰብዎ የምግብ አቅርቦትና /መጠን/ ደረጃ /ዓይነት/ ከመርሃ ግብሩ በፊትና በኃላ ቢያወዳድሩልኝ?
12. የቤተሰብዎ የልብስ አቅርቦትና /መጠን/ ደረጃ /ዓይነት/ ከመርሃ ግብሩ በፊትና በኃላ ቢያወዳድሩልኝ?
13. የቤት ውስጥ ቁሳቁስ ከመርሃ ግብሩ በፊትና በኃላ ሲነፃፀር እንዴት ነው?
14. ከመርሃነ ግብሩ ጋር በተያያዘ የሚኖሩበት ቤት ዓይነት ተለውጧል ?
15. እርሻ የሚያርሱበት መሣርያ ምን ዓይነት ነው?
16. የሚጠቀሙበት ግብዓቶች በበቂና በጊዜ ይደርሶታል?
17. ስለግብዓቶች የቀጋ ሀሩታ ያለዎትን አሳብ ቢገልፁልኝ?
18. በመርሃ ግብሩ ምክንያት የቤተሰብዎ ገቢ ጨምሮአል?
19. የቀበሌዎ የመርሃ ግብር ኃላፊ /የልማት ሠራተኛ/ ከእርስዎ ጋር ያለውን የሥራ ሆነ የሌላ ግንኙነት ቢገልፁልኝ?
20. የልማት ሠራተኛዉ ተሳታፊዎችን ሁሉ በእኩልነት ያስተናግዳል?
21. ችግሮችን በመፍታት በኩል ምን ያህል ይረዳችኃል ?
22. የልማት ሠራተኛ ያዳምጠታል?
23. የታታሪነቱ ብቃቱ እንዴት ነው?
24. በአጠቃላይ ክንዉንና ግንኙነት የልማት ሠራተኛዉን እንዴት ይመዝኑታል?
25. በቀበሌዎ ውስጥ በኮሚቴ አባልነት ወይም በሌላ ሀሩታ አገልግሎት ስጥተው ያዉቃሉ?

Interview Questions Prepared to study peasant responses to Extension package

1. What is your age? The number of your household members?
2. what is the status of your literacy?
3. When did you become participant member of the extension programme?
4. How and why did become participant member?
5. What is the amount of your land holding?
6. What is the number of your livestock?
7. What benefits did you draw from participanting in the extension programme?
8. What problems did you face as a participant member?
9. Did you get the inputs you wanted when starting the extension programme?
10. How do solve whenever you face extension related problems?
11. Would you compare the quality and quantity of food of your household before and after participant in the programme?
12. Would you compare the quality and quantity of cloths of your household before and after joining the programme?
13. Would you compare the quality and quantity of your household utensils before and after extension programme?
14. Did the type of your home change related to benefits got from extension?
15. What instruments do you use to plough?
16. Do you receive inputs in time and appropriate amount?
17. What do you think about the cost of the inputs you get?
18. Did your income increase as a result of extension benefits?
19. What is your relation with the DA?
20. Is the DA impartial in treatment of members of the community of participants?
21. Is the DA helpful in solving your problems?
22. Does the DA listen to you?
23. Is he effortful?
24. How do you rate the DA in his general performance and social relation?
25. Did you ever serve as a committee member or any other capacity in your kebele?

DECLARATION

The thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Michael Sisaye Mengistu

This thesis has been submitted with our approval as university advisors

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