

Enhancing Understanding of Local Accountability Mechanisms in Ethiopia

Protecting Basic Services Project

PBS II Preparation Studies

REVISED SUMMARY REPORT

by

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based on case study reports by

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22 May 2008

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report is a summary of the findings of a study carried out in four regions: Afar, Amhara, Oromia and Tigray for a month by five researchers from 15 March to 13 April 2008.
- 1.2. This revised summary follows a reporting format developed for the individual reports. However, the conclusions and recommendations also relate to a review of the literature on informal and customary institutions and social accountability initiatives.
- 1.3. The final report will give more consideration to a systematic comparison between findings from the four regions, a fuller discussion of the implications of the rich case material, and will provide a more comprehensive review of informal institutions and social accountability initiatives from the literature.
- 1.4. This summary report is based in part on the reports of the individual researchers based on their regional case studies and on the team leader's interpretation of the findings in relation to the wider literature on relevant topics.
- 1.5. We should like to acknowledge the exemplary cooperation of wereda and kebele officials and citizens who patiently answered our questions and the outstanding working cooperation with the Bank team from Washington, Serdar Yilmaz, Yakup Beris, and Varsha Venugopal, as well as the Bank staff in Addis Ababa, notably Janelle Plummer, and Robin Milton from DfID.
- 1.6. The report is divided into ten sections: 1) This introduction, 2) the research process and context, 3) *wereda* level findings, 4) relations between the Regional, *Wereda* and *Kebele* levels, 5) *Kebele* level institutions, 6) the involvement of local institutions in social accountability, 7) an analysis of local level power dynamics, 8) an analysis of sectoral issues, 9) conclusions, and 10) recommendations.

2. The Research Process and Context

- 2.1. **This report is based on five main sources:** a) the findings of the PBS/ALCOSA mission, March 2008, b) research reports on each of the four regions by five researchers, c) a literature review on informal institutions, d) a review of social accountability initiatives in Ethiopia, and e) the author's experience and writings on informal organizations, customary institutions and related topics.
- 2.2. **This report is a summary and should be read in conjunction with seven other documents** a) the PBS/ALCOSA mission report, b) the five regional reports that provide more detail and case material, and b) a summary paper on community associations and institutions.
- 2.3. **The team of five researchers has had considerable experience in carrying out independent research.** Four out of five have had training in social anthropology and have worked on other projects under the guidance of the team leader.

- 2.4. **The team held training meetings prior to their fieldwork and joint and individual debriefing sessions afterwards.** The team held a group discussion and briefing session prior to leaving for the field and the members were all individually in contact with the team leader by phone almost daily during the field research.
- 2.5. **Two progress reports were submitted during the fieldwork and a third after the joint debriefing session** held the day after the researchers returned. The team leader also held separate debriefings sessions with each of the researchers.
- 2.6. **Due to time constraints to meet the deadline a reporting format and report writing guidelines were prepared by the team leader to help the researchers produce summary draft reports.** In order to have draft summary outputs by April 30 to be able to provide useful inputs for the PBS II design phase rapidly, at the request of the researchers in addition to a reporting format which was revised twice on the basis of discussions with the researchers, the team leader prepared guidelines for producing a first summary draft.
- 2.7. **The team leader reviewed the first drafts of the reports and provided feedback comments to improve the drafts by the deadline for four of the reports received in time.** Only one researcher met the first deadline of submitting a draft by April 20, and three others by April 24. Initial comments on all of these were sent back to the researchers and the supervisory group within a day of receiving them. However, the last researcher only submitted her partial report on April 30. Comments on the Afar and Amhara report from the supervisory team were forwarded to the researchers. Four of the researchers have submitted revised drafts by the deadline, though much more work is required for improving these drafts.

Table 1: Regions, *Weredas*, *Kebeles* and Researchers

no	Region	<i>Wereda</i>	<i>Kebele</i>	Researcher
1	Afar	Abala	Adeharemele	Agazi
2			Urkudi	
3		Asayta	Hinele	
4			Berga	
5	Amhara	Debub Achefir	Dilamo	Damtew
6			Lalibela	
7		Fogera	Bebeks	
8			Quhar Mikael	
9	Oromia	Lome	Dhungugi Bekele	Buli
10			Muda Sanqalle	
11		Welmera	Bakakka Qore Odo	
12			Wajitu Harbu	
13	Tigray	Asgede Tsembela	Indaabaguna	Hadera
14			Maysiye	
15		Kola Temben	Geskimilesily	Yohannes
16			Workamba	
17			Dr Atakilti	
total	4	8	17	5

- 2.8. **The research was carried out by five researchers in four regions:** Afar, Amhara, Oromia and Tigray, and within the Regions in eight *Weredas*, two in each Region, and within the *Weredas* in a total of 17 *Kebeles*, four in three of the Regions and five in Tigray.
- 2.9. **The selected *weredas* were those where the PBS/ALCOSA team carried out its reconnaissance mission** in the first 10 days of March 2008, except for Asayta *Wereda* of Afar Region, since the mission had visited only one *Wereda* in Afar Region. The researchers accompanied the team for the regions as translators and assistants and gained valuable training and insights about the context and issues in the process.
- 2.10. **The rationale for returning to the same *weredas* included the following five reasons:** a) data mainly from *wereda* officials and some focus groups at *Kebele* level had been obtained providing a good basis for in-depth follow-up, b) it was important to fill gaps and probe about differences between theory and practice, c) there was limited time to carry out work at both *wereda* and *kebele* levels and the focus of this research was more on the *kebele* level for which the reconnaissance team had little time and about which less is known, d) there was concern that officials at *wereda* level may be less open to individual researchers than the ALCOSA/PBS team, and e) the context of pre-election meetings meant that *wereda* officials were often too busy to spend time with the researchers.
- 2.11. **The logic of the number of *Kebeles* and *weredas* was different for each of the regions.** It was agreed that the researchers in Amhara and Oromia would work in two *weredas* and four *Kebeles*, two in each *wereda*. The research in Afar would work in two *weredas*, and three *kebeles*, two in Abala *Wereda* which was already visited by the PBS/ALCOSA team and one in the new *wereda*, Asayta to give time to carry out the *wereda* level interviewing and data

collection. For Tigray the two researchers worked in separate *weredas*. The woman researcher worked in two *kebeles* in Asgede Tsembela *Wereda* and had the additional brief of a special focus and reporting on gender issues, and the male researcher worked in Kola Temben *Wereda* in three *Kebeles*.

- 2.12. **In response to the question raised by some of the funders that the study should consider NGO and donor initiatives, it was agreed that all the researchers would find out as much as possible about non-government initiatives in all the regions, *weredas*, and *kebeles* studied.** Moreover, the second *wereda* in Afar was selected on the basis of discussion about where non-government social accountability initiatives exist, and the third *Kebele* in Kola Temben *wereda* of Tigray Region was likewise selected with a view to considering such initiatives.
- 2.13. **The main common problems faced by all the researchers included the following three:** a) *Wereda* officials being busy with the elections, going away for meetings, and not having time to spend time with them, b) little willingness to come to meetings and form focus groups, c) limited time for follow up and in-depth interviews. The context of the elections period was in part responsible for the other problems faced.
- 2.14. **Additional problems that were region specific included the following five:** a) in Afar in Abala *wereda* dispersed settlement, and people going away due to drought and in Asaita *wereda* lack of trust by officials, limited documents and willingness to show them, b) in Oromia the Party celebrations for three days and market days, c) in Tigray *wereda* officials left for regional meetings for ten days, d) in Amhara difficulty in getting people to come to meetings and form focus groups, e) two of the researchers, Agazi in Afar and Buli in Oromia were ill for a couple of days each but were able to complete their assignments successfully.
- 2.15. **The main changes in the research design necessary to overcome the constraints included the following three:** a) interviewing *wereda* officials when they were available rather than at the beginning and end as anticipated, b) adopting a more flexible approach of interviewing where and when informants could be found, c) some researchers facing difficulty in holding focus groups since the officials and local people were busy and relied more on individual interviews.

3. *Wereda* Level Findings

- 3.1. **This section considers a range of aspects of financial and social accountability.** These include notably planning and budgeting, civil service management, procurement, council oversight, and service delivery at the *wereda* level.
- 3.2. **Since this is the subject of the ALCOSA/PBS reconnaissance mission this report focuses on the following three points:** a) additional information obtained in filling gaps, b) identifying differences between the theory and practice. A systematic discussion of regional variations will be included in the full report, due to delays in receiving drafts and revisions from the researchers

and the short deadline. For ease of reference this report uses the same headings as the draft ALCOSA/PBS report.

Planning and budgeting

- 3.3. **There is a disconnect between planning and budgets.** The two processes seem to take a parallel course that often does not converge or there is insufficient time for meaningful revisions.
- 3.4. **Five year strategic plans are produced by weredas but they do not take into account revenue projections.** This limits the relevance and usefulness of plans.
- 3.5. **Planning tends to be carried out largely in a top-down fashion.** This often involves targets set by the region allowing for limited revision at the *wereda* level. However, some revision of plans was noted in Tigray.
- 3.6. **Annual planning of budgets works from the basis of previous year's budgets.** *Weredas* make requests sent to the BOFED but often only hear about actual budgets after the fiscal year has started. This provides very little time for meaningful adjustments or involvement of *kebele* stakeholders. In practice *weredas* often only ensure that salaries are paid in the interim.
- 3.7. **Meaningful planning of development is constrained by limited capital budgets.** The bulk of budgets (90 to 95%) go to recurrent costs, with most of this for salaries. This gives little room for discretion over planning, and limits *Kebele* level initiatives and social accountability. If budget allocations are lower than requests, as was the case in Oromia, then recurrent costs are prioritised further reducing the potential for *Kebele* level development planning.
- 3.8. ***Kebele* level planning is constrained by limited capital budgets.** Given small capital funds to be distributed by sector to a large number of *Kebeles*, funds for specific *Kebeles* do not exist and aspects of *Kebele* planning that require external funding are dependent on *Wereda* prioritisations of allocations. In Amhara *Kebele* plans are produced but only for activities that do not require external funding.
- 3.9. ***Kebeles* that do have an income that they can use are better able to plan and take initiatives.** This includes or instance income from grazing land or cutting forest trees or from user fees or fines from social courts. Where *kebeles* do control some income there are clear cases of social accountability issues with some outstanding examples of excellent community involvement (e.g. Bakaka in Welmera *Wereda* of Oromia Region), and some cases where malpractice has been investigated or audited by *wereda* levels (in Oromia and Tigray).
- 3.10. **The sectoral basis of planning limits the potential for integrated *Kebele* planning.** Since *wereda* planning is carried out largely following sectoral divisions *kebele* extension workers in agriculture, education and health and relate their planning to their sectoral offices, and integrated *Kebele* level planning is rare. Most of the planning seems to be done by sectoral extension agents rather than by *Kebele* cabinets let alone involving wider community consultation, and there is limited oversight by *Kebele* councils. The recent introduction of *Kebele* managers may, however, allow for better integrated planning, since their mandate is not sectorally defined. It is too early to assess

their effectiveness and there seem to be regional and local variations with some signs of a positive facilitating role.

- 3.11. **Kebele level planning is affected detrimentally by targets, quotas and campaigns set from the wereda, often based on regional directives.** Such planning is often blind to local realities and constraints, and does not take into account actual population data, seasonal variation in production and labour activity, and contingent localised shocks.
- 3.12. **Kebele level workplans and discussions in public meetings and councils tend to be limited to a few issues, with the agendas sometimes suggested from the wereda.** These tend to focus on: a) what community members will contribute in terms of labour, material and cash for collective infrastructure projects (schools, health posts etc) or for community labour activities (road building, irrigation, terracing), b) taxation and additional levies, c) targets and quotas for extension packages, d) in food insecure weredas work in safety net projects and being excluded therefrom (in Tigray).
- 3.13. **Wereda level planning and budget information is generally not shared with Kebele communities.** However, there are some cases where Kebele cabinet and wereda council members are better informed than is generally the case. However, the implications for specific Kebeles are often not stated in plans and budgets, since the planning is carried out on a sectoral basis and is subject to decisions about prioritisation at the wereda level.
- 3.14. **Budget information is generally not posted at the Kebele level, though some Kebeles do receive the information.** However, this is usually meaningless as the sectoral division of budgets does not allow Kebele members to understand the implications for their Kebele, even if they are budget literate. In Kola Tembien, however, information on capital and infrastructure projects with details by Kebele is provided which would be a good practice for other regions to emulate.
- 3.15. **Weredas have bank accounts for block grants and separate ones for each donor activity.** Knowledge about these is often limited to the wereda cabinet or even the finance sector and not presented in detail to the councils. The expenditures for donor funded projects often do not show in plans and budgets and are generally not presented to the wereda council. This can result in lack of integration of donor funded projects with the rest of the planning and budgeting process. In the case of the Hundee project of Older Citizen's monitoring in Oromia Kebele elderly representatives are involved in tripartite committees along with members of the wereda executive, and representatives of the NGO from the planning to the implementation and evaluation of interventions.

Council Composition, Role and Oversight

- 3.16. **The wereda councils are composed of representatives from the Kebeles.** In Amhara and Oromia there are three per Kebele, and in Tigray it varies and can be more as it is based on the population with a figure of one councillor per 1000 people.
- 3.17. **In the current elections there were plans to increase the overall number of councilors. In Tigray there was a target to increase the number of women**

- to half.** The councils have a speaker, and several technical committees that in some cases obtain advice from members of the executive.
- 3.18. **The existence of *wereda* councils is already a big step forward and there are some cases where they have been able to challenge decisions by the cabinet administration.** However *Wereda* Councils are constrained by a number of factors including: a) limited literacy, b) lack of funds for travel, c) limited sharing of information, d) party pressure.
 - 3.19. **More fundamentally *wereda* councilors are in effect proposed and endorsed by the party.** There is not much opportunity for opposition candidates to stand, and *wereda* councilors are susceptible to pressure to accept or rubber stamp decisions made by the executive.
 - 3.20. **The separation of powers between executive and legislature are not clearly articulated.** Members of administration, especially sector heads, who are council members may review and vote on their own plans and performance reports within the council meetings.
 - 3.21. **Heads of sectoral units are proposed by the party at *wereda* level and cleared by the zonal administration.** Then *wereda* administrator informs the cabinet and submits the candidate's name to the council for approval. The Party has a decisive role in high level appointments including the administrator. The Council approves party nominated candidates.
 - 3.22. **In principle the Council is supposed to review plans, budgets, and implementation and is expected to meet quarterly, though practice does not always follow the theory.** In some *weredas* Council meetings are sometimes delayed, documents may not reach the councilors in advance, full budget information may not be submitted to them, and no information about procurement is shared with them.
 - 3.23. **The leeway for Councils to question decisions of the executive is on the whole limited.** There are some instances of questioning decisions, but generally councils tend to approve what is submitted with limited attempts to suggest or insist on amendments, let alone reject proposals by the administration. Also, most sector heads are also council members.
 - 3.24. ***Kebele* representatives tend to deliver information from the *wereda* to the *kebele* administration, cabinet and council, but do not have a strong role in advocacy of *kebele* interests.** In principle they approve plans and check implementation. They do not organise community meetings on their own though they are involved in meetings called by the cabinet, and are involved in the *kebele* council meetings.
 - 3.25. ***Wereda* councils have a number of committees.** However these seem to rely on information and guidance from sector cabinet representatives and do not always meet or receive detailed information in time. Their capacity varies by region and *wereda*.
 - 3.26. **Sectors report on their activities to councils.** However, the reports are usually not provided in advance and often to not provide enough detail to allow council members to fulfill their oversight role. Councils are also generally not provided with detailed audit data on the grounds that these are too technical.
 - 3.27. **It is suggested that the councilors lack the capacity to properly overview the planning, budgeting, and service delivery processes.** Though it is true

that most of the members have limited education technical expertise, and knowledge about their roles, there is a danger that this may be an excuse not to provide them with detailed data. In Tigray, the party decided to set as a rule that the candidates for councilors should at least be literate.

- 3.28. **The councilors do not benefit from adequate training to increase their understanding of local government decision making.** This constrains their oversight role. Given the technical nature of the reports they are expected to review, improving their capacity through budget and justice literacy is particularly important.
- 3.29. **The significant differences between the council and the cabinet are not only to do with capacity but also to do with power relations.** It is true that the cabinet have salaries and training whereas the council members receive only stipends and often lack even basic literacy. Moreover, the decision-making power and backing of the party structure ensure that the cabinets dominate and their decisions are very rarely questioned and their proposal hardly ever rejected by the councils.
- 3.30. **Dismissal of council members and speakers are rare but have occurred. Mechanisms for replacement including if members leave or die do not seem to have not be instituted.** It would seem that often decisions for dismissals are activated by the party through the cabinet. Members sometimes leave as the work on the council is incompatible with their own livelihoods.
- 3.31. **Members of other civil society groups are included as non-voting members in *wereda* councils in some regions.** This included members of mass associations (farmers, women and youth) and in principle religious leaders, although the extent of their involvement and participation varies between regions.
- 3.32. ***Kebele* councils are large involving at least 100 members and the numbers are to be tripled in the current elections.** In Amhara there were an additional 100 supporting members who were supposed to be non voting. The role of the *Kebele* council seems to be mainly as fora for awareness about government directives and to endorse reports. Discussion of issues is often limited to questions that worry *kebele* residents such as labour contributions, increased taxation and involvement in safety nets in food deficit *weredas*.

Service Delivery

- 3.33. **The bulk of *wereda* budgets goes on civil servant salaries, and the limited capital budgets reduces the relevance of social accountability.** *Wereda* level planning of service delivery is often viewed as the affairs of the *wereda* that do not concern *kebele* cabinets let alone citizens.
- 3.34. **Decision-making on prioritisation of capital expenditure on *kebele* level construction seemed to be made on a sectoral basis in line with federal and regional policy with little limited discussion or negotiation by community representatives.** *Wereda* councils have sometimes questioned the location of some facilities though this seems to be rare.
- 3.35. **Generally donor assistance in capital budgets is not recorded in the budgets and there is little discussion of these between cabinets and councils.** The prioritization of such projects often does not involve adequate

discussion and negotiation between the *wereda* administration, the project personnel and community representatives. This ring-fencing of donor and NGO projects does not allow for integrated planning, and can lead to lack of coordination or duplication and may create room for accountability abuses.

- 3.36. **Hiring of extension workers following civil service regulations by line agencies seems to allow *wereda* administrations significant discretion in most cases.** Procedures for promotion and relocation seem to be areas where health workers and teachers have expressed grievances. The dismissal of extension workers seems to be rare and is often initiated by *wereda* officials rather than by complaints from the *kebele* level.
- 3.37. **Limited resources for extension work were even more critical than lack shortage of staff.** In health care there were complaints that health posts were under equipped and that health workers did not have any medical supplies to offer except for malaria and contraceptives. In the Oromia *kebeles* the health posts were still under construction. There were also complaints about the emphasis on preventative health packages notably for sanitation requiring time-consuming labour. In the education sector crowded conditions in schools and limited equipment and textbooks were mentioned.
- 3.38. ***Kebele* representatives on *wereda* councils do not seem to be actively engaged in complaints over service delivery.** This is in part since services at a local level are often very limited in the first place, and since the sectoralised planning is dominated by the *wereda* administration and its sectoral offices with the backing of the party on key decisions, so that councils largely endorse decisions that have already been reached.
- 3.39. **Complaint mechanisms are sectorally differentiated and are more institutionalized in the education sector.** Employees seem to be able to lodge complaints against unfair dismissal etc, though these often involve appeals to higher levels notably the region. It does not seem common that communities initiate complaints against extension workers, and their removal seems to be decided by *wereda* officials, sometimes with minimal consultation.
- 3.40. **Complaints and suggestions boxes are available at the *wereda* level but do not yet seem to have become part of the cultural repertoire of civic action.** Cultural norms of complaints in written form are rare except with reference to personal justice, and hierarchical notions of authority mean that citizen's complaints are not common and there are fears of reprisals that limited the willingness of individuals or groups to be seen to be critical.

4. Relations between Regional, *Wereda* and *Kebele* Levels

- 4.1. **Planning and budgets seem to flow largely in a vertical downwards direction.** Instructions and targets move from Region to *Wereda* to *Kebele* largely through sectoral offices in line with federal and regional guidelines.
- 4.2. ***Weredas* are largely reliant on block grants from the regions.** In practice they have limited ability and rights to raise and use additional funds, which constrains their involvement in participatory development and accountability.

- 4.3. **Kebeles are often upwardly accountable but do not expect downward accountability from weredas.** *Kebeles* are expected to report on achievement of sectoral plans and targets notably for packages. However, *kebele* administration members generally do not expect *wereda* officials to account for decisions on service delivery. The hierarchical vertical relations that are historically rooted in cultural traditions and the fear that criticism will be equated with dissent hinder the development of accountability.
- 4.4. **Kebele participation in services is often restricted to labour contributions and in some cases cash contributions.** In the service provision, *kebeles* are involved in mobilizing labour for construction of health posts, schools and water points, as well as labour for road building. In some cases such as for water points cash contributions are also expected.
- 4.5. **Changes in the methods of labour mobilization particularly in avoiding mandatory mobilization have resulted in less enthusiasm for work on collective projects which are less popular.** With the avoidance of mandatory labour in the post 2005 election reforms, except in Tigray, there has been a reluctance for communities to engage in less popular forms of labour mobilization such as terracing. This has made ensuring labour mobilization more difficult, although *kebele* structures are still able to mobilize considerable labour notably for construction of health posts and schools and road building.
- 4.6. **The involvement of kebele dwellers in the management of services varies sectorally and regionally.** It seems that there is more involvement of *kebele* residents in the management of water points through users committees and education through parent-teachers associations and school boards than in other sectors.
- 4.7. **A few partnerships with donor and NGO sponsored project involve communities more in the use of funds, procurement, monitoring and evaluation etc.** This was noted for example in the case of FINIDA water projects in Amhara Regions. However, the dominant model seems to be ones in which communities are involved in needs identification and labour provisions. In the water sector, users committees do manage contributions from users.

5. **Kebele Level Institutions**

- 5.1. **Institutions at the Kebele level can be divided into three:** a) formal or government structures, b) semi-formal which are externally organised by government or NGO/donor initiatives, and c) customary or informal ones that are internally initiated and organised independently by community members themselves.
- 5.2. **Formal institutions at the Kebele level include the following six types:** a) the administration or cabinet also referred to in Amhara as *sira asfetsami*, i.e. executive, b) the *kebele* council, known as *gubae* or *mikir bet*, c) the social court known as *mehaberawi fird bet*, d) the *Kebele* manager, known as *yesira halafi* literally 'the head in charge of work', e) sectoral extension agents (for agriculture Development Agents, for education headmasters and teachers, for health locally recruited health workers), f) security and police officers.

- 5.3. **Kebeles have a number of sub-committees including the following six:** a) plan preparation, b) forest development/protection, c) peace and security, d) development, e) land administration, and sometimes f) committees of elders.
- 5.4. **The Sub-kebele structure involves two levels:** The first one referred to as *got* in Amhara, *goti* in Oromia and *qushet* in Tigray, and the second called *limat budin* meaning 'development teams' in Tigray and Amhara (formerly called *mengistawi budin* or 'governmental teams') and *gare* in Oromia.
- 5.5. **The first level is usually based on geographical divisions of the kebele into several sub-units, and the second is a form of organisation that brings together a group of neighbours and forms work teams within them.** Both levels have representatives who are responsible to the *Kebele* administration and are involved in mobilising labour and organising distribution of assistance or relief where and when it is necessary.
- 5.6. **Semi-formal institutions are set up by the external intervention of government or NGO/donor projects and include the following eight sub-types:** a) 'mass' associations (women, youth and farmers), sectorally based committees and associations: b) Education committees, associations and boards (education and training boards, parent- teachers associations), c) health committees (sometimes specifically for particular problems, e.g. malaria committees, HIV/AIDS committee), trained birth attendants, d) water related committees and associations, (water users associations, irrigation users associations, drinking water committees), e) peace, security and justice committees (neighbourhood watch committees, elders committees) f) credit associations, g) cooperatives (including agricultural producers and service cooperatives, h) political organisations, in the case *kebeles* limited to the EPRDF party.
- 5.7. **Informal or customary institutions that are initiated by community members include the following four types:** a) associations, b) labour, land and livestock sharing institutions, c) customary dispute resolution institutions, d) natural resource management institutions (for pasture, irrigation and forest).
- 5.8. **The community-initiated associations can be divided in term of their primary function into four types:** a) the most prevalent are funeral associations, known as *iddir* and found in this study in Amhara and Oromia, b) rotating credit associations, known as *iqqub*, found in Tigray and Amhara and Oromia, c) socio-religious institutions known as *mehaber*, found in Tigray and Amhara in Orthodox Christian communities, d) church based associations, known as *senbete* found in Tigray and Amhara in Orthodox communities.
- 5.9. **Labour, land and livestock sharing institutions tend to be very small-scale and transitory.** They are often dyadic between two individuals except in the case of festive labour groups, and are generally reciprocal and short-lived. Land sharecropping and share-rearing of livestock often have in-built power dimensions with weaker members, often female headed households, sharing out land and providing the labour in share-rearing. These institutions provide mutual help and redistribute land, labour and livestock according to need and power relations, but are not the kind of institutionalized group-based associations that can become partners in development.

- 5.10. **Customary dispute resolution institutions are the most prevalent informal structure found in all regions and highly involved in grassroots justice delivery.** These elders' councils known as *shimagile* in Amhara and Tigray and *Jarsa biyya* in Oromo play a key role in solving minor disputes and bringing more serious ones to social courts. The elders act as witnesses at the formal courts and then often are involved in ensuring that decisions and agreements are respected by the parties and that they are reconciled. In practice the formal justice system relies very heavily on the customary systems and the bulk of cases are never seen by the social courts. However, their role is often not acknowledged or officially recognized, and there have not been much attempts to involve them in social accountability except for the pioneering work of Hundee in setting up older citizens' councils involving customary leaders.
- 5.11. **Natural resource management institutions are rarely separate institutions but are often a series of rules and sanctions upheld by customary dispute resolution institutions.** Such institutions are involved in the management of pasture, irrigation and forests. Sometimes users associations have development notably in the case of irrigation.
- 5.12. **Mutual assistance is also predicated on networks.** These are based on gender, kinship, neighbourhood, faith, clanship, age-grading or ethnicity or combinations thereof.
- 5.13. **Inter-relations between the different types of institutions at the local level are in practice fairly strong because of the overlap of personnel.** The same people, are in different organizations, committees and institutions in formal, informal and customary structures. The leadership is often composed of men, some of whom are often among the more wealthy elderly local elites.
- 5.14. **However, in official terms and in power relations with higher levels notably *wereda* government formal institutions dominate.** There is limited space accorded to and involvement of semi-formal committees and even less to informal organisations
- 5.15. **Semi-formal committees set up by the formal structures of government or NGOS can be a bridge between formal structures, NGOs and informal community organizations and customary institutions.** These committees have aspects of formalized procedures but the personnel, practices and constituency based on localized trust are often more akin to those of informal institutions.

6. Involvement of Local Institutions in Social Accountability

- 6.1. **We can distinguish between social accountability and community accountability.** Social accountability is defined as how citizens and their organizations are able to exact accountability from government structures. Community accountability is how citizens hold their own community organizations accountable.
- 6.2. **Most discussions and studies of accountability are only concerned with social accountability.** However, this research suggests that *community accountability* is relevant and provides a potential resource and experience which could be useful for social accountability.
- 6.3. **This study suggests that while social accountability is still embryonic at the local level in the study areas, community accountability is fairly strong.** The ability of citizens to become involved in social accountability has been constrained by historical and cultural factors. However, the engagement of citizens in community accountability has been important and increasing.
- 6.4. **Community accountability includes both internal accountability and external accountability.** *Internal* accountability is that of the leadership within the community institution to its members. *External* accountability is that of the organisation to the wider community and external institutions. The findings suggest that internal community accountability is strong whereas external community accountability is fairly weak.
- 6.5. **We can also distinguish between financial accountability and social accountability.** Financial accountability can be considered a more specific sub-set of social accountability. Financial accountability includes all aspects of planning and budgeting, auditing, civil service management, etc.
- 6.6. **Much of the focus of government representatives is on financial accountability and wider social accountability issues are often not given much attention.** Social accountability is often presented and discussed in terms of budgets and planning. Little consideration is given to issues to do with village level justice, legal literacy, collective savings and investment, addressing marginalisation, knowledge of service standards and rights and obligations etc.
- 6.7. **We can also distinguish between vertical and horizontal accountability.** Vertical accountability is between levels (Federal, Regional, *Wereda*, *Kebele*, *Sub-Kebele*). Horizontal accountability is within the same level (*Wereda* executives towards councils, *Kebele* executives and councils).
- 6.8. **Vertical accountability can be upwards or downwards, the former being the historically and culturally dominant pattern.** Upward accountability involves accountability to lower officials to higher levels of government with limited downwards accountability. The idea that office holders and citizens are responsible to higher authorities is historically and culturally endorsed. However, the idea that officials need present themselves as accountable for their decisions to citizens and communities that can hold them accountable is fairly new and might require time to take root.
- 6.9. **Horizontal accountability within wereda and kebele levels between councils and executives has tended to be weak.** This is partly since councils have been established fairly recently and lack resources and capacity.

- 6.10. **The separation of powers between the executive and councils has not clearly established.** The relations between by the *wereda* cabinet and the *wereda* councils are characterised by domination of the cabinet and limited separation of powers. Similar problems were noted at the Kebele level.
- 6.11. **The decentralisation to the *wereda* level has offered great opportunities for greater decision-making and financial accountability at lower levels than ever before.** However, it is early days in the decentralisation process and so far awareness of citizens and their organisations of the potential for engaging in social accountability issues is limited.
- 6.12. **The limited involvement of citizens and their organisations in social accountability is a function of several factors including the following four:** a) lack of knowledge, b) limited understanding of the issues, c) limited development activities, d) fear of engaging in areas considered to be political.
- 6.13. **At the *Kebele* level accountability of *Kebele* leaders is primarily upwards.** The *kebele* cabinet is accountably to the *wereda* cabinet rather than horizontally to the *Kebele* council. In some regions the kebele council is accountable to the *woreda* council and the Kebele council speaker reports to *woreda* council speaker.
- 6.14. **Likewise accountability of the extension agents in agriculture, education and health is primarily to their sectoral offices at the *wereda* and regional level rather than to the communities they are expected to serve.**
- 6.15. **The accountability of local associations established by members of the community rather than externally is primarily towards their members.** Membership based community initiated organisations (MBCIOs) such as burial, credit and socio-religious associations are accountable financially and socially primarily to their members.
- 6.16. **Membership-based externally initiated organisations (MBEIOs) have dual accountability to government structures and to their members.** These include government sponsored mass organisations for farmers, women and youth, and regional credit organisations established by government. There external organization and allegiance often results in mistrust and the concern that they represent political rather than developmental interests and that the organisations may be subject to political interference in the s/election of leaders, purposes for labour mobilisation and use of contributions, levies, and externally donated funds.
- 6.17. **Customary institutions for justice delivery are accountable to the community at large.** Dispute resolution institutions seek to bring about reconciliation between litigants to ensure that community peace and harmony is maintained. The main sanction at their disposal is the threat of using social ostracism and or cursing to obtain compliance or the threat or taking the matter to the formal system. As community institutions they reflect cultural power relations and have traditionally excluded women and sometimes minorities. However these institutions are flexible and able to change and have become involved more recently through external initiation in promoting gender sensitive measure and countering harmful customs.
- 6.18. **Collaboration between formal, semi-formal and informal institutions is most common in the justice sector.** The bulk of dispute resolution is resolved by customary institutions and there is good unofficial collaboration with

the formal justice system which also seeks to coop members of the customary institutions in semi-formal justice committees. There are regional variations in both the formal and customary justice institutions. The role of the social courts has been restricted recently in Amhara and Oromia, though it seems to have been strengthened in Tigray. In Afar the customary dispute resolution system involves clan elders and religious leaders who are extremely powerful and whom the formal system relies on very heavily and in parts of Oromia the *gada* system of age organization also has a prominent role.

- 6.19. **There are also some collaborations between formal, semi-formal and informal institutions in the education and water sectors.** In the education sector the parents' teachers associations and school boards from bridges between the formal structure and the community with the possibility of activating complaints mechanisms and in the water sector users committees play a role in linking formal and informal structures.
- 6.20. **Semi-formal institutions play a prominent role as intermediaries for government and non-government agencies at *kebele* and sub-*kebele* levels.** These committees are often sectorally defined and involve users groups, notably for water management, and in the education sector in the form of parent-teacher associations and school boards. However, the extent to which they are involved in social accountability varies considerably and depends in part on the relations with government and NGO structures.
- 6.21. **Since the study did not focus on areas where social accountability initiatives have been piloted, it may not be surprising that did not find strong involvement of NGOs and donor funded projects in social accountability except for some community management of water points and the pioneering work of Hundee with senior citizens.** Most of the NGO sponsored and donor funded projects were based on a conventional model of the external agency carrying out needs assessments, requiring community participation in labour and sometimes cash contributions with the implementation carried out by the agency. Sometimes local committees for management and monitoring are set up notably in the water sector. The WASH projects in Tigray and Amhara and the FINIDA sponsored water projects in Amhara have set up such structures which seem to involved significant community participation and management. The Hundee project in Lome *wereda* of Oromia involved older citizens alongside the NGO representatives and *wereda* officials in joint planning and monitoring of development activities. However, the extent of awareness and participation of the elders does not seem to have been as extensive as expected even in this pioneering collaborative project.

7. Local Level Power Dynamics Analysis

- 7.1 **Power relations are complex but the basic configurations are well known, though the dynamics vary and this study provides interesting evidence.** This study was not able to focus specifically on power relations but draws on other studies (Aklilu and Dessalegn 2000, Vaughan and Tronvoll 2002, Yared 2002, Taye and Tegegne 2007). Much of the structure of power relations in rural Ethiopia is well known from the literature. What is less well known is the

dynamics of changes and some important insights have come out of this study, suggesting that power relations are not static and that there is significant changes taking place.

- 7.2 **Power in Rural Ethiopian society is structured along gender and age dimensions** (Bevan and Pankhurst 2007), in which the patriarchal authority of elderly men is dominant.
- 7.3 **However, there are signs of women and the younger generation gaining more power and autonomy.** The 1975 and subsequent land reforms, as well as the criterion of education for positions of responsibility have changed the balance of power in favor of younger men. In parts of Ethiopia women, notably among the nobility, have traditionally had rights to property.
- 7.4 **Nonetheless, economic practices and cultural customs have until recently reproduced male domination.** In the highlands the male-controlled ox-plough cultivation system coupled with virilocal marriage and residence patterns, and customs of early marriage and in the pastoralist lowlands bridewealth payments of livestock for women, polygamy, widow inheritance, and throughout most of the country forms of physical violence notably abduction, genital mutilation and wife-beating. Customary dispute resolution institutions have been controlled by men. However, there are signs of change in gender relations (Aklilu and Dessalegn 2000).
- 7.5 **In terms of representation, there are still clear imbalances at the *wereda* and *kebele* levels.** Most of the cabinets at both levels are comprised of men and women are exceptional in positions of authority except for the stipulated women's affairs representatives on cabinets, and social courts in Tigray. However, there have been some improvements brought about by government. The health workers as a matter of policy are women. In Amhara all the *Kebele* managers in the four *kebeles* happened to be women. Also, in the current elections there has been a stipulation that one of out three candidates in Oromia should be women.
- 7.6 **There have been changes in women's reproductive and land rights though inequalities still persist.** Family planning services seem to have given women more autonomy in decision-making particularly in Tigray, and land reforms and certification has given them greater rights at least in theory. However, the practices in divorce cases do not always reveal that women's rights are upheld. Nonetheless case material shows that some women at least have been able to use both the informal and formal justice systems even going to the *wereda* to defend their rights.
- 7.7 **NGOs have played a role in gender awareness and training.** This was noted in Afar where women's associations were active and had feeding programmes in schools which helped to allow girls to remain in school. In Welmera *wereda* of Oromia Hundee was involved in raising awareness of harmful customs notably violence against women with apparently impressive results.
- 7.8 **Inequalities in land holdings have been much reduced through land reforms. However, there are still significant differences and growing numbers of dissatisfied landless youth with limited land available for redistribution.** In this study the case of the landless youth in Amhara who organised to request to be given part of the common grazing land for irrigation

is a case in point. It is also revealing that there were allegations that powerful people who had land were trying to be part of these groups to obtain more land.

- 7.9 **Clans structure is a feature of social organisation that is particularly strong in Afar.** Clan leaders and clan ties were found to be very important and neither the formal institutions nor NGO and donor initiatives could afford to ignore them and in fact always considered them as entry points, stake-holders. To get any decisions approved required the backing of clan leaders. Clanship is also relevant to some extent in Oromo areas, although other cross-cutting aspects include the age-grading gada system of customary authority and dispute resolution (operational at least in Lome *wereda*), spiritually-sanctioned dispute resolution institutions among the Macha (Knuttsen 1967), and voluntary associations (H. Lewis 1974).
- 7.10 **On the whole the communities have been largely from one ethnic group and one religion.** Issues that are found elsewhere of unequal power relations on the basis of ethnicity or religion are not salient issues (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Bevan and Pankhurst 2007).
- 7.11 **Likewise, marginalisation on the basis of occupation did not come up as a significant issue.** However, this is a prevalent aspect of domination of minorities throughout Ethiopia (Freeman and Pankhurst 2003).
- 7.12 **The study found a prevalent presence and influence of party structures.** There is an overlap in structures and personnel between government and party representatives. Concern over the limited separation between State and Party had already been an issue raised at the EPRDF's Fourth Congress in 2001 (Clark et al 2004). *Wereda* councilors in the study were all from the EPRDF party. Likewise most of the cabinet staff at *wereda* level were party members. At a *Kebele* level the same was true regarding the councils and cabinets, and many of the members of the local party structure were also in the *Kebele* administration holding key positions.
- 7.13 **At the recent 2008 elections in the study areas those who stood were all EPRDF candidates and people voted for all the presented candidates.** However this was not always the case elsewhere. The number of councilors has been increased considerably resulting in a very large number of persons in each *Kebele* being part of the council.
- 7.14 **Informal institutions on the whole do not have a direct role in Kebele wide decision making and social accountability,** except in the sphere of justice and conflict resolution, where they play a very active informal role.
- 7.15 **However, there are three main ways in which they are involved indirectly.** In effect therefore they have considerable influence and it would be a mistake to disregard their potential role in the design of PBS II as was the case in PBS I.
- 7.16 **First, the formal system often uses the meeting organised by the associations.** This is particularly the case with funeral associations as fora for passing messages and explaining issues.
- 7.17 **Second, members of associations learn skills in community accountability which could become relevant for social accountability.** This includes keeping and checking records of members and their contributions, keeping financial accounts, choosing leaders and holding them accountable,

devising statutes and bylaws, and generally participating in democratic practices.

- 7.18 **Third, and most importantly the members of the formal government system are also members of informal organisations.** This is particularly the case with burial associations and also often other associations such as credit or socio-religious ones. This means that they are able to discuss issues that come up in the informal settings of the associations, explain policies and decisions, and solicit opinions from their co-association members.
- 7.19 **These practices and overlaps are very important resources for wider social accountability.** It would therefore be important for the design of PBS II to make use of these resources particularly in the planning of community-run funds.
- 7.20 **Finally, in the sphere of justice informal institutions play a critical role.** This is primarily since they provide the means for people to resolve disputes in such a way that they can live in harmony together (Pankhurst and Getachew 2008). In effect the formal system relies very heavily on the informal system for justice delivery, as noted earlier from the very beginning in dealing with less serious cases, to providing evidence and ensuring that agreements are honoured and reconciliation achieved.

8. Sectoral Issues Analysis

Health

- 8.1. **Health posts are common in most of the rural *Kebeles* and clinics or health centres in urban *kebeles*.** The health posts are constructed through community participation, with *wereda* offices providing roofing iron sheets and nails. Complaints about the quality of the health post constructed in Abala were voiced with allegations of misuse of allocated budgets, although the complaint did not result in an investigation. In Amhara there are health clusters, one for five *kebeles*. In Oromia in the selected *Kebeles* the health posts were still under construction and people complained of distance to towns and the cost of private clinics.
- 8.2. **The extension workers are women according to the policy and have received training for 10 months and apprenticeship for two months giving them a 1 year certificate.** Some complaints were voiced by health workers that work conditions are not conducive and there is a lack of promotion or transfer practices. In Afar in Abala *wereda* there were complaints that the health workers stayed in town and did not come to the *Kebeles* regularly and even those living in the *Kebele* were not working regular hours, so that people had to go to find them in their houses. Complaints about the use of the ambulance service and the insistence on payments for fuel and driver's allowance to regional representatives were to no avail.
- 8.3. **Some criticisms from communities were expressed about the health workers' focus on preventative packages** with an emphasis on sanitation with little treatment except for malaria. People complained that this was not their local priority, and they had to go far for health treatment.

- 8.4. **There was a lack of enthusiasm expressed for the campaigns and quotas.** This was particularly in the case of the campaigns to build toilets and dig garbage areas.
- 8.5. **Complaints were voices about the lack of ability of the health workers to deliver children and their reliance on trained birth attendants.** Concerns were expressed about the dangers in cases of labour complications resulting in having to transport women in labour to towns.
- 8.6. **A recurrent complaint was that due to lack of drugs and curative services people had to walk long distances to obtain services in town.** However, government services and drugs were limited so that people had to go to private clinics incurring high costs.
- 8.7. **Overall there does not seem to be clear complaints procedures regarding health services.** People often rely on traditional healers or self healing as a first option. Travel to towns is sometimes difficult or costly, government services limited, and private services costly.
- 8.8. **The area of health service is one where people in the study communities feel that they are not getting the deal they would like.** However, it seems that people in the *Kebeles* do not see any means of complaining that could bring about improvements.
- 8.9. **The emphasis of health policy and practice on sanitation and other preventative packages does not seem to have gained broad support.** However, in Tigray at least, women expressed satisfaction with access to family planning.

Education

- 8.10. **The education sector is often better resourced, staffed and managed than other sectors.** The education sector receives a higher allocation particularly in Tigray. There are clusters for schools within *weredas* and the schools are staffed with qualified directors and teachers.
- 8.11. **There are clearer guidelines, mechanisms and local institutions involved than in other sectors.** At a local level there are parents-teachers associations and school boards that are involved in the management of schools. Teachers have clearer career paths and promotion procedures than other extension agents.
- 8.12. **Disciplinary procedures exist and complaints mechanisms against unfair measures are available and are sometimes used.** However, these mechanisms seem to be used mainly by teachers seeking redress rather than by community members, and measures against teachers and headmasters including dismissals seem to be largely initiated from the *wereda* level rather than by community action with limited involvement of the semi-formal institutions notably the boards and parent-teacher associations.
- 8.13. **There is often a strong willingness on the part of communities to mobilize for the construction of schools.** There is a positive attitude towards education and a local awareness of the costs and risks of sending children to schools further away. Communities are therefore often more than willing to contribute labour and sometimes cash for the construction of schools.

- 8.14. **A contradiction between agricultural labour and child schooling was noted in several regions and seems to have been partly resolved through a shift system.** Despite the policy of full time child education this is in contradiction with the need for child labour in agriculture, particularly at peak seasons. The shift system which was a popular demand in some *weredas* has been accepted and is a clear case of communities mobilizing to defend their interests.

Agriculture

- 8.15. **The development agents who are involved in sectoral planning and reporting and work primarily with model farmers to promote packages.** There are in principle three DAs in a *kebele* one of whom is specialised in crops, the second in livestock and the third in natural resources. There is sometimes a mismatch between supply and demand for certain packages, notably for livestock improvement.
- 8.16. **There are strong peasant concerns about the rising price of fertilizers, and lack of timely delivery.** The involvement of DAs in collecting fertilizer debt and labour organization on collective work notably terracing is unpopular and reduces trust in their role.
- 8.17. **Farmers training centers have been built but do not seem to be well attended.** There was some concern expressed that there was limited interest on the part of farmers to attend training as these competed with their labour needs and seemed to be a top-down form of training.
- 8.18. **Although in theory complaints can be made to DA supervisors this seems to be rare, though it has sometimes resulted in salary cuts.** Farmers raise issues of concern mainly with the *kebele* administration.
- 8.19. **Development agents complained about lack of opportunities for promotion and transfer.** There is sometimes a problem with extension workers not wanting to work in more remote areas.
- 8.20. **In Afar potential contradictions between pastoral and agricultural livelihoods with irrigated development are a cause for concern.** Particularly in Asayta *wereda* fears about shortage of grazing areas with the expansion of irrigation were voiced.
- 8.21. **Natural resources are considered under agriculture. Where *kebeles* are able to sell trees this has stimulated income and resulted in exemplary social accountability, as communities feel responsible for the use of the funds.** However, in some areas a system of forest guards seems to generate tensions and lack of a sense of ownership and community benefits from the resources.
- 8.22. **Land shortage is a serious issue and in some cases in Amhara landless youth have mobilized to request being granted land from communal grazing for irrigation.** The case material suggests that there is considerable mobilization and competition over land.

Water

- 8.23. **Water shortage seems to be a prevalent problem and the water sector seem less well organized and funded than other sectors.** In many cases attempts to dig water wells have failed despite considerable community labour. There also seems to be staff shortage and limited budget allocations to the water sector at a *wereda* level.
- 8.24. **Local level management with semi-formal committees often raises issues of accountability.** Water committees are involved in raising funds and employing water attendants and sometimes carrying out minor repairs. This has sometimes resulted in examples of admirable sub-community management although there were also cases of mismanagement and *wereda* investigation.
- 8.25. **Linkages between *kebele* and sub-*kebele* levels do not seem to be well developed in the water sector.** Water committees are often at a very local level with linkages to the *wereda* and limited involvement of *Kebele* institutions.
- 8.26. **Water pollution was a particularly serious problem in Lome *wereda* of Oromia Region.** Pollution of the Awash River from factories resulting in animal death and human disease is a serious problem about which communities have mobilized, through the *Kebele* administrations taking the matter to the *weredas*. However, the complaints have been ineffective because they are in contradiction with federal and regional investment priorities.
- 8.27. **Irrigation development is *kebeles* in Achefir *wereda* of Amhara region has been a source of tensions between up-stream and downstream users, and between traders brokers and farmers.** Water shortage has resulted in competition and tensions which were resolved with the involvement of both formal and customary institutions. Conflicts with traders and brokers who were setting prices disadvantaging farmers were subjects of petitions and appeals to *wereda* levels so far in vain.

Justice

- 8.28. **The justice sector is an overarching and cross-cutting sector, where individual level justice seems to work well involving informal collaboration between formal and customary institutions.** Taking cases to informal and formal justice institutions is well within the cultural traditions and the dual justice systems offer opportunities for citizens to obtain redress in one system if they do not obtain justice in the other. However, this can result in lack of coordination and people playing one system off the other. Nonetheless justice mechanisms work fairly well for individual justice and citizens can take cases to *wereda* courts if they are dissatisfied with *kebele* level justice.
- 8.29. **There is less mobilization over justice by interest groups, which are sometimes by disadvantaged groups or by localized groups competing over resources.** This sometimes takes the form of disadvantaged groups such as landless youth mobilizing to obtain land, or competition between different sub-areas within *kebeles* for the location of services such as health posts and schools or the digging of water wells. There are some cases of lack of transparency by *kebele* cabinets pointing to insufficient or inadequate mechanism to hold the *kebele* leadership accountable.

8.30. **Community wide mobilizations are rarer and are often *vis a vis* neighbouring communities over resources.** This can be over natural resources notably irrigation of rivers or over resources brought by government or NGOs such as the routing of roads.

9. Conclusions

The conclusions are grouped and presented in the following ten sub-sections:

- 1) General overall conclusions
- 2) A supply and government-led standardized service delivery model
- 3) *Wereda* and *kebele* linkages in planning, budgets and accountability
- 4) *Wereda* and *kebele* councils' oversight role
- 5) *Kebele* planning and funding for service delivery
- 6) The sectoralised approach to service delivery
- 7) The vision of social accountability as relating to budgets
- 8) Community-level organizations and inter-relations
- 9) Community-wide and intra-community mobilizations
- 10) Capacity, constraints and potential of community-initiated organisations

9.1. General overall conclusions

- 9.1.1. **The first phase of the Protection of Basic Services Project has considerably enhanced the capacity of *wereda* level service delivery. However, attempts to promote the role of citizens and their organisations in developing local level accountability have so far had limited impact**, at least in the *kebeles* and *weredas* included in this study. There is a long way to go in stimulating social accountability and the design of PBS Phase II needs to consider ways of involving communities and their organisations more constructively in improving grass-roots service delivery.
- 9.1.2. **Planning of services has successfully and rapidly moved downwards in from regions to *weredas*. However, service delivery impacts primarily at the third level, the *Kebele*, where involvement in planning, decision-making and accountability remains limited.** There is a need for planning of service delivery to focus more on the third level of *Kebeles*, where the interface between service provision and citizens and their community organisations actually takes place.
- 9.1.3. **The provision of services follows a standardized approach to delivery that does not give much consideration to regional and local variations and does not have a clear focus on poverty alleviation, and addressing the needs and rights of marginalised and disadvantaged groups.** The approach is largely undifferentiated and is not tailored to localized differential capacities and needs. Service delivery does not give much special attention to the extremely poor, the disabled, female-headed households, landless youth, marginalised groups of craftworkers, pastoralists, displaced groups etc. The PBS II design should consider ways of adapting programmes to local capacities and needs and empowering and involving disadvantaged and marginalised

groups in articulating their interests, mobilising as groups and promoting the tailoring of services to their needs.

- 9.1.4. The capacity of NGOs that are external to local communities to engage in facilitating grass-roots level social accountability is limited but the potential for involving community-initiated organisations is considerable and has remained largely untapped.** Despite attempts to involve NGOs in PBS I their engagement particularly in social accountability has been limited in part due to a late start, urban, national and highland concentrations and lack of an enabling environment and mutual trust with government. Some of these constraints may be relaxed but it is likely that there will be a capacity ceiling that will hinder scaling up and mainstreaming. However, the potential role of community-initiated organisations that are widespread and prevalent has so far been largely overlooked. This is partly because these micro-level organisations are often not visible or are considered to lack capacity. However, they have internal community accountability experience which can be relevant in the management of community funds and projects in collaboration with government and NGOs.
- 9.1.5. Community-initiated membership-based organisations have internal community accountability experience, are used as entry points by the formal system and have a high degree of personnel overlap with the formal system.** Community-initiated membership-based organisations for funerals, credit, and socio-religious organisation have been involved in fund-raising and management, democratic practices of internal leadership and accountability to members. They are being increasingly used as entry points for information exchange and rallying support by the formal and NGO structures, and there is a high degree of overlap in personnel between members of customary and formal and semi-formal institutions at a local level.
- 9.1.6. There are important regional and local variations in the types of community organisations and their differential capacity for engagement in social accountability.** This study reveals some commonalities but also important variations. Such differences were not taken into account in the design of PBS I where tailoring service delivery to local realities was not on the agenda. Moreover, the design tended to be largely standardised. PBS II should introduce more differentiated and locally context-specific approaches to social accountability initiatives that take into consideration grass-roots realities and varying capacities of government, non-government organisations and community-initiated organisations.

9.2. A SUPPLY AND GOVERNMENT-LED STANDARDIZED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

- 9.2.1. The current service delivery model can be characterised as following a largely top-down, supply-led, government-organised and standardised approach.** Planning and implementation follows flows designed from the region downwards, often based on regional targets that are set for *weredas*, with limited consideration of local conditions, potentials and constraints. This has constrained the capacity of citizens and their organisations to become engaged as effective partners in development and service delivery accountability. There should be scope to introduce into the PBS II design elements of a bottom-up, demand-led, community-organised, and differentiated context-specific

approach. Genuine community participation in decision making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, needs to be related to differential community needs and capacities.

- 9.2.2. **Planning of service delivery flows largely from region to *wereda* and the involvement of *kebeles* is constrained by a range of factors.** Regionally set targets and campaigns are often applied to *weredas* that further sub-divide these by *Kebele*. Effective *kebele* planning is constrained by limited resources for capital development, a largely sectoralised approach, timing bottlenecks in the gaps between budget releases and revised planning, limited transparency of *wereda* decision-making, partial oversight capacity of *wereda* councils, a culture of hierarchical relations, and the legacy of a history of mistrust of government-led interventions.

9.3. **WEREDA AND KEBELE LINKAGES IN PLANNING, BUDGETS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 9.3.1. **There is a disconnect between *wereda* and *kebele* levels, and an asymmetry in accountability, vertically downwards in planning and upwards in accountability.** Most planning is carried out downwards from the *wereda* level with limited involvement of *kebele* level planning, whereas accountability for implementation is largely upwards from the *kebele* to *wereda* levels, with limited downwards accountability of *wereda* structures. This leads to limited trust in government and lack of citizen's involvement in accountability through their own community-initiated institutions and organisations.
- 9.3.2. **There is a disjuncture between the planning and budget process at *wereda* and *kebele* levels.** The planning and budget processes seem to be undertaken separately with limited integration, and insufficient time once budgets are known to engage in effective budgetised community-led and inter-community negotiated planning. This would suggest the need for clearer budget calendars, earlier notification of budgets, greater discretion and decision-making over funds at sub-*wereda* and *kebele* levels, more involvement of *kebele* representatives in negotiated prioritisation, and strengthening the oversight role and independence of *wereda* and *kebele* councils.
- 9.3.3. **Complaints structures exist in theory but do not seem to be not used much by ordinary citizens within communities, who do not feel empowered to use such channels.** Recently introduced complaints mechanisms are not within the cultural traditions and seem not to be fully trusted. However, extension workers and civil servants sometimes use these mechanisms, although they tend to rely on going to higher levels notably the region to complain. Sometimes personal connections or party influence seem to be involved in how complaints are addressed. This would suggest that better information about rights could be useful and that the independence, confidentiality and transparency of complaint mechanisms need to be strengthened.

9.4. WEREDA AND *KEBELE* COUNCILS' OVERSIGHT ROLE

- 9.4.1. **The establishment of *wereda* and *kebele* councils is an important step forward. However, their effectiveness is constrained by limited resources.** *Wereda* and *kebele* councils are fairly recent and evolving institutions. Resource constraints relate to lack of budgets for basic operational costs.
- 9.4.2. **The role of *Wereda* and *Kebele* councils is also affected by capacity constraints.** These relate to limited experience, literacy and understanding of budgets, auditing, justice and separation of powers, and poor incentives for involvement in public service.
- 9.4.3. **The role of *Wereda* and *Kebele* councils is also affected by structural constraints.** Structural constraints relate to the dominance of the better qualified and remunerated cabinet, limited separation of powers between the executive and legislature, the predominance of a single party and overlap of state and party structures. The PBS II design should consider ways of strengthening the resources, capacity and independence of councils.

9.5. *KEBELE* PLANNING AND FUNDING FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

- 9.5.1. **Service delivery has an impact at a very local level of the *Kebele* and below. However, the bulk of the resources of PBS I went to bolstering *wereda* level capacity and extension services, with minimal investment at the *Kebele* level.** Most funding has gone into recurrent costs, primarily on salaries, and community level investment represents a limited proportion of the expenditures. Close to zero budgets for capital costs has limited the potential for the involvement of citizens and communities in decision-making in improving services and has reduced the community relevance of social accountability.
- 9.5.2. **Lack of discretionary funds renders citizens' engagement in planning and budgeting hypothetical or theoretical.** Expecting social accountability to take root in a context of limited visible investment reduces the local interest of citizens in the process. Budgets which are not disaggregated by recurrent and capital costs, and do not give citizens a handle on what will affect their communities are of limited local relevance, and *wereda* level planning is sometimes considered 'some one else's business' even by *Kebele* officials. There is therefore a need for PBS II to ensure that there are local investment funds and community development sub-projects over which communities and their organisations have decision-making.
- 9.5.3. **Where *Kebeles* have had access to funds, notably those generated from their own resources and used for collective resources, social accountability practices have already developed rapidly and sometimes very successfully.** There are cases where *kebeles* have made judicious use of funds derived for instance from cutting and sale of trees, or from fines imposed by social courts. This would suggest that there is a need to promote enabling communities to use income they generate or raise through levies to use for collective purposes, to be encouraged by providing a system of matching funds. This is necessary to promote effective local level planning which underpins social accountability agendas and can allow for community engagement and participation.

9.6. THE SECTORALISED APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY

- 9.6.1. **The sectoralised approach to service delivery has led to limited integrated and cross-sectoral planning and implementation at a *kebele* level.** Much of the planning and implementation from *wereda* to *kebele* levels is organised on a sectoral basis. Even where some *kebele* level integrated planning takes place this is often overlooked due to sectoral planning or becomes meaningless due to limited funds for *Kebele* level activities.
- 9.6.2. **The recent introduction of the post of *Kebele* manager can to some extent help to overcome the sectoralised format or service delivery.** However, there is a need to further develop inter-linkages and cross-sectoral planning for instance between health, water and sanitation; agriculture, irrigation, health and sanitation; health and natural resource management, and justice as an overarching and cross-cutting sector.

9.7. THE VISION OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AS RELATING TO BUDGETS

- 9.7.1. **There is a prevalent assumption that accountability can be limited to financial accountability and budgets.** Much of the discussion about accountability within the administration at *wereda* level relates almost exclusively to budgets and financial management. However, this is an area which is more difficult for citizens to comprehend particularly when budgetisation is sectoralised and *wereda*-led, and the implications for local communities on the ground are not clearly shown
- 9.7.2. **Broader and more locally relevant issues in effective localized planning are not sufficiently addressed.** The debate needs to be broadened to take account of a more locally relevant issues notably village level justice, legal literacy, collective savings and investment, addressing marginalisation, knowledge of service standards and rights and obligations etc.

9.8. COMMUNITY-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS AND INTER-RELATIONS

- 9.8.1. **The organisational landscape at the local level includes three basic forms: a) formal government structures, b) semi-formal committees set up by government or NGOs and c) community initiated membership-based associations and customary institutions. Limited linkages between these structures has constrained partnership, participation and accountability.** There are regional and local variations in the types of organisations that exist and in the forms of inter-relations between them. The design of PBS needs to be more sensitive to these differences, map local institutional profiles, understand the strengths and weaknesses of different structures, appreciate the local power dynamics and actively promote potential partnerships between the different localised organisational forms. The activities of NGOs and donors funded projects should be better integrated into *wereda* planning to enhance equitable coverage, avoid duplication and ensure accountability transparency.
- 9.8.2. **Horizontal linkages at the *kebele* level between government structures and community-initiated institutions are informally robust in the justice sector though not officially recognised.** At local level the formal system relies heavily on customary structures for justice delivery, which has reduced the case load that the formal system has to deal with. Minor cases are resolved

by elders, who bring serious cases to social courts and act as witnesses. Cases are sent back to elders for reconciliation and ensuring that agreements are honoured. This unofficial *de facto* collaboration is not sufficiently recognised and the partnership could be further developed, while ensuring that the autonomy and legitimacy of customary institutions is not eroded and that that women's and minority rights are protected.

9.8.3. **The justice system at a local level involves unofficial partnerships between Kebele social courts, and customary institutions and in serious cases wereda courts.** Processes and procedures for *individual* justice are institutionalised and work fairly well in linking formal and customary institutions and resolving conflicts in restitutive ways that ensure that community members can continue to live together in peace. *Collective* community-wide mobilisation is more difficult, particularly over service delivery where there are limited traditions and resources for community engagement. The ability of customary justice to reconcile litigants and reduce conflict is an important resource for negotiation and conflict resolution over service delivery. There is a need to draw linkages between individual justice, sub-group interests, and community wide mobilisations.

9.8.4. **Government structures have had a predominant role leaving limited space for the genuine involvement of non-government structures.** PBS I focused largely on formal government institutions and some emerging initiatives but has not harnessed the potential of community-initiated institutions to play an active role in social accountability. The role of civil society organisations, in particular community-initiated organisations as capacity builders deserves greater consideration and advocacy over the establishment of an enabling environment. This should involve simplified registration and accounting procedures, the development of fair codes of conduct and responsible internal and external regulation.

9.9. COMMUNITY-WIDE AND INTRA-COMMUNITY MOBILIZATIONS

9.9.1 **Community-wide mobilisations are rare, and tend to involve defending interests vis-a-vis other communities.** The study revealed that community mobilisations have taken place for instance over the location of a road, up-stream downstream negotiations over river water usage, or divisions of *Kebele* boundaries and units. More effective engagement of communities particularly in service delivery would require a greater transparency and involvement of community representatives in *wereda* and sub-*wereda* integrated planning, and inter-community negotiation about prioritisation, phasing and collaboration over development projects.

9.9.2 **Intra-community mobilisations within kebeles are also not very common, but may involve disadvantaged groups or geographical defined sub-units competing over the location of facilities.** Cases identified in the study include the landless seeking to obtain land from communal grazing areas, and women forming their own groups. In terms of service delivery issues often revolve around the location of infrastructure (schools, health posts, water wells etc). Some cases of lack of transparency and consultation of *kebele* cabinets in this respect suggest the need for promoting greater popular participation in decision-making and ensuring that the executive can be held accountable by councils and citizen's organisations.

9.10. CAPACITY, CONSTRAINTS AND POTENTIAL OF COMMUNITY-INITIATED ORGANISATIONS

- 9.10.1 Social accountability is seen in terms of citizens' involvement in relation to government structures. However, community-initiated and led organisations have useful experience in relevant *internal community accountability* to their members.** Local community-initiated organisations are involved in collecting and managing funds raised from members, keeping accounts and presenting them to members, devising and approving statutes and bylaws, holding regular meetings, electing leaders and holding them accountable. This experience should be drawn upon in designing, managing and accounting for community-led funds.
- 9.10.2 The representation and involvement of women in formal and some customary structures is weak although women do have internally-accountable community-initiated gender-based and membership-based organisations.** The proportion of women in councils and administration at *wereda* and *Kebele* levels remains very low. The elders' councils are male-dominated though they have increasingly become more gender-sensitive and collaborate with the women's representatives of the formal structure. However, women's community initiated membership-based organisations are effective in providing mutual support, group cohesion and internal community accountability. PBS II should be concerned with promoting a greater involvement of women's in formal structures as well and involving their own organisations in gender-based community development funds.
- 9.10.3 The limited involvement to date of community-initiated institutions is arguably not primarily about lack of information or capacity but rather to do with lack of consultation, limited visibility and mutual mistrust.** Community-initiated organisations that are widespread have tended to be overlooked by the formal government and NGO sector alike. They have generally not been consulted or involved in development processes, due to their limited visibility as micro-organisations based on localised trust, and the context of mutual mistrust between formal and customary institutions. Government institutions have been powerful but often relied unofficially on the legitimacy of customary institutions particularly for dispute settlement. Partnerships between formal, informal and semi-formal structures should be a priority area in the PBS II design, while ensuring that the autonomy and legitimacy of customary institutions are not undermined through such collaboration.
- 9.10.4 The micro-scale of community initiated institutions and lack of coordination between them present particular challenges for their involvement in development.** PBSII can play a vital role in promoting inter-linkages among community-initiated institutions through networking, integration and forming umbrella organisations or unions. Semi-formal committees organised by government or NGOs can act as effective bridges between formal and informal and customary institutions.
- 9.10.5 Most of the community-initiated organisations and institutions have primary functions that are sectorally-specific.** These could form the basis for expansion and development of their role and sectoral partnerships with formal government and semi-formal externally-initiated committees. Sectoral primary functions vary. For instance:

- *iddirs* have been largely involved in funerary activities but have started working in health care. They could be relevant partners for health insurance initiatives.
- *Iqqub* manage rotating credit but have begun to include savings schemes. They could play a role in income-generating activities with matching funding.
- *Mehabers* involve wide networks across communities with strong internal ethics. They could be linked with parents-teachers associations and school boards.
- Customary irrigation groups have been involved in resolving conflicts between members and negotiations between up-stream and downstream users. They could become involved in wider water management, pollution and sanitation issues.
- *Shimgilinna* elders' groups are already closely associated informally with social courts and their role could be acknowledged and become more significant in service delivery as pioneered by the work of the NGO Hundee in involving senior citizens in committees along with *wereda* officials.
- Religious and clan leaders have been involved in reconciliation. They have also been used as entry points by government and NGOs in peace making and to reform customs to promote gender equality and reduce the effects of harmful customs. They could be more involved in development as long as their autonomy is not compromised.

10. Recommendations for the Design of PBS II

These recommendations are grouped into the following ten sub-sections:

- 1) Strengthening a bottom-up approach involving community organizations
- 2) Bridging the disconnect between *wereda* and *kebele* levels
- 3) Strengthening the *wereda* and *kebele* councils' oversight role
- 4) Enhancing *kebele* involvement in planning and decision-making
- 5) Funding and projectisation of community-led development
- 6) Broadening the vision and agenda of social accountability
- 7) Promoting linkages between PBS II and other government and donor initiatives
- 8) Adopting a cross-sectoral design and linkages with the justice sector
- 9) Involving women and promoting the interests of minorities and the disadvantaged
- 10) Promoting the involvement of community-initiated and led organizations.

10.1. STRENGTHENING A BOTTOM-UP APPROACH INVOLVING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- 10.1.1 **The design of PBS Phase II should enhance elements of a bottom-up, demand-led, and community-organized approach.** Genuine community participation in decision making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, requires a grass-roots approach in which planning starts at the local community level and is related to differential community needs and capacities.
- 10.1.2 **The PBS II design needs to consider ways of involving communities and their organizations more constructively in improving local service delivery.** Service delivery impacts at the local *kebele* level which should be more involved in PBS Phase II. This requires a better understanding of the capacities, constraints and potentials of local level formal, semi-formal and community initiated organizations and institutions.
- 10.1.3 **The PBS II design should introduce more differentiated and locally context-specific approaches to social accountability initiatives.** These should take into consideration local realities and differing capacities by Region, *Wereda* and *Kebele* of government, non-government organizations and community-initiated organizations.
- 10.1.4 **Planning of service delivery should avoid regionally determined and mechanically applied targets and campaigns.** There is a need to go beyond regionally determined formats and enhance greater discretion for *wereda* and *kebele* level involvement in planning, decision making, and evaluation of service delivery.

10.2. BRIDGING THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN WEREDA AND KEBELE LEVELS

- 10.2.1 **The connections between *wereda* and *kebele* levels should be strengthened.** This requires improving upwards planning and downwards accountability. This is important so that citizens and their own community-initiated institutions and organisations can become more involved in decision-making and accountability over service delivery.
- 10.2.2 **The linkages between the planning and budget process at *wereda* and *kebele* levels needs to be enhanced.** This requires clearer budget calendars, earlier notification of budgets, greater discretion and decision-making over funds at sub-*wereda* and *kebele* levels, more involvement of *kebele* representatives in negotiated prioritisation, and strengthening the oversight role and independence of *wereda* and *kebele* councils.
- 10.2.3 **Improving technical processes and transparency in service delivery.** This should involve reducing bottlenecks in the gaps between budget releases and revised planning, increasing transparency of *wereda* decision-making, and enhancing oversight capacity of *wereda* councils.
- 10.2.4 **Sub-*wereda* structures (*neus wereda*) could be involved as bridges.** Sub-*wereda* clusters already operate in some *weredas* in health and education service delivery. Enhancing the role of these intermediary structures could be an interim step to full involvement of *Kebele* structures in development planning. It could also be a means to promote the involvement of community representatives in inter-community negotiation and dialogue over integrated community development prioritization.
- 10.2.5 **PBS II should promote greater involvement of community representatives in *wereda* and sub-*wereda* integrated planning.** This should involve facilitating inter-community negotiation about prioritisation, phasing and collaboration over development projects in sub-*wereda* and *wereda* level planning and decision-making.

10.3. STRENGTHENING THE WEREDA AND KEBELE COUNCILS' OVERSIGHT ROLE

- 10.3.1. **The PBS II design should consider ways of strengthening the capacity of councils at both *wereda* and *kebele* levels.** Capacity building should seek to address constraints relating to resources and capacity. This should include setting minimum operational costs, improving information flows within the Councils and with the Cabinets, promoting experience sharing, justice literacy training, budget and audit literacy, training in understanding and analyzing plans, budgets and reports, and better incentives for involvement in public service.
- 10.3.2. **The potential role of councils needs to be better understood among executives, non voting members and citizens and the community at large.** This could involve information and training provided not just to council members but also to members of the executive, civil society organizations that are involved as non-voting members and more generally to citizens and the wider community through media notably local radio.
- 10.3.3. **There is a need to consider ways of promoting the independence of councils.** This could involve training of members and employment of support staff, establishing clearer guidelines for the separation of powers between the

executive and council oversight role, and to reduce the overlap between state and party structures.

- 10.3.4. **The capacity of Kebele councils requires strengthening and their linkages with wereda councils should be improved.** Much of the focus of capacity building seems to have concentrated on the *wereda* level, and there is a need for strengthening capacity of *Kebele* councils where the interface with service delivery occurs. Linkages between *kebele* councils and *wereda* councils should also be improved.

10.4. ENHANCING KEBELE INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

- 10.4.1 **There is a need for planning and decision-making regarding services to focus more on Kebeles.** The interface between service provision and citizens and their community organisations actually takes place at the *kebele* level whereas most planning and decision-making takes place at the *wereda* level. A greater focus on *kebele* involvement would enhance participation and a sense of responsibility regarding service provision.
- 10.4.2 **Planning and implementation at kebele level should involve integrated cross sectoral approaches.** The current sectoralised approach to service delivery constrains integrated *Kebele* planning. Greater cross-sectoral linkages and inter-sectoral planning should be considered for instance between health, water and sanitation; agriculture, irrigation, health and sanitation; health and natural resource management.
- 10.4.3 **Avoiding the current constraints on kebele level planning and decision-making.** This requires earmarked resources for community level capital development, inter and cross sectoral integration, invigorating the role of *kebele* councilors, and executives in inter-*kebele* negotiation and prioritization of service delivery within *weredas*.
- 10.4.4 **Promoting values that are conducive to greater trust between citizens and the state.** There is a great need to foster adoption of values that counter the culture of hierarchical relations, and the legacy of a history of mistrust of government-led interventions. This could involve more regular meetings between *Wereda* and *Kebele* councils and executives and *Kebele* communities.
- 10.4.5 **PBS II should promote greater popular participation in kebele level decision-making to ensure that the executive can be held accountable by councils and citizen's organisations.** This should involve promoting greater transparency and involvement of councils, semi-formal and non-government organizations in oversight roles.

10.5. FUNDING AND PROJECTISATION OF COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

- 10.5.1. **PBS II should include funds that are earmarked for community development sub-projects.** Funding for service delivery should not be limited to recurrent costs. Local funds for development are required if communities are to be fully involved, empowered, responsible and involved in accountability.
- 10.5.2. **The disbursement, use and monitoring of local development funds should involve mechanisms ensuring that communities and their organisations are involved in decision-making and accountability.** Such projects should involve communities and sub-community organisations not just in sharing costs and providing labour as is often currently the case but also in the planning, implementation, use of funds, accounting, monitoring and evaluation which is necessary for genuine participation.
- 10.5.3. **Linkages between formal, semi-formal and informal organisations should be promoted in the management of community funds.** Linkages between government structures, government- and NGO-sponsored organisations, and community-initiated associations and institutions should be enhanced in the design and implementation of community funds. Committees involving the different partners and stakeholders could be an appropriate mechanism to ensure wider participation.
- 10.5.4. **Community funds should be first piloted to test different approaches on a limited scale with a view to upscaling and mainstreaming best practices.** This could be undertaken in target or sentinel *weredas* and within them model communities promoting integrated *Kebele* level planning involving confidence and trust-building through partnerships between formal government, informal customary and Non government organizations.
- 10.5.5. **There is a need to promote enabling communities to use income they generate or raise through levies for collective purposes.** Communities that have raised funds have often used these responsibly and to good effect. Promoting community revenue generation for local development can enhance accountability. This could be encouraged by providing a system of matching funds.

10.6. BROADENING THE VISION AND AGENDA OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- 10.6.1. **Broader and more locally relevant issues than simply financial accountability and budgets need to be considered.** This should include to issues such as village level justice, legal literacy, collective savings and investment, addressing marginalisation, knowledge of service standards and rights and obligations etc.
- 10.6.2. **PBS II should promote better information about standards and rights to services.** It is important to raise consciousness about national, regional and *wereda* service standards, rights of citizens to obtaining fair treatment in service provision, and the mechanisms and procedures for complaints.
- 10.6.3. **PBS II design should advocate greater independence, confidentiality and transparency of complaint mechanisms.** This is important to instill citizen's confidence in complaints mechanisms that are not within the hierarchical cultural values and traditions.

10.7. PROMOTING LINKAGES BETWEEN PBS II AND OTHER GOVERNMENT/DONOR INITIATIVES

- 10.7.1. **The PBS II design should include clearer linkages with the poverty reduction agenda.** The design should consider linkages with the PASDEP, PSNP and OFSP. In particular ways of empowering and involving disadvantaged and marginalised groups in articulating their interests, mobilising as groups and promoting the tailoring of services to their needs.
- 10.7.2. **The PBS II design should enable funding for strengthening the capacities of democratic institutions at regional level to be used to assist *wereda* councils, and consider linkages with PSCAP.** This should be carried out in all regions to enhance the broader understanding of the potential oversight role of *wereda* councils.
- 10.7.3. **Funding for the Multi-Donor Civil Society Support Programme should enable greater involvement of community organizations in service delivery.** The fund should enable local grass-roots organizations and community initiated membership-based associations to engage in community-led development and accountability.

10.8. ADOPTING A CROSS-SECTORAL DESIGN AND LINKAGES WITH THE JUSTICE SECTOR

- 10.8.1. **Planning and implementation at *kebele* level should involve integrated cross sectoral approaches.** The current sectoralised approach to service delivery constrains integrated *Kebele* planning. Greater cross-sectoral linkages and inter-sectoral planning should be considered for instance between health, water and sanitation; agriculture, irrigation, health and sanitation; health and natural resource management.
- 10.8.2. **PBS II initiatives should be linked with the justice sector since it cross-cuts sectoral interests and bridges divides.** The justice sector is potentially involved in all aspects of service delivery and can provide an overarching linkage between the different sectors notably regarding accountability.
- 10.8.3. **The design of PBS II should build on the success of individual local level justice to draw linkages between individual justice, sub-group interests, and community wide mobilisations.** The ability of customary justice to reconcile litigants and reduce conflict is an important resource for negotiation and conflict resolution over service delivery. Grass-roots justice delivery over a broad range of *individual* interests can be expanded to *group* rights, and serve as a springboard to initiate and stimulate *community* accountability initiatives over service delivery.
- 10.8.4. **The positive informal collaboration between formal and customary institutions in the justice sector deserve greater recognition and the partnership should be further developed.** The *de facto* role of customary institutions in reducing case-loads and the burden on the formal system can be enhanced through *de jure* recognition and greater collaboration. However, this should not compromise the autonomy and legitimacy of customary institutions and provision should be made to ensure that women's and minority rights are protected.

10.9 INVOLVING WOMEN AND PROMOTING INTERESTS OF MINORITIES AND DISADVANTAGED

- 10.9.1. **The design of PBS II should be concerned with promoting a greater involvement of women's in formal structures as well as involving their self-initiated organisations in gender-based community development funds.** This should involve not just increasing representation of women in formal institutions, but also providing training to women representatives including councilors, *kebele* officials, and social court members. It should also involve support to women's own organisations in mobilising over their rights and obtaining and managing gender-related community funds.
- 10.9.2. **The PBS II design should pay more attention to involving and catering to the needs of disadvantaged groups.** The requirements of sectors within communities with special needs and interests based on gender, age, disability etc, deserve greater consideration in designing targeted provision of service delivery. For instance the interests children in continuing education, of pregnant women in accessible delivery services, of landless youth in obtaining access to land and related services may be considered priority areas requiring further attention.
- 10.9.3. **The PBS II design should consider sub-wereda coverage of services and prioritise disadvantaged Kebeles.** This could be best achieved by enhancing negotiation between *Kebeles* competing over the location of facilities, and promoting greater access to services by disadvantaged or under-resources *kebeles*.
- 10.9.4. **The PBS II design should consider sub-kebele distribution of services and prioritise disadvantaged areas.** This could involve enhancing negotiation between sub-*kebeles* units regarding the location of facilities, and promoting greater access to services by disadvantaged or under-resources sub-units.

10.10. PROMOTING THE INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY-INITIATED AND LED ORGANIZATIONS

- 10.10.1 The experience of community-initiated membership-based organisations is an important resource that should be considered in the PBS II design.** The experience of community-initiated and led organisations for funerals, credit, and socio-religious organisation in fund-raising and management, democratic practices of leadership and internal accountability to members including devising and approving statutes, holding regular meetings, electing leaders and holding them accountable should be drawn upon in designing, managing and accounting for community-led funds and projects in collaboration with government and NGOs.
- 10.10.2 The role of civil society organisations, in particular community-initiated organisations as capacity builders deserves greater consideration and advocacy over the establishment of an enabling environment.** This depends on a genuine belief by government that an autonomous sector independent of the state has a useful role to play and a willingness to open up the space to partnerships. This should involve greater recognition of the potential role CSOs can play, establishment of procedures for their involvement, simplified registration and accounting procedures, development of fair codes of conduct and responsible internal and external regulation, easier access to land for offices and development purposes, and promotion and replication of model partnerships.
- 10.10.3 The design of PBS needs to be more sensitive to differences in types of local institutions and their social accountability capacities, constraints and potentials.** There is a need to map local institutional profiles at a local level and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of different structures and appreciate the local power dynamics. The constraints and potentials of local institutions differ and need to be taken into consideration in designing a locally-differentiated approach to service delivery.
- 10.10.4 PBS II should consider ways of promoting partnerships between the range of community level organisations.** There is a need to actively promote potential partnerships in service delivery and accountability between the different localised organisational forms. This requires coordination between formal, semi-formal, informal and customary associations, organizations and institutions. Semi-formal committees can act as bridges between formal and informal customary institutions. However, care should be taken ensure that the autonomy and legitimacy of customary institutions are not undermined through such collaboration.
- 10.10.5 PBS II can play a crucial role in promoting inter-linkages among community-initiated institutions.** This can involve networking, integration and promoting the formation of umbrella organisations or unions, as is already happening in some initiatives by government, NGOs and self-initiated groupings particularly among urban *iddirs*. It is important that where external interventions are involved in such networking the autonomy of community institutions is not undermined and that their independence from interference is guaranteed.
- 10.10.6 The sectorally-specific primary functions of most community-initiated institutions can serve as important principles for partnerships.** This can involve partnerships with formal and semi-formal institutions, government and NGOs for the development and expansion of their role. For example:

- ***Iddirs* are primarily involved in burial, but have already revealed their potential as partners in wider development.** In a conducive environment they could become much more important partners in local development of all kinds notably in health care and could potentially play a key role in moving from funerary to health insurance.
- ***Iqqub* have primary roles in credit and savings and are potentially important in developing community savings.** They could become viable partners in community-level investment and income-generating activities especially with matching funding. Furthermore linkages could be established between them and with the banking sector.
- ***Migrants associations* are important in helping migrants cope with difficulties of living in towns but are also involved in development of the areas they come from.** Some even have networks with the Ethiopian Diaspora. They clearly have a great potential as engines of development especially in enhancing urban-rural linkages.
- ***Mehaber* socio-religious groupings have strong moral ethical values and could be involved in various ways in social accountability.** For instance in the education sector they could be involved in linkages with semi-formal institutions such as parent-teachers associations and school boards.
- **Customary dispute resolution institutions have collaborated with the formal justice sector and reduced case-loads.** These institutions' role could be better acknowledged and collaboration with the formal justice sector enhanced. They could also play a greater role in avoiding conflict and enhancing peace and reconciliation and have a more significant role in service delivery as pioneered by the work of Hundee, in involving senior citizens in committees along with *wereda* officials in planning, implementing and monitoring local development.
- **Customary irrigation groups can become involved in wider water management, pollution and sanitation issues.** Irrigation users groups can mobilize to address issues to do with water sharing and conflict resolution and advocacy regarding potential threats from investment projects resulting in water pollution or shortage.
- **Religious and clan leaders can be involved in reform of customs to promote gender equality and reduce the effects of harmful customs.** Religious and clan leaders have a considerable following and there have already been useful precedents of Government and NGOs involving them in awareness raising for instance around HIV/AIDS, gender and harmful customs. There is considerable potential for this role to be enhanced as long as their autonomy is not compromised.

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Appendix 1

Enhancing understanding of local accountability mechanism in Ethiopia

Protecting Basic Services Project PBS II preparation Study

Field methods guidelines and checklist

The procedure involves an iteration between two levels in each of two woredas. The main work is in the two Kebeles sandwiched between interviews at the woreda level at the beginning and end of the fieldwork: 1) starting at the woreda, 2) moving down to the two kebeles in each woreda in turn (except in the second (new) Afar woreda where the study will only be done in one kebele) and then 3) back to the woreda. The procedure repeated in the second wereda (except for the Tigray case where each researcher will work in one woreda, with Hadera working in addition on women's issues and Yohannes working in a third Kebele).

There are five stages, the first and last at the woreda level: 1) woreda level follow-up, gap-filling and checking, 2) exploring issues, power relations, mobilisations, actors, institutions, conflicts, mechanisms and processes, 3) Selection of issues/cases for follow up, 4) Interview with formal, customary and emerging institutions, 5) Final follow up at woreda level.

Researchers are to use their initiative and skills to analyse and select issues, mobilisations, conflicts etc to follow up in consultation with Alula at the different stages. We are interested in understanding the local power structures and relations between different types of institutions, particularly in mobilisations around service delivery.

In describing the power structure you should pay special attention to the question of the extent of separation of power notably between council and cabinet and how this may impact on service delivery. It is also vital that you consider the constraints on women and marginalised groups to articulate and promote their interests and biases in service delivery.

We would like to you follow up on cases of oversight and conflicts regarding service provision and dismissals and also conflicts over community labour and work. We are interested in understanding transparency and accountability and the leeway for those in authority at Kebele and Wereda level to make and implement decisions in practice following up on specific cases rather than the theory of how these structures and processes are meant to work or might work in hypothetical cases. We also want to understand the space for those who are not in positions of authority to question decisions made by those in power.

The cases should be described as narratives accounts presenting the actors, events, sequences, processes, mobilisations, oppositions, alliances etc. As far as possible you should check documentary evidence of letter, petitions minutes etc for the selected cases. Cases should be selected as far as possible which have matured after a period of mobilisation and have been concluded. It is important that you consider both successful and failure cases.

There are a range of people to interview some of which are considered mandatory and others optional for researchers to chose depending on the topics/cases you select. Please consider that interviewees often have several roles and positions, sometimes in both formal, customary or also emerging institutions. Interviewees should be asked about topics they can be expected to know about but also about the issues, conflicts, mobilisations that have been selected for follow up.

We are interested in understanding social accountability issues as processes over time involving actors involved in mobilisations, using a range of formal, customary and emerging institutions and mechanisms in a variety of ways depending on their social position (gender, age, wealth, and other social statuses as appropriate (religion, ethnicity, clan caste). You should provide a simple outline of the social profile of each of interviewees.

The report will include the following outputs/items/sections:

- 1) interview reports (as raw data appended to the report),
- 2) the documents obtained and interview explanations around them (appended),
- 3) narrative accounts of the selected issues/mobilisations, forming the main component
- 4) a summary analysis of formal, customary and emerging institutions + their inter-relations
- 5) a summary analysis of the involvement of institutions in social accountability
- 6) a summary analysis of power dynamics and actors, decision-makers and marginalised.
- 7) a summary analysis of kebele/wereda interactions, based on the cases
- 8) a summary analysis of sectoral issues, based on the issues
- 9) brief conclusions on social accountability on the ground.
- 10) brief suggestions for practical measure to improve PBS II.
- 11) a list of the interviewees appended with their social profile data: sex, age (rough), education, wealth, ethnicity, religion, clan and caste, as relevant, and institutional positions in formal, informal or emerging institutions.

A simple model reporting format including these elements will be designed and provided.

1. Woreda level

Stage 1: Follow up, gap-filling and checking

Follow up on obtaining documentation and information regarding budgets, plans, demands from kebeles, reports by sectors, notification posted
clarify the calendar of budgeting planning procedures, obtaining and using the block grant. (both last year and current year)

Refer to provided questionnaire for field research - grey document about the documents.
Refer to the report of the visit on any issues lacking clarity or requiring follow up notably regarding oversight.

check on any NGO/Donor involvement in social accountability initiatives defined broadly.

Report progress to Alula including difficulties and how to overcome them.

2. Kebele level

Stage 2: exploring issues, power relations, mobilisations, actors, institutions, conflicts, mechanisms and processes

Explore the major issues around service delivery and social accountability.

Beware of the power dimensions and silences in community meetings and focus group discussions, and consider informal methods including walking through the community, visiting sectoral interventions (health, education, water etc) and talking to individuals from different genderages at random.

Analyse power dimension of identified problems. For whom it is a problem

Check interests of marginalised categories (women, children, minorities etc)

Check sectorally about 1) health, 2) education, 3) water and sanitation, 4) agriculture and 5) justice

Prioritise the first five issues to investigate, taking into account issues that are of wide community concern but also those of the marginalised.

consider mobilisations around service delivery

identify who the actors are (for, against, indifferent; benefiting losing, neither)

Report on exploration stage to Alula

Stage 3: Selection of issues/cases for follow up

Select three cases to investigate further and one of these for in-depth investigation. Consider conflicts and the institutions, mechanisms and processes for dealing with them. Make sure that when you interview representatives of the formal, customary, or emerging/NGO structures that you enquire about the relationships between them in the process and mechanisms for social mobilisation.

Conflict case: Select one conflict case ideally relating to 1) dismissals, 2) service provision and 3) over community labour mobilisation.

Consider addressing different issues in the second kebele

Consult with Alula about your initial identification of problems, ranking and selection of issues to investigate further in each Kebele.

Stage 4: Interview with formal customary and emerging institutions

Follow up on selected issues/mobilisations/conflicts

establish a timeline of events, actors, processes, and mechanisms in mobilisations over the past decade and especially in the last couple of years during the PBS I period.

Discuss the selected cases with actors in the formal and formal structure and where relevant emerging social accountability initiatives by NGOs/donors.

Make sure that when you interview representatives of the formal, customary, or emerging/NGO structures that you enquire about the relationships between them in the process and mechanisms for social mobilisation.

Where you do focus group discussions make sure you interview two members afterwards separately, one of those who was vocal and one silent.

In both the formal and informal there are institutions/representatives that must be interviewed and others that you can choose depending on the issue/mobilisation you are following up on.

Consult with Alula about your selections.

Formal structures that must be interviewed:

1) Kebele administration/cabinet FDG 2) Kebele chairman, 3) Kebele Secretary, 4) social court male member, 5) social court female member, 6) women's affairs rep, 7) Kebele manager, 8) Kebele council speaker, 9) male woreda council representative, 10) female woreda council representative, 9) sub-kebele representative, 11) party member, 12) former kebele administration member.

Pay special attention to understanding **new** institutions and roles such as the Kebele manager, and Kebele council speaker.

Make sure to enquire about the sub-Kebele levels of mobilisation.

Formal structures additional depending on the issues

1) Development agent, 2) director/teacher, 3) health worker, 4) education committee, 5) Parent-teachers association, 6) youth association, 7) representative from woreda for women's affairs, 7) man standing for election, 8) woman standing for election, 9) cooperatives member, 10) land registration committee, 11) micro-finance committee, 12) water committee member, 13) water pump attendant, 14) other.

Customary structures that must be interviewed

1) elders' council FDG 2) vocal elder, 3) silent elder 4) funeral association, 5) socio-religious group male (e.g. mehaber) 6) socio-religious group female (e.g. butter group) 7) religious leader.

Customary structures additional depending on the issues

1) credit association (iqub), 2) women's credit group, 3) traditional healer, 4) traditional midwife, 5) kinship leader, 6) clan leader 7) agricultural group model farmer, 8) natural resource management group, 9) grazing group, 10) irrigation group, 11) forest resource users' group, 12) other.

Emerging social accountability initiatives by NGOs and Donors

1) representative at Kebele level (if available), 2) beneficiary women, 3) beneficiary man, 4) non beneficiary. If relevant 5) beneficiary elder, 6) beneficiary child, 7) beneficiary orphan, 8) beneficiary AIDS patient, 9) beneficiary FHH, 10) beneficiary disabled. 11) other beneficiary.

Ascertain the social position of the NGO representatives and to what extent they also have other formal and informal roles to understand potential overlaps.

For the conflict case follow through the story of the case: you should interview 1) defendant, 2) plaintiff, 3) informal mediator and 4) formal mediator

Establish a timeline and sequence of events and decisions in the case, check any documentary evidence, petitions, minutes, appeals etc and describe the case as a narrative.

report to Alula on main findings after during work in each Kebele

3. Woreda level

Stage 5: Final follow up at woreda level

- 3.1. Discussion with woreda officials about planning documents and changes in implementation.
- 3.2. Meeting with social accountability initiatives representatives NGOs and check data obtained from Kebele level.
- 3.3. follow up on issues that came from the kebeles regarding the identified mobilisations with relevant wereda administrators and sectoral heads
- 3.4. cross-check information that you have obtained from the Kebele regarding the cases you selected sectorally.
- 3.5. Report to Alula on main findings and writing up plans.

Appendix 2

Enhancing understanding of local accountability mechanism in Ethiopia Protecting Basic Services Project PBS II preparation Study

Finalised Reporting Format for Regional Studies

1. Methods

- 1.1. Interviews and FGDs at wereda level
- 1.2. Interviews and FGDs at kebele level
- 1.3. Observations by researcher
- 1.4. Identification of locally salient issues
- 1.5. Process of selecting cases/mobilisations/conflicts for follow up
- 1.6. Procedure in following up cases
- 1.7. Return visit to wereda
- 1.8. Social accountability initiatives (NGOs donors)
- 1.9. Problems encountered
- 1.10. Ways problems were addressed

2. The setting

- 2.1. Introducing the weredas
 - 2.1.1. Location
 - 2.1.2. Characteristics
 - 2.1.3. Comparison between weredas
- 2.2. Introducing the kebele(s)
 - 2.2.1. Location
 - 2.2.2. Characteristics
 - 2.2.3. Comparison between kebeles

3. Wereda level findings

- 3.1. Planning and budgets (approval, notification, execution, monitoring)
- 3.2. Bank accounts, auditing and Inspection
- 3.3. Civil Service management (hiring, firing, promotion, demotion, relocation)
- 3.4. Sectoral: reporting, planning, hiring, monitoring
- 3.5. Councils:
composition, role, membership selection, leadership, relations with wereda, relations with kebeles.
- 3.6. Role of Wereda speaker
- 3.7. Council oversight
- 3.8. Complaints mechanisms in action
- 3.9. Social accountability initiatives (NGO and donor activities)
- 3.10. Response on issues selected for follow up (after the Kebele level investigation)
- 3.11. Researcher's comments

4. Relations and interactions between Regional, Wereda and Kebele levels

- 4.1. Information flows from Region to Wereda to Kebele (from whom, when, what?)
- 4.2. Information flows from Kebele to Wereda to region (from whom, when about what?)
- 4.3. Instructions from Regional and Wereda level (from whom, when about what?)

5. Analysis of formal, customary and non-government institutions at Kebele level

- 5.1. Formal institutions (at Kebele level)
Kebele cabinet, manager, council, speaker, social court, party,
Extension agents, DA, health, headmasters, teachers etc
sub Kebele structures, (got etc), committees (security, peace conflict resolution, resource management etc)
 - 5.1.1 Name, role, establishment, composition, leadership, membership, rules, sanctions.

- 5.2. Customary institutions (at Kebele and sub-Kebele levels)
- 5.2.1 Name, role, establishment, composition, leadership, membership, rules, sanctions.
- 5.3. Non-government institutions (at Kebele and sub-Kebele levels)
- 5.3.1 Name, role, establishment, composition, leadership, membership, rules, sanctions.
- 5.4. Semi formal institutions (at Kebele and sub-Kebele levels)
mass associations farmers, women, youth, coops, water irrigation committees, credit groups,
- 5.4.1. Name, role, establishment, composition, leadership, membership, rules, sanctions.

6. Inter-relations between institutions

- 6.1. Inter-relations between the institutions
- 6.1.1. Inter-relations between the formal and the customary
- 6.1.2. Inter-relations between the formal and the non-government
- 6.1.3. Inter-relations between the customary and the non-government
- 6.1.4. Inter-relations between formal and semi-formal
- 6.1.5. Inter-relations between customary and semi-formal
- 6.1.6. Inter-relations between non-government and semi-formal
- 6.1.7. Inter-relations between all four (division of labour, collaboration, separate jurisdiction, lack of coordination, competition, conflict)

7. Narrative accounts of selected issues/mobilisations

- 7.1. The five selected issues and their prioritisation (dominant and marginalised)
- 7.2. The three issues/mobilisations selected for follow up
- 7.3. Conflict case
- 7.4. In each case timeline of events and actions
- 7.5. Who were the actors (for, against, indifferent, what did they do? coalitions?)
- 7.6. How was the issue addressed over time and who was approached, involved?
- 7.7. Role of formal and customary and NGO actors
- 7.8. Outcomes
- 7.9. Researcher's comments

8. Analysis of the involvement of institutions in social accountability

- 8.1. Involvement of formal institutions
- 8.2. Involvement of customary institutions
- 8.3. Involvement of non-government institutions
- 8.4. Inter-relations of institutions in social accountability
- 8.5. Constraints on institutional involvement in social accountability.

9. Analysis of local level power dynamics

- 9.1. Power relations between wereda and kebele levels
- 9.2. Gender relations in practice at wereda and kebele level
- 9.3. Age relations in practice
- 9.4. Wealth relations in practice
- 9.5. Other social relations (education, class, party membership, ethnicity, religion, clan, caste)
- 9.6. Representation and decision-making
- 9.7. Forms of domination and marginalisation
- 9.8. Power relations between formal, semi-formal and customary institutions
- 9.9. Analysis of conflict and conflict resolution.

10. Analysis of sectoral issues

- 10.1. Health and sanitation
- 10.2. Education
- 10.3. Agriculture and natural resources
- 10.4. Water
- 10.5. Justice

11. Conclusions on social accountability

12. Suggestions for practical measures to improve PBS II.

Appendices

1. Interview reports

- 1.1. profile of interviewee: sex, age (rough), education, wealth, ethnicity, religion, clan and caste, as relevant, and institutional positions in formal, informal or emerging institutions.
- 1.2. interview data
- 1.3. Researcher's comments
(repeat for each interview)

2. Focus group discussions

- 2.1. Formation of Focus group
- 2.2. Composition of Focus group
- 2.3. Focus group data
- 2.4. Focus groups dynamics (who spoke who silent etc)
- 2.5. Researcher's comments
(repeat for each interview)

3. Documents obtained

- 3.1. List of documents and actual documents appended
- 3.2. Explanation of documents by those who provided them
- 3.3. Discussion of differences between documents
(earlier and later plans, 5 and 1 year plans, provisional and actual budgets etc)
- 3.4. Researcher's comments
(repeat for each interview)

Appendix 3:

Draft Report Writing Guidelines for PBS Study Team

1. From the debriefing session yesterday I realise that you have collected a large amount of data and it will not be possible to include it all in the first draft.
2. Given the very tight time constraint, please focus on producing a draft report of about 35 pages which includes a summary on all the 11 sections of the format.
3. You do not need to include the full appendices of data for the draft.
4. I need to receive your summaries ideally by Friday 17th but at the latest on Sunday 20th as I am expected to submit a summary by Monday 21st.
5. I have revised the reporting format by exchanging the order of two sections to make it more logical so that section 6 "*Relations and interaction between Regional, Wereda and Kebele levels*" come instead earlier as section 4, and the current section 4, "*Narrative accounts and selected issues/mobilisations*" comes later where section 6 was.
6. I am adding the following points to clarify what the focus of each of the sections should be to allow you to decide how to summarise them, and a rough guide of number of pages (single spaced); if short of space/time use bullet points.

Section titles, focus, rough number of pages

1. **Methods (2 pages)**
Focus: problems encountered, changes in methods, and how problems addressed
2. **The setting (2 pages)**
Focus: comparisons between *weredas* and/or between *kebeles*
3. **Wereda level findings (4 pages)**
Focus: differences between theory and practice, with earlier field report, gap filling
4. **Relations and interactions between Regional, Wereda and Kebele levels (3 p.)**
Focus: downwards and upwards flows and accountability; role descriptions.
5. **Analysis of formal, customary and emerging institutions and inter-relations (3 p.)**
Focus: description of the institutions, inter-relations between them
6. **Narrative accounts of selected issues/mobilisations (9 p.)**
Focus: description of the selected cases with time, actors, actions, outcomes
7. **Analysis of the involvement of institutions in social accountability (2. p)**
Focus: roles of different types of institutions, inter-relations and constraints
8. **Analysis of local level power dynamics (3 p)**
Focus: gender, age, wealth, education, status; marginalisation, formal-customary, conflict
9. **Analysis of sectoral issues (5 p)**
Focus: health, education, agriculture, natural resources, water, sanitation, justice
10. **Conclusions on social accountability (1 page)**
Focus: what emerges from 6,7,8,9.
11. **Suggestions for practical measures to improve PBS II. (1 page)**
Focus: practical improvements in design and implementation

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