Understanding the role of informal institutions in social accountability

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Acronyms

ACSI  Amhara Credit and Savings Institution
BMI   Body Mass Indices
CRDA  Christian Relief and Development Association
CSA   Central Statistic Authority
DA    Development Agent
DFID  Department for International Development (UK)
DPPA  Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency
EPRDF Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERA   Ethiopian Roads Authority
ESDP  Education Sector Development Plan
EU    European Union
FDRE  Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
HSDP  Health Sector Development Programme
HIV/AIDS Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
INGO International Non-Governmental Organisation
MDGs  Millennium Development Goals
MoFED Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NAP-GE National Action Plan – Gender
NRG   National Regional Government
NGO   Non-governmental Organisation
OCSI  Oromiya Savings and Credit Institution
PASDEP The Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PPA   Participatory Poverty Assessment
PTA   Parent Teachers Association
REST  Relief Society Tigray
SDPRP Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme
SIA   Social Impact Assessment
SNNPR Southern Nations and Nationalities and Peoples Regions
SSA   Sub-saharan Africa
ToR   Terms of Reference
UN    United Nations
US    United States

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Executive Summary

This background paper examines the existing evidence to:

- Explain the interaction and relationships between community organisations and formal organisations within the Woreda and Kebele that have responsibility for service delivery
- Assess whether there are particular challenges or opportunities for social accountability by involving community institutions in the delivery of agricultural extension, water supply, health and education services.

The paper gives a brief summary of vulnerability and risk in Ethiopia. The paper then looks at key formal and informal institutions working at Woreda, Kebele and community levels and draws out six examples from the literature to illustrate a variety of interactions between formal and informal institutions. These examples illustrate cases where collaboration has been largely successful and others where, for a variety of reasons, collaboration was constrained. The final section draws a number of conclusions, highlights issues that need be taken into account by outside agencies including government institutions when working with informal organisations, identifies a number of opportunities and entry points that may bring about increased social accountability through collaborative working, and suggests a number of areas where further discussion or action is required.

Decentralisation to the Woreda level potentially provides opportunities for greater accountability in decision making by bringing decision making closer to citizens. Decentralisation places increased emphasis on the importance of local level institutions but to date, much of the effort in decentralisation has focused on formal institutions. To be effective, however, formal organisations must be seen in the context of local social institutions. An understanding of the relationships between formal and informal institutions, and between informal institutions and their communities, is essential if formal institutions are to facilitate development at the local level.

Social capital, often built and maintained through collective action, plays a central role in the lives of many rural and urban Ethiopians helping to protect them from risk in an unpredictable environment. Institutions at community level in rural areas seen as of particular importance are schools, Iddirs and the Kebele administration. However evidence on the quality of relationships between informal and formal institutions is mixed. Informal institutions have a mistrust of outside agency, particularly of government. Despite this, there are examples where collaboration between formal and informal institutions has brought about improved service delivery and enhanced social accountability. In one case the Kebele administration supported a private enterprise to provide a rubbish collection service through assistance with registration, publicising the service and facilitating contacts with agencies providing training. In another case the PTA and Girls’ Advisory Committee have enhanced governance of local schools making schools more accountable to the local community. The PTA also was also able to enter into negotiations with the Woreda administration.

Traditional funeral associations, the Iddirs, are explored in more detail to assess which socio-economic groups they cater for, what forms the institutions take and how they have been adapted to take on new functions. A number of examples illustrate that Iddirs are capable of taking on new responsibilities and can cater for the poor though the poorest may be excluded. However obstacles were encountered. These include the bureaucratic difficulties of registering, the lack of recognition of associations and, at times, the lack of representativeness of the institution itself.
In working with informal institutions, the paper highlights the need for a clear understanding of the institution and the context in which it operates, attitudinal and behavioural change on the part of Woreda and Kebele officials and an analysis of government policy. The Kebele, as the lowest tier of the government structure, is seen as key to establishing trust between the state and its citizens.

Potential opportunities and entry points for outside agencies to work with informal institutions are identified as: key individuals such as agricultural extension agents (DAs) who reside within the Kebeles, the facilitation of inter-Kebele learning facilitated at Woreda level, regular exchanges between government officials and traditional leaders, joint training for representatives of informal and formal institutions, the use of the education sector to demonstrate female achievement and further identification of traditional informal organisations that have a track record of working with the poor.

Six main conclusions are drawn:
1. The recent history and power structures within Ethiopia have deep-rooted repercussions to the present day. Government structures have a history of centralised power and hierarchical control. Informal institutions have a mistrust of outside agency, particularly from government.
2. Social capital, often built and maintained through collective action, plays a central role in the lives of many rural and urban Ethiopians helping to protect them from risk in an unpredictable environment. Social capital is both a means to reducing vulnerability and an indicator of enhanced agency.
3. There is considerable potential for complimentarity between formal and informal institutions. The capacity is not available at Woreda and Kebele levels for government to fulfil all that is expected of them. It is therefore essential that efforts are made to build on the strengths of existing institutions. Where informal institutions are strong, there has historically been a temptation to see them as rivals to existing power structures or to exploit them in terms of provision of labour. Therefore attitudinal change is required on the part of formal institutions to see informal institutions as partners in development, for roles to be negotiated and interference to be avoided where it is not necessary, so that mutual trust can be developed.
4. There is lack of clarity around issues relating to the extent of informal institutions’ powers within the formal system. This lack of clarity prevents an enabling environment in which Woreda and Kebele are confident to partner informal institutions.
5. Informal institutions can adapt to take on new roles. However those working in partnership with them should be realistic about the limitations of the institutions’ remit and work at a pace that allows new roles to be integrated with the old.
6. Third party agencies such as NGOs and other aid agencies, have a role to play in supporting both local level administrations and informal institutions to form reciprocal and lasting working relationships.

A number of areas for future action are suggested:
1. **The development of trust in state organisations**
Examples where Kebeles have been able to play a facilitating role should be developed and shared. More controversially, the ‘controlling’ aspect of Kebele responsibilities should be revisited and revised where they are not necessary and up to date guidelines produced through Federal government.

2. **Creation of an enabling legal environment for non-governmental institutions and legal and/or ownership rights to assets**
Greater clarification is needed in the legal status of informal and community-based organisations including the ownership and/or user rights of assets (infrastructure, land, natural resources). To enable Woreda and Kebele administrations to consider partnership at the community level, they need to be clear about what can and cannot be done within the law. To empower community institutions to not only initiate but also to maintain a resource, greater clarity (and greater powers) to the community institution, either as sole custodians or in partnership with government, is likely to be needed to provide for future sustainability.

3. **Rural-urban linkages**

Movement of people, enhanced communication particularly through mobile phone technology (including text messaging and money transfer) should not be regarded with suspicion but seen as an area that government can enhance development. Kebele restrictions on movement, perceived or real, should be minimised.

4. **Hierarchy of systems**

A number of parallel systems are found involving informal and formal institutions, for example in the justice sector. However there are areas that present difficulties, in the justice system for example, in traditional perceptions of women’s rights. Working closely with key stakeholders, this is an area that needs further investigation.
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1 Introduction

The discussion below, based on existing evidence, aims to

- Explain the interaction and relationships between community organisations and formal organisations within the Woreda and Kebele that have responsibility for service delivery
- Assess whether there are particular challenges or opportunities for social accountability by involving community institutions in the delivery of agricultural extension, water supply, health and education services

The paper is intended as the starting point for discussion as to where collaboration between formal and informal organisations has been successful and why, and where relationships between these two sets of organisations have been less successful and why. The paper will identify constraints, and highlight areas where opportunities exist to maximise the benefits that can be derived from enhanced relationships. Enhanced relationships have the potential to maximise use of existing capacity from informal and formal sources at community level and increase social accountability to empower citizens to have greater control over the decisions that affect their lives.

Capacity at Woreda and Kebele levels is highly constrained. Decentralisation to the Woreda level potentially provides opportunities for greater accountability in decision making by bringing decision making closer to citizens. However such opportunities may be constrained by a number of factors including lack of capacity (unfilled positions, lack of skills and resources), a history of hierarchical government and at times, unclear policy. Communities themselves are frequently isolated, their members have low levels of literacy, formal education and lack material resources. From past experiences, they have had good reason to mistrust government and other structures outside their community. These issues are discussed further below.

However a number of working definitions are first provided:

**Institutions**

Institutions are defined as “the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction”\(^1\). They are the rules by which people have dealings (or not) and relate to each other. They are often resilient structures, often informal and the rules that govern these structures are usually unwritten. As such the term institution is used to describe social practices that are repeated and are sanctioned and maintained by social norms. Institutions are “patterns of behaviour”\(^2\) or “regularised patterns of behaviour”\(^3\). They shape human behaviour but are also shaped by the actions of individuals and groups\(^4\). In this paper they are seen as both constraining and enabling structures setting rules as to how an individual can behave but also enabling individuals to organise for collective action. Thus institutions are organisations but they also include the rules and regulations that govern individual and group behaviour.

**Formal Institutions**

In the context of this paper, formal institutions are taken to mean those institutions that are likely to function or have established links beyond the Woreda, as well as within, have written rules and refer, in the main to governmental bodies and NGOs (non-governmental organisations). Where relevant, private organisations will also be included.

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\(^1\) OECD (2006)  
\(^2\) O’Riordan and Jordan (1996) quoted by Yibabie (2001)  
\(^3\) Leach et al (1997) quoted by Yibabie (2001)  
\(^4\) Yibabie (2001)
Social accountability
Social accountability refers to society’s role in improving accountability\textsuperscript{5}. It is seen as an approach towards building accountability that relies on citizens and/or civil society organisations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability\textsuperscript{6}.

1.1 Approach

Reflecting the diversity of the country (see briefly below) there is a vast diversity of informal institutions and organisations. This paper therefore cannot and does not intend to attempt to cover all types of institution and organisation found at the local level to examine their relations with formal agencies. Instead examples from the literature will be used to illustrate lessons of successful and unsuccessful attempts in joint working between formal and informal organisations at Kebele and Woreda levels.

The paper first provides some background to vulnerability and risk in Ethiopia.

The paper then looks at key formal and informal institutions and organisations working at Woreda, Kebele and community levels and summarises their key functions.

This is followed by a section that picks out a number of examples to illustrate interactions between formal and informal organisations. Examples are chosen to provide a cross section of different contexts and levels of success. These examples are given in the form of brief case studies and are used to summarise opportunities and constraints experienced in collaboration between formal and informal institutions.

The final section looks at how change can be brought about together with recommendations for areas that need further development to provide further insights into possible roles in increasing social accountability.

2 Background

2.1 Vulnerability context

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa, after Nigeria, with a population estimated to be just over 71 million. The 2004 UN Human Development report ranks Ethiopia 170th out of 177 countries included in the Human Development Index, ranks 92 out of 95 on the Human Poverty Index, and 137th out of 144 on the gender-related Development Index.

Gini coefficients (a measure of equity of income distribution) were estimated at 0.26 for rural areas and 0.38 for urban areas. Income distribution is therefore more evenly distributed in both rural and urban areas compared to other Sub-Saharan African countries. Despite Gini coefficients showing a relative equity of income distribution, there are clear inequalities and a class of more wealthy people, notably in urban areas. Their comparative wealth is often based on trade. In rural areas, land inequality is high (Gini coefficient of 0.47) and a land-poor class has emerged, living on “hunger” plots\textsuperscript{7} and (World Bank, 2005)\textsuperscript{8}. Agriculture

\textsuperscript{5} Ackerman, 2005  
\textsuperscript{6} World Bank website. http://go.worldbank.org/YOUDF953D0  
\textsuperscript{7} “Hunger” plots – farm sizes insufficient to support the household. Size sufficient to support a family will depend upon terrain. About one fifth of all rural households (excluding SNNPR) do not manage to produce half of their annual cereal calorific need from their plots despite being mainly dependant on agriculture.  
\textsuperscript{8} However this somewhat contradicts the PPA (2005) which found land ownership to be relatively evenly distributed.
accounts for 45 per cent of GDP with agriculture providing the means for livelihood for more than eight out of ten people. Ethiopia is one of the least urbanised countries in the world.

Ethiopia requires continuously high levels of humanitarian and developmental assistance. Despite high levels of humanitarian and developmental assistance, due to the large population of Ethiopia, assistance per head is lower than that of many average African countries.

Risk permeates Ethiopia life. An assessment of vulnerability undertaken in 2004 looked at who are the poor and vulnerable and how and why individuals and households move into and out of poverty. At the macro level the most vulnerable groups include women, pastoralists, certain occupational groups, children, the elderly, the disabled, widows, the chronically sick, the resettled, the communities into which they have been resettled, those with HIV/AIDS and those who are affected by conflicts. Households and individuals move between different levels of poverty and well-being at different points in time and their life cycle.

Poverty and vulnerability in Ethiopia is multi-dimensional and the causes of poverty are multi-faceted. Participatory Poverty Assessments from Ethiopia, in which poor people themselves describe the elements of their poverty, commonly emphasise elements of poverty over and above those directly linked to income. Vulnerability is defined as comprising of “both exposure and sensitivity to livelihood shocks” (Devereux, 2002) or in the PPA (2005) as “living on the edge”. For a given set of risks it is frequently the varying asset status of households that determines how vulnerable they are to shocks that may “push them over the edge”. In much of the country, rainfall and weather patterns are unreliable and highly unpredictable. Government policies, implementation and local culture will also affect people’s ability to use their assets to protect themselves from falling (further) into poverty.

Communities in rural Ethiopia are also frequently isolated both in terms of geographical isolation and isolation from new ideas and influences. Only 13 per cent of rural population has a radio, three times less than Sub-Saharan African coverage and 87% of the rural population are not exposed to mass media (radio, TV, newspaper) at least once per week. Households are on average 10 km away from a dry weather road and, more importantly, 18 km from public transport services. 85% of the rural population have been continuously residing in the same Woreda as they were born.

2.2 Marginalised Groups

2.2.1 Gender Dimensions of Poverty and Empowerment

Ethiopia remains a patriarchal society with women’s role in decision making both within the home and in public spheres, in general, subservient to that of men. As noted above, Ethiopia scores particularly low on the UN’s Gender-relater Development Index. Against a range of indicators, women fair particularly badly even when compared with women in other parts of Africa. Regional variation does occur, for example, Customary marriage rules in the Oromo include parental arrangement of marriages, bridewealth, polygyny, widow inheritance, replacement of a dead wife with a sister, and allow for abduction. Amhara marriage rules allow for very early marriage, and divorce is frequent.

US$13 as compared to an average of US$23 for Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. World Bank 2005
10 World Bank 2005
11 Hobley, Jay and Mussa, 2004
12 World Bank 2005
13 Bevan et al 2005
While the Ethiopian constitution and more recent policy documents\textsuperscript{14} recognizes the equal rights of women and men, the traditional societal structure keeps women in a vulnerable position. Women still occupy a very small percentage of key government decision making positions: 7.7 percent in the House of Representatives and 13 percent in regional councils in 2000\textsuperscript{15}. In mixed gender traditional institutions, few positions are occupied by women.

Traditional harmful practices are common with 80 percent of women having undergone circumcision. Prejudice and violence against women is widespread. A Central Statistical Report\textsuperscript{16} found that acceptance of domestic violence was high amongst both men and women. Limited studies and police and media reports suggest that violence against women is high and increasing every year. About 25 percent of Ethiopian women have experienced rape\textsuperscript{17}. In many parts of the country there is a tradition of abduction and forced marriage, sometimes with the girl’s consent as in the case where a dowry cannot be afforded, but in many cases against her will. Prejudice pervades both informal and formal justice systems and is deeply embedded in traditional culture.

A heavy workload (on average, Ethiopian women work 15-18 hours per day and many rural domestic tasks are highly labour intensive) and early marriage (the average age of women at first marriage was 17.6 years in 1998) are common occurrences\textsuperscript{18}.

Overall literacy rates for women is considerably lower than for men: 34 per cent for women as compared with 49 per cent for men\textsuperscript{19}. Results from the Ministry of Education for 1999/2000 showed gross primary\textsuperscript{20} enrolment for boys and girls at 61 and 41 per cent respectively with a trend compared to the last year of data collection (1995/6) in favour of girls, particularly in rural areas.

Awareness of HIV/AIDS is said to have increased dramatically but is still lowest amongst the rural poor and younger women\textsuperscript{21} - younger women being the most vulnerable group to HIV/AIDS.

About one out of three women and one out of four mothers of children less than three years old have Body Mass Indices (BMI) that are less than 18.5 indicating that the level of chronic energy deficiency among adult women is relatively high in Ethiopia compared to other SSA countries.\textsuperscript{22}

Figures for those ill in the last two months were slightly higher for women as compared to men (26 per cent as compared to 24 per cent). More significant is the gender discrepancies in seeking treatment. 29 per cent of males reported to have been ill sought no treatment while 38 per cent of similar women sought no treatment. The group most likely not to seek treatment was women in the poorest quartile\textsuperscript{21}.

\textsuperscript{14} The national Policy for Women 1993, National Action Plan for Women (2005)
\textsuperscript{15} Ethiopia, A Country Status Report on Health and Poverty, World Bank and Ministry of Health, 2005
\textsuperscript{16} Central Statistical Authority (2001)
\textsuperscript{17} World Bank and Ministry of Health (2005)
\textsuperscript{18} The average age of marriage for all rural women between the ages of 20 to 49 years was 16.2 years. In Oromiya, the average age was 14.3 years. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey, 2001.
\textsuperscript{19} World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2005
\textsuperscript{20} Grades 1 to 8
\textsuperscript{21} AIDS in Ethiopia Fifth Report, Federal Ministry of Health (2004)
\textsuperscript{22} Ethiopia, A Country Status Report on Health and Poverty, World Bank and Ministry of Health, 2005
\textsuperscript{23} SDPRP, 2002
The relationship between gender of head of household and poverty is complex in rural areas\textsuperscript{24}. Although the probability of being poor is significantly higher when the household head is female, this is only so when other less measurable factors (age, education, labour, capacity, etc) are taken into account. Therefore taken alone there is little difference in poverty incidence according to gender of household head\textsuperscript{25} in rural areas. In urban areas, female-headed households are significantly more likely to be poor than male-headed counterparts. Reasons for this in urban areas are unclear. However one reason may be that women who migrate to town are less able to maintain old and build new social networks than those in rural areas.

2.2.2 Pastoralists

The lowlands, where most pastoralists are found, are estimated to constitute 56 per cent of Ethiopia’s land mass\textsuperscript{26}. However against a range of indicators in the health, education and water sectors these areas fall well below national averages.

The PASDEP and recent sectoral plans, most notably education and water give recognition to the importance of mobility for pastoral groups in maintaining their livelihoods. The PASDEP see the need “a special effort in pastoral areas tailored to their socio-economic conditions”. In education the need for the introduction of ‘alternative’ schools, mobile schools in pastoral and semi-agricultural areas is recommended\textsuperscript{27}.

However at the country’s Regional administrative level, strategies continue to see development in pastoral areas through settled farming. In Afar the development objective is one of “changing the economic base of the region through a gradual shift from nomadic activity to settled agricultural farming”\textsuperscript{28}. For Somali the development strategy is, in summary, to encourage a shift from pastoral (nomadic) towards a settled farming through developing livestock and increasing the number of farming cooperatives.

Historically there have been a number of attempts to co-opt informal institutions into a working relationship with government bodies including in pastoral areas. Hogg (1997) describes the relationship as being based on extraction and authoritarianism – “whenever livestock have been needed by the centre it has been extracted under quota, when land is needed to develop irrigations schemes, as Ali Said points out for the Afar living in the middle Awash Valley, it has been taken without compensation”.

Since 2003 there Constitutional Provision for an Assembly of Elders and Ethnic leaders. However there a number of questions over their representativeness. Lister (2004) notes a number of issues: the cooption of pastoralist leaders into government systems results in them being seen as “part of the system” and no longer truly part of the communities that they

\textsuperscript{24} Two recent studies (Ethiopian Roads Authority/SIDA 2005, Ethiopian Roads Authority/World Bank 2004 ) in rural area found 26% and 18% of households to be headed by women. It should perhaps be noted that even the term “female-headed households” reinforces stereotypes of women and men not being able to share the head of the household
\textsuperscript{25} SDPRP, 2002
\textsuperscript{26} Water Sector Development Programme, 2001
\textsuperscript{27} Education Sector Plan (ESDP III) covering 2005/6 to 2009/10. Ministry of Education, 2005
represent. Pastoralist leaders are said to have some influence at levels of the Woreda and below but there influence beyond these levels is said to be limited\textsuperscript{29}.

### 2.3 Institutional Diversity

It is worth stressing that Ethiopia is a country with considerable agro-ecological and social diversity. Although the Oromo, Amhara, and Tigreans make up more than three-quarters of the population, it is estimated that there are more than 77 different ethnic groups with their own distinct languages within Ethiopia. Some of these have as few as 10,000 members. There is also considerable livelihood and political complexity: a function of its diverse human and physical geography. Ethiopia however, has a long history of central authority\textsuperscript{30}. The political environment within Ethiopia remains tightly controlled and the potential for politicising information is high\textsuperscript{31}.

In recent years the country has been decentralising political and administrative structures. Ethiopia has gone through two stages of decentralization over recent years. During the first stage, functions were decentralized from the central to regional level. During the second stage there has been some decentralisation from Regional to Woreda level. Steps in this decentralisation process may be regarded as relatively modest in nature, particularly in relation to fiscal empowerment, However it marks a considerable change from the previous centralised system of decision-making\textsuperscript{32}.

### 3 Organisations and institutions at Woreda and Kebele levels

A brief description of the main formal agencies responsible for administration and development at Woreda and Kebele levels is given below. This is followed by evidence from the literature that describes relations between the formal administrative structures and the populace. As mentioned above, the Woreda level of administration is now a key level in improving governance and service delivery in Ethiopia. Decentralisation, to the regional and now to the Woreda\textsuperscript{33} and Kebele\textsuperscript{34} levels, is a centrepiece of Ethiopia’s strategy for ending poverty\textsuperscript{35}.

It is generally accepted that capacity at Woreda level is limited and the PASDEP\textsuperscript{36} lists the next steps in moving forward as including: (i) strengthening the Woreda governments so that they have the capacity to manage and deliver services; (ii) staffing: getting enough good, qualified staff; iii) finding ways of effective communication between people and government, especially in the rural areas; iv) operationalising the gender strategy; v) implementation of the environmental programme\textsuperscript{37}.

#### 3.1 Formal institutions at Woreda and Kebele level in Ethiopia

##### 3.1.1 Woreda Administration
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The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is governed under a Constitution which came into effect in 1995 after being endorsed by referendum in the previous year. There are five tiers of government, namely: Federal, Regional (state), Zonal\textsuperscript{38}, Woreda (district), Kebele (group of villages).

In the country as a whole, there are nine regions plus two large municipalities with regional status, over 500 Woredas\textsuperscript{39}, and around 15 to 18,000 Kebeles. There are 927 municipalities, of which around 50 are Woredas in their own right. There is considerable variation in both Woreda size and in population density with extremes occurring between urban and rural areas. However the average Woreda is said to cover an area of about 2,100 sq km and serves a population of around 140,000. However some individual Woredas have populations of around 597,000\textsuperscript{40}.

The Woreda Administration has the overall responsibility for social and economic development in its area, i.e. is the leading actor in local development and responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating work by all the various development actors in the Woreda including NGOs, private sector entrepreneurs, community based organisations and the communities. An example of Woreda administrative organisational chart is given in ANNEX 2.

Two important features of the decentralisation reform are the block grants to the Woredas and the capacity building efforts at Woreda administration level.

3.1.2 Kebele Administration

The Kebele or Peasant Association is the lowest rung of government administration in Ethiopia. As with the Woreda, there is a Kebele council, judiciary and executive. Kebele power expanded in the late seventies to include collection of local taxes and registration of houses, residents, births, deaths and marriages. The general assembly composed of all Kebele residents is responsible for electing a policy committee which in turn is authorised to appoint the executive committee and judicial tribunal.

3.1.3 Other development agencies

Until the fall of the Derg, the non-governmental development sector in Ethiopia was largely undeveloped and those NGOs working in Ethiopia were primarily concerned with relief operations. However since this time the NGO sector has greatly expanded. Data from six regions, Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR, Somali and Addis Ababa indicates that between 1997 and 2001 Birr 3.53 Billion was dispersed by NGOs. 90 per cent of this expenditure was on development programmes\textsuperscript{41}. Over three quarters of this expenditure was on measures to support food security, health (including HIV/AIDS), water and education. However in Addis Ababa, just under 40 per cent of expenditure was on education and training. NGOs play a role in developmental activities in the majority of Woredas and in many Kebeles.

Acknowledgement of NGO activity by government policies and plans varies. Revisions to the draft PASDEP have increased acknowledgement of NGO activity. The Health Sector Development Plan and Ethiopian Rural Transport and Travel Programme (ERTTP) specifically mention the NGO sector as a potential partner.

\textsuperscript{38} Zones are of less functional importance than they used to be, with substantial powers now being devolved directly to the woredas
\textsuperscript{39} The Statistical Abstract (2005) lists 531 woredas.
\textsuperscript{41} CRDA and DPPA, 2005
3.1.4 State relations with the populace

A number of sources point to a degree of mistrust between Kebele residents and those in administrative positions. From the literature, it is not possible to ascertain how widespread such mistrust is and there are dangers in over-generalising across Kebeles. However mention is sufficiently frequent to include as this is likely to have repercussions on the relations between formal and informal organisations discussed below.

Historically Woreda and Kebele officials looked upwards in terms of loyalty, concern and accountability rather than downwards to their constituencies. This is compounded, particularly at Kebele level, by the fact that Kebeles receive little of the funding capital requested through the planning exercise creating few incentives for councillors to engage with citizens. Citizens appear to continue to have a general distrust of government that limits the extent to which they rely on formal institutions.

This mistrust is further accentuated by certain roles of the Kebele administrations such as registration, that have been used for control under previous regimes. Kebele leaders in some areas have abused their positions in selecting families for compulsory resettlement or for allocation of land.

This mistrust is also compounded by a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of Federal or State law. For example, from the PPA it was reported that there is a common perception, though not strictly grounded in law, that migration beyond a certain duration can result in forfeit of land rights of the person concerned by the Kebele administration, or that the same can occur due to engagement in non-farm activities such as trading in consumer goods. Belshaw (1997) states that for many politicians and officials participation means the free supply of labour and/or materials to projects by the presumed future beneficiaries.

Despite in some circumstances a reluctance to engage with Kebele (and Woreda administrations), Kebeles play a central role in people’s lives. A nationally conducted PPA carried out in 2005 gives as the most frequently mentioned institutions, in descending order, as the development agent (agriculture extension), the church or mosque, iddir and health post. In all 70 different organisations or institutions were identified as being important across the 31 rural research sites that were included in the PPA.

Using a combination of counting and ranking methods, the PPA authors summarise that the school, iddir and Kebele administration can be taken as the “three priority institutions in rural communities across rural Ethiopia”. The report goes on: “In addition to schools, iddir and the kebele, the agricultural extensions system (development agents – DAs), peace committees (often stated as elders’ committee or other conflict resolution body), NGOs (both foreign and local), and formal religious institutions are reliably in the top ten institutions according to all the different measures. A wide variety of local and international NGOs were found either to be currently operating, or had been operated in the resent past, in the case study sites, and their efforts are typically highly regarded by ordinary citizens.”

Schools, although awarded high scores in the PPA, were associated with considerable concern about the quality of facilities with lack of desks, books and qualified teachers being primary among concerns expressed. Primary healthcare facilities were also highly rated but

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42 Pankhurst (2001)
43 PPA – Participatory Poverty Assessment, Ellis and Woldehanna, 2005
44 Belshaw (1997) quoted in Decron 1999
45 PPA, 2005. Sites were selected to cover all regions except those where security issues prevented access. Within regions sites were selected to cover a range of agro-ecological and vulnerability criteria. However sites are unlikely to be statistically representative.
were said to suffer from negative attitudes of health workers, absentees and lack of medicines. Extension agents (DAs) received more positive than negative reactions in the study. This is attributed, in 16 out of the 31 PPA sites, to the extension agents living on site or nearby in the Kebele.

Over the 14 urban research sites that were included in the PPA, 40 different organisations or institutions were identified as being important in citizens’ lives or livelihoods. The most frequently mentioned institutions, in descending order, were health posts or health centres, various NGOs, primary school, the Kebele administration, the church or mosque, iddir, the police, water supply and telecommunications. The authors concluded, using a combination of measures, that schools, Kebele, health, water and electricity provision, the police and the iddir were of consistent importance. The municipalities were said to have received relatively few mentions.

Similarities and differences between urban and rural areas are summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Comparison of top ranked institutions between rural and urban PPA sites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PPA Rural Research Sites</th>
<th>PPA Urban Research Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The same</strong></td>
<td><strong>School provision</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Health services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Kebele administration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Iddir</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>NGOs (national &amp; foreign)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Different</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agricultural extension</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Religion (church &amp; mosque)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Peace committees (conflict resolution)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Credit institutes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Labour sharing (debo)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Water supply</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Electricity supply</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Telecoms services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Police force</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Banks (proivate &amp; govt.)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Source: PPA 2005, p.65]

Differences in terms of quality or access were detected. These included a more positive view of the quality of school service provision and greater access to health facilities in urban areas.

In terms of governance, empowerment and people’s ability to influence decision making, there are currently few opportunities for meaningful participation of Ethiopian citizens in governance and political life to shape their lives. The effects of government reform and action to empower citizens is yet to be fully felt by citizens and sub-regional governments. Despite this the PPA would seem to indicate that progress has been made. The PPA reports widespread agreement across the rural communities involved in the study, that ordinary citizens are now more able to express their views and opinions freely than was the case five or ten years ago with similar findings for people’s awareness of rights as citizens. However at 11 of the 31 sites, it was reported that although people were able to express their opinions more freely, they feared retribution from officials if this happened too often or too openly. Similar findings were found in urban PPA sites. In urban areas it was concluded that

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46 World Bank, 2005
“officials tend to stand aloof from ordinary citizens and to see their role in terms of authority and issuing instructions than in terms of consultation and problem solving”.

Responses collected as part of a baseline study in rural Amhara\textsuperscript{47} reported that the majority of male responses indicated that decisions in the community were taken by the Kebele leaders but there was a right to appeal. Other bodies mentioned less frequently were Woreda level officials, religious leaders, Kire and Gott\textsuperscript{48} level leaders. However there was considerable variation as to whether the people’s voice could be heard. In this study, men generally felt that had more say in community affairs than women, see Box 1.

\textsuperscript{47} Ethiopian Roads Authority/SIDA (2005)
\textsuperscript{48} Gott: Village
Box 1: Sample responses from male and female respondents

Sample responses by male respondents

“Can appeal on the decisions made by Kebele administration but no disagreement on the decisions made by religious leaders. Yes his voice can be heard if the community accepts his idea.”

“Kebele leaders do make decisions in the community, one can forward his idea or appeal if he doesn’t agree with the decision.”

“Kebele leaders make community level decisions. My ideas or views are not considered as such. We even do not have opportunity to make our ideas or views be heard let alone influence the decisions.”

“Decisions are made by the members of the community. I have the right to make my views and opinions on issues. I think my ideas and views are relevant and important to make community level decisions.”

Sample responses by female respondents

“In our area government people and elected officials make all the decisions. Our participation is minimal. We just wait for the outcome to be good or bad. Nothing as we are afraid to give opinion, I only talk when I am asked.”

“Government bodies decide issues at the community level, our involvement is minimal.”

“It is the leadership that makes decisions at community level. If my voice is not heard I will appeal to authorities. I know that I have the right to make suggestions or present my views.”

“We are called to meetings for consultation but the decision is always made by the Kebele leadership. Our views do not matter much.”

“Community level decisions are made by Government authorities. We do not make any decision. We are actually told or informed about the decision that is made by Government authorities. Participation is not very common in our area. They sometimes give us to make questions or give our opinion but for the questions raised we are not given the proper/appropriate/ reply. We are farmers and we do not have any means how our opinion could be accepted. “

[Source: Blue Nile Road: Road Area Community Development Study and Study of Poverty Impact of Transport Infrastructure and Operation, Ethiopian Roads Authority/SIDA (2005)]

The responses above are in contrast to a statement from the same study vis-à-vis the local Women’s Association: “In the Women’s association we make joint decisions. I feel that my voice is also relevant and important. My views and ideas in most cases are accepted. They also give me due respect because of my age.”
3.2 Informal/community institutions at community level in Ethiopia

Informal institutions permeate the life of all societies, including those of Ethiopia, to provide practical and psychological support. In addition, a large number of organisations built around collective action exist. Various forms of collective action are a response to the high levels of risk experienced in Ethiopia. Isolation reinforces the need for rural communities to be self-sufficient and fall back on their own resources while at the same time enabling cultural customs, norms and practices to continue, with positive or negative consequences for communities or groups within the community.

There are a large number of non-market institutions within each village particularly in relation to land, labour and draught animals organised through a variety of networks. These include share-cropping, labour sharing, oxen sharing and reciprocal credit arrangement through a variety of networks: family, neighbourhood and village.

Table 2 below summarises some of the main institutions found at community level in Ethiopia with a focus on those with a primary function related to collective action. The table is not intended to be comprehensive and is included to provide an overview of the types of organisation functioning in Ethiopia and their primary roles. In the following sections their relationship with the state will be examined and their current or potential roles in addressing social accountability.

Examples of institutions in Table 2 are divided into a number of categories – governance, service provision, etc. However it must be recognised that in many instances there will be considerable overlap between categories. For example, organisations under education may be primarily concerned with service provision in that they may take the lead in constructing a rural primary school but also play a role in how the school is run (governance). Conversely those that have a significant role in governance may derive their authority from a religious or spiritual base and also play a role in service provision as well as having a social function. Thus many of the institutions have multiple functions. Work associations may support business training, access to inputs, market diversification and credit provision.

Over and above the institutions listed in Table 2, there are numerous community-based organisations that have been initiated with the support of outside agencies. These include, for example natural resource management committees, water-user committees and youth and HIV/AIDS clubs for example. Womens’ associations are included in Table 2. Many, have been initiated with outside support but have been included in the table above, as they seem to have been one form of institution that has commonly survived the end of project or other outside support. The focus here is on indigenous institutions – those that have been initiated without outside support.

A number of common characteristics are shared across informal institutions. These include rules and regulations though these rules may not be written and the institutions are unlikely to be formally registered. Informal institutions play a significant role in protecting individuals and households within it from risk or shocks to their income, health or assets. Transactions are generally organised through a variety of personal networks in which all members are known to each other. Membership is frequently based on fixed contributions in terms of cash, food or labour, or a combination of these. It is frequently compulsory to attend meetings and fines for non-attendance are common.

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Table 2: Informal/community organisations for collective action working at community level in Ethiopia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary function(s)</th>
<th>Some examples</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Clan elders and leaders, dispute settlement committees, conflict resolution committees, peace committees</td>
<td>Indigenous dispute settlement institutions, e.g. jaarsa biyaa (Arsil Oromo), Gadda (Oromo). Found in most communities.</td>
<td>Studies in the literature have, in the main, focused on pastoralist societies. See for example: Hebo (2003); Abbink (1997); Edossa et al. (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Mehber</td>
<td>A religious association of the Christian Orthodox church where a group of people come together to celebrate saints days and provide food and drink according to their turn</td>
<td>GebreMichael (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senbete</td>
<td>The main function is to create and strengthen ties between Christians. Members rotate in bringing food and drinks to be consumed by the priests often on a weekly basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Provision</td>
<td>Iddir</td>
<td>Traditional burial associations providing financial, social and psychological support. May have other functions such as insurance against fire, death of cattle, etc.</td>
<td>Decron et al. (2004), Decron (2003), Pankhurst and Mariam (2000), Solomon, 1999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ezen</td>
<td>Assist household at time of death</td>
<td>Baum et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kire</td>
<td>Traditional self-help organisations involved in arranging communal activities around important cultural events such as weddings and funerals, see also Iddir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings and/or credit</td>
<td>Equub</td>
<td>An informal savings group in which a group contributes an agreed amount of money at regular intervals. At intervals, either through lottery selection or according to assessed need, a member receives a lump sum. Equub exist along side formal micro-finance institutions (ACSI, OCSI, etc) in many areas</td>
<td>See for example GebreMichael (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour sharing</td>
<td>Debo</td>
<td>Collective labour often for agricultural tasks. The person hosting the debo receives labour and provides food and drink</td>
<td>See for example GebreMichael (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wonfel</td>
<td>Involves smaller work sharing parties than the Debo usually with the direct expectation of reciprocity among the members in harvesting and weeding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock associations</td>
<td>Bulbul grazing group</td>
<td>Initiated by Save the Children US, the group coordinates rotational grazing and improved pasture management, imposing sanctions on those that do not comply. Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding the role of informal institutions in social accountability, Ethiopia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Traditional healers</td>
<td>“Traditional healers are often the first place carers take a sick child”. Traditional healers are seen as treating the cause (often spiritual) of an illness while formal health services are only able to deal with the symptoms.</td>
<td>Community-based Therapeutic Care Workshop Report (2004); Abbink (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>School committees / PTAs</td>
<td>Parent Teachers Associations usually made up of parents, community members and school staff.</td>
<td>Pratt and Earle (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religious teaching</td>
<td>Most well known through islamic schools but many religious institutions run teaching for children and/or adults.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water &amp; sanitation</td>
<td>Water point maintenance groups</td>
<td>Indigenous management of wells</td>
<td>Beyene (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-based</td>
<td>Women's associations</td>
<td>Wijo (women's dairy product saving and credit society – associated with the Guraghe)</td>
<td>Ireland Aid/ILO (2001); Pratt and Earle (2004); Bevan et al (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth associations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnically-based</td>
<td>For example, Guraghe Peoples Self-help Development Organization (GPSDO), REST (Relief Society of Tigray)</td>
<td>Developmental organisations based on a geographical area associated with a particular ethnic group. Closeness to government bodies varies with REST working closely with the government and GPDSO less so.</td>
<td>Pratt and Earle (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional / work-related</td>
<td>Buyers’ or traders’ association</td>
<td>Example exist throughout Ethiopia for example coffee cooperatives, transport operators organisations</td>
<td>Ethiopian Roads Authority (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Markets</td>
<td>Markets are important throughout Ethiopia not only for buying and selling but also in terms of building social capital, maintaining contact with more distant relatives and exchange of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural norms or practices</td>
<td></td>
<td>There are a large number of non-market institutions within each village particularly in relation to land, labour and draught animals organised through a variety of networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The list above provides an overview of the type of informal institutions for collective action found in Ethiopia but does not answer the question of how inclusive such institutions are. In assessing their role in social accountability and service delivery a number of questions are asked: What determines participation in these networks? Is there systematic exclusion of particular groups of individuals or households? How are decisions made, are they democratic in nature? These are discussed below as they relate one type of indigenous institution, the Iddir.

3.3 Iddirs in Ethiopia

Iddirs are indigenous voluntary associations established primarily to provide mutual aid in burial matters but may also address other community concerns. Iddirs are found throughout Ethiopia with the possible exception of Tigray where they occur less frequently. Although they are seen as an indigenous institution, their origins are relatively recent, with first recordings occurring during the early part of the twentieth century. As noted in the PPA referred to above, they were seen by respondents as one of the key institutions operating at the local level.

Decron (2004) interviewed members of 78 Iddirs in seven villages located across Ethiopia. Members interviewed stressed funeral insurance as the main function of the Iddirs. Support in terms of cash, cooking pots, food and/or labour are provided to members on the death of someone in their household. However 64 per cent of sampled Iddirs offered loans to members, the majority of these loans being for shocks experienced by members such as destruction of the family home, illness, fire, and death of cattle. From sample villages studied, Decron found the average size of Iddirs to be 84 members with a median of 55.

Households may belong to more than one Iddir thus further increasing their insurance and reducing risk. A study along four road corridors found an individual membership of 26.4 per cent of those interviewed. A study along the Gondowein to Kombolcha road corridor found an individual membership of 32 per cent with little difference in membership recorded according to distance from the road or from the nearest town. However household membership is frequently seen as being much higher. In Shashamene town a survey carried out by Action Aid found 90 per cent of households were members of at least one Iddir and 66 per cent of households were members of more than one Iddir. A further study states “Different studies conducted on this civil institution had revealed that about 87% of Ethiopians in urban centres and close to 70% of Ethiopians living in rural areas belong to these Iddirs” though the origin of this information is not given.

Iddirs are generally quite stable in terms of membership and location. Membership of mixed-gender Iddirs is usually through the head of the household and members pay fixed contributions usually on a monthly basis. Contributions range from less than one Birr per month amongst the poorest Iddirs to over 10 Birr among the wealthier Iddirs. Contributions are generally equal across all members as are payouts in the event of a death. Contributions are fixed per member, irrespective of age or family size.

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50 Pankhurst and Mariam (2000)
51 Pankhurst and Mariam (2000)
52 Ethiopian Roads Authority/World Bank (2004)
53 Ethiopian Roads Authority/SIDA (2005)
54 The difference may be due to unit of measure the road corridor studies interviewed individuals. The latter studies appear to refer to the household level.
55 Itrac (2004)
56 Solomon (1999)
Entry fees are often substantial for those wanting to join and this is seen as a means for ensuring continued membership, even after payouts. Entry fees are estimated to be about 25 times the monthly fee and may be a fixed fee or calculated according to a formula based on household assets. There is usually a fine for late payment and non-attendance at general Iddir meetings.

Membership is generally open to all who can make the required entry fee and monthly contributions. However there may be Iddirs that respond to specific groups of people and therefore restrict their membership accordingly. Over and above open membership Iddirs, Solomon (1999) lists the following types of Iddir:

**Kebele Iddirs:** These Iddirs were formed during the Derg regime as the amalgamation of smaller Iddirs. Membership may range from a few hundred to over a thousand. They are heterogenous in terms of socio-economic status, religion, sex and ethnicity. They are generally more organised, are recognised by local authorities and have bank accounts.

**Women’s Iddirs:** Solomon states that these are often “sub-Iddirs” of mixed gender Iddirs. The membership fee is frequently less than for mixed-gender Iddirs and membership is generally less than 50 members and Solomon found them to be “less well organised” than mixed-gender Iddirs.

**Ethnic Based Iddirs:** These are made up of members from a single ethnic group and are not as common as other types of Iddirs. They are likely to cover a wide geographical area and may, for example, include those who have migrated as well as those who remain in their home area.

**Workplace Iddirs:** These are formed by people working in the same organisation or by people with similar occupations, for example teachers.

### 3.3.1 What determines participation in Iddirs?

Unless the Iddir is associated with a specific group, see above, which is not seen as the norm, membership is open to all. In reality a number of restrictions do apply, the first being ability to pay an entry fee and make regular contributions. However a range of Iddirs do exist with at least some catering to the needs of those unable to make larger contributions.

Hobley et al (2004) categorises vulnerable households as 1) Improving with some agency for social action; 2) Coping with little agency for social action and 3) Declining with no agency for social action.

According to her categorisation those individuals and households under 1) Improving with some agency for social action “have better links to iddirs and eqqub” while those in 2) Coping with little agency for social action have little agency for social action and are frequently dependent on patron-client relations. In 3) individuals and households experience high levels of insecurity and “rely on the charity of others for social action”. In this categorisation membership of an Iddir is both a definition of vulnerability and lack of membership is also a cause of vulnerability. Other sources also see Iddir membership as out of reach of the very poorest and contributions have been found to systematically increase with wealth. Although Iddirs do frequently include a cross-section of the populace except

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the very poorest, in larger Iddirs it has been found that due to this heterogeneity, the larger Iddirs are unable to respond to the needs of their poorer members. Membership is frequently linked to the male household head. Entry to an Iddir normally requires a down payment which ensures continued membership and can be quite substantial relative to households’ income. From documented evidence there is no mention of what happens in the case of separation or divorce but it might be expected that membership remains with the male household head.

3.3.2 How are decisions made?

Although Iddirs are often referred to in the literature, there is less on leadership and decision making within Iddirs. Where this is referred to, it is usually in passing rather than providing in-depth analysis. Iddir leaders are often said to be a respected member of the community and thus selection is in terms of social standing and status rather than on merit. It is also stated that, particularly with larger Iddirs, “management is not transparent and therefore there is corruption and mismanagement” and that leadership in most Iddirs is more or less permanent and not necessarily democratic in nature.

3.3.3 Do Iddirs have the potential to act as agents of change?

From across a number of information sources it is possible to draw out a number of aspects where Iddirs have the potential to act as agents of positive change and further areas where constraints are likely to be encountered. These are summarised in Table 3 below.

### Table 3: Potential and constraints of Iddirs as agents of development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative or unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common across large parts of the country</td>
<td>Decision making is not transparent to outsiders and this may be so for insiders also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary and self-initiated</td>
<td>Size may be critical – when small they may have little social clout; when large transparency and responsiveness to the needs of members may be compromised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly valued and respected</td>
<td>A working (in most cases) system of arbitration in disputes, of financial management and discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A working (in most cases) system of arbitration in disputes, of financial management and discipline</td>
<td>For historical reasons, may be suspicious of coalitions with government and other outside agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term and stable</td>
<td>In mixed gender Iddirs, women may have little say in the running of the Iddir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross socio-economic groups</td>
<td>In mixed gender Iddirs, women may be at a disadvantage on divorce or separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A variety of models adapted to the needs of different socio-economic groups</td>
<td>Have difficulty in coping with covariate risk – risk that affect whole communities. This is particularly relevant with increased HIV/AIDS related deaths where it is reported some Iddirs are failing to meet their commitments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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60 Solomon (1999)  
61 Solomon (1999)  
62 Solomon (1999)  
63 Solomon (1999)  
64 Decron et al (2004); Pankhurst and Mariam (2000); Pratt and Earle (2004)  
65 Pankhurst and Mariam (2000)
A key element of Iddirs would appear to be the variety of forms in which they exist. Although they may not reach the very poorest, where there has been a need, there has been the evolution of different Iddirs with different entry contributions to meet the needs of poorer sections of society. Their strengths to date would appear in providing insurance for “single event” risk and as savings and credit groups. The potential and constraints of seeing Iddirs as agents of general development are illustrated in the case studies below, see Box 4 and Box 7.

4 Interactions and relations between community organisations and formal service delivery agencies

The literature provides a number of examples where informal institutions for collective action have interacted or developed relationships with formal institutions. This section further explores these relations through a number of case studies which highlight the opportunities and constraints encountered. Brief details of a further 6 examples are given in Annex 3.

The first case study (Box 2) describes how traditional governance structures amongst a semi-nomadic pastoralist group of Southern Ethiopia are being threatened. It demonstrates how under changing circumstances, the greater availability of firearms, traditional governance and accountability systems are fragile. Attempts by the state to engage the already fragile system were largely unsuccessful due to a misunderstanding of the indigenous governance systems. Support to a younger age set within Surma society through an externally imposed Surma Council has led to increased conflict with neighbouring groups. Incompatibility between formal and informal systems resulted in older Surma withdrawing from government contact.
The difficulties of engaging with traditional institutions in the Ethiopian context are illustrated by two further examples given below.

The first describes inter-institutional alliances and conflicts in natural resource management among the Borana of Oromiya Region, see Box 3. This example illustrates an early enthusiasm for engaging with traditional organisations shown on the part of NGOs and bilateral agencies working in the Borana area. However over time, the constraints of working through traditional institutions became apparent. The dominant Borana traditional institutions...
were seen as non-representative particularly with regards smaller ethnic groups in the area and of women. Despite this, those interviewed as part of the research on which the case study is based did note that the Kebele and informal justice system could work together strengthening both the informal and formal systems. However in the case cited, this relationship was based on related individuals working in both systems.

**Box 3: Case Study 2 - NGOs, the Borana and the state**

When the source author (Watson) started working in Borana, she encountered strong support from the state and NGO representatives with regards to Borana indigenous institutions. Interviewees referred to the indigenous structures as institutions through which they could contact the Borana indigens and create a new, more positive community. Indigenous institutions were seen as a bridge to accessing and enabling the community to help themselves. During the initial visit, she noted a tendency to idealise indigenous institutions as a “ready-made set of participatory structure”

Within Borana, a number of different ethnic groups coexist of which the Borana are the dominant group. Other groups include the Guji, Arsi, Gabbra, a number of Somali groups and the marginalised Waata Wondo. Between the various groups, joint resource access is said to be managed through institutions in the context of an uneasy truce. Important resources such as deep water wells are highly regulated by indigenous institutions. The natural resource institutions are all said to be male institutions in which women cannot hold positions of power (although there are means for women to influence decisions and actions).

However on a return visit the author found the state and NGOs more sceptical about institutional partnerships with the Borana indigenous institutions. The reasons for given were the lack of official representation of women in the traditional institutions, the power struggles experienced between the Peasant Association (Kebele) and traditional institutions and the differences in power relations between the different ethnic groups. The youthfulness of the Peasant Association officials was seen as positive in bringing in new ideas.

Two examples of the Peasant Association (Kebele) and traditional organisations working together are given, one seen as positive the other less so. In the former, a Peasant Association Chairperson was the younger brother of a traditional leader. This resulted in a strong alliance and division of tasks that worked to mutual advantage, for example, ruling together in land and livestock disputes. However, in a further case, it is said the Kebele undermined the traditional organisation by reversing their decision.

[Source: Watson, 2001]

Box 4 illustrates a situation involving the adaptation of an indigenous organisation, the Kire. Although it is reported that the Kire had been successful as an intermediary in seed distribution, in the more complex case of natural resource management, problems were encountered from the state and from the community itself. Difficulties with the state stemmed from a lack of recognition of the Kire as a legitimate body to manage natural resources. The state saw natural resource management as falling under its mandate. Difficulties also stemmed from the Kire’s relationship with the community. The community saw the adapted Kire as only representing the Christians within that community. Further difficulties were encountered through lack of clarity vis-à-vis the Village Development Committee. It should be noted that the adaptation of the Kire (a funeral association) to a natural resource management institutions constitutes a large change in role which was attempted over a
relatively short period of time. A more successful adaptation, in the case of the Iddirs in Dire Dawa, is given in Box 7 below.

**Box 4: Case Study 3 - The Kire as a natural resource management institution – constraints experienced**

During 1995 SOS-Sahel had worked successfully with a Kire in Wollo, Amhara Region. In 1995 seed shortage was identified by communities as a major problem and SOS-Sahel began a seed distribution programme to needy households. The Kire leaders were given standard criteria primarily based on a system of ‘collective beneficiary ranking’. Kire leaders were said to have played an important part in beneficiary identification and seed distribution to needy households. Encouraged by this success, SOS-Sahel worked with the Kire to transform it into a natural resource management institution.

A number of problems were encountered. Kire-based users-rights groups developed a management plan that was approved by the relevant tiers of government. However there was lack of clarity over the Kire-based group’s legitimacy to participate in natural resource management vis-à-vis government structures. The Woreda Administrative Council recognised individual users’ rights in individual users not in the Kire as an institution.

Within the Kire itself, there was also lack of clarity of roles when a Kire member but not the Kire leader, who also happened to be the Village Development Chairman, took it upon himself to sign on behalf of the Kire.

Further problems were experienced due to misunderstanding the representativeness of the Kire. It was assumed that the Kire was a village-base organisation when in fact it was a Christian organisation, primarily based on the parish church thus excluding a significant proportion of the population. An over-simplified view of the Kire and a lack of understanding of deep-seated land tenure and social conflicts among resource users resulted in the exclusion of users of the resource.

[Source: Yibabie, 2001]

In the above three case studies, a number of constraints were experienced. These include lack of understanding of local governance systems, lack of legal (formal) mandate, lack of informal mandate - the informal institutions were not seen by the community (or sections within the community) as representing their interests, and lack of accountability.

The following three case studies provide examples where relations between informal and formal institutions have been more successful. The first (Box 5) looks at how, through training and other support, to both state and non-state institutions service delivery and accountability was improved. In this case the Educational Policy was seen as supportive to the initiative.

The second (Box 6) example looks at how a small entrepreneurial enterprise was able to provide a service not fully met by the state. In this case study, the enterprise was able to extend the minimal services provided by the state (central refuse collection points) to door-to-door household and office refuse collection. The Kebele, despite minimal resources, created an enabling environment for the service. Although details are not provided of how this happens in practice, the service has devised a modality in which poorer households can take part through lower charges for rubbish collection.
Box 7 provides an example of extended service provision through the adaptation of an existing and respected informal institution. The Iddir was seen as an appropriate mechanism for reaching women and the poor. In this case although the local authorities were not hostile to the initiative, the legal environment was slow and bureaucratic, and therefore wasting scarce institutional resources in terms of time and money.

**Box 5: Case Study 4 - Parent Teachers Associations (PTA) empowerment – Dukem Town**

With the support of Save the Children US, a project was initiated to support primary school education approximately 40 km from Addis Ababa. The start of the project was said to have coincided with the New Education Policy of the Ministry of Education which gives considerable powers to PTAs.

The project has supported PTAs and Girls Advisory Committees (made up of mothers, PTA members, women teachers, elders and sometimes girl students) to work with School Development Coordinators who are staff of the Woreda Education Bureau. It also provided school improvement grants and capacity building to enhance school governance.

Despite some objections from some members of the local community who believed that the role of providing basic education was the duty of government, the PTAs and Girls Advisory Committees are said to have played an important role in the management of schools. Advocacy for children’s rights, especially the rights to be protected from deleterious traditional practices, and increased involvement by PTAs in planning and running of schools are seen as areas of particular success.

PTAs have entered negotiations with the Woreda administration to discuss development issues such as the allocation of land to schools. The involvement of the Education Bureau staff is said to have enhanced better relations between schools and the Woreda Administration.

Indicators of success achieved are said to include:
- Improved numbers of students attending school, particularly girls
- Better management of schools
- Better infrastructure
- Evolving PTAs that are empowered to manage the affairs of the schools

Success is attributed to close involvement of staff from the Education Bureau, training provided to Woreda officials, community and PTA members which has enhanced understanding of the different roles each can play. Furthermore, there is now said to be a strong sense of ownership, control and organization by the PTAs, as opposed to the previous perception that education is the role of the central government. The role of the PTA is said to have enhanced the participation of communities in education.

[Source: Pratt and Earle, 2004]
Box 6: Case Study 5 - Income generation and public service – Yeka cleaning services, Addis Ababa

This case study illustrates what can be achieved when the Kebele provides a supportive environment.

A group of 4 unemployed young people, three men and one woman, started Yeka Cleaning services with no external help. The service provides rubbish collection from houses and offices which is said to have resulted in “economic, psychological and social empowerment”.

Yeka cleaning services provides rubbish bags and regularly collects household and office rubbish which is then placed in collection points provided by Addis Ababa City Administration. Yeka Cleaning Services charges households according to their capacity to pay. Poorer households pay as little as 2 birr per month while the wealthier pay 15 birr per month. The service covers 600 households within a Kebele and disposes of 2500 m³ per year. The group has now expanded to eight members (2004)

Initially the group was said to have had to overcome traditional attitudes. There were some that saw those involved in rubbish collection as affected by evil spirits.

The group were required to register with the City Administration and report to the Kebele on their activities. However rather than being seen as a constraint to the group’s development, this is said to have “opened the way to improve their organisation, meeting obligations such as drawing up a memorandum of understanding of the association, following reporting regimes, paying taxes, etc” which made the group eligible for training in recycling and organisational development. The Kebele has supported the project through publicising the usefulness of the services provided, and liaising with appropriate agencies for access to training.

[Source: Pratt and Earle, 2004]
Box 7: Case Study 6 -The adaptation of an informal institution to take on new roles. Iddirs in Dire Dawe

This case study looks at an INGO’s attempts to build on an indigenous institution, the Iddir, to expand their role in credit and savings service provision. A degree of success was achieved despite what is described as a weak enabling environment.

Iddirs are widespread throughout Ethiopia giving support during funerals based on entry fees and regular payments made by members. On the whole, however Iddirs have maintained their distance from intrusion by external agencies outside their own constituency.

ACCORD, an international NGO (INGO) began working with Iddirs in Dire Dawe in 1995 seeing the advantages of a working partnership with a self-initiated, mutual-support organisations based on strong social cohesion. A major component of the programme was the provision of a grant that serves as a revolving credit fund to support community or individual income-generating activities. This is supported by training to Iddir members and the facilitation of links between Iddirs and other development actors.

100 Iddirs were identified, mainly from the poorer communities and the majority of Iddirs were women’s Iddirs. The project is said to have reached 3784 households and just over 70 per cent of beneficiaries were women. An external evaluation (1997) assessed that more than half of the very poor members had engaged in at least one income-generating activity and 42 per cent of those who had previously been in the poor category had attained middle status.

Initial mistrust on the part of Iddir leadership and membership was said to have been overcome through clarifying that Iddir members who did not want to participate in income-generating activities were able to retain their membership. Iddirs that were experiencing hardship in meeting their funeral obligations were also assisted with materials.

Through the credit facilities managed through the Iddirs, a substantial number of members are said to have improved their incomes. Community projects implemented included bridges, water supply, the provision of electricity, a flour mill and renovation of schools. Through the support provided and experience gained over a variety of initiatives, in some cases, the structure of the Iddirs has evolved to better meet their new roles with posts of treasurers, secretaries and accounts being created. In 1998, a plan was formed to create second level associations with the aim of allowing savings to made through the joint hiring of accountants, and to replace the role of ACCORD as they phased out their activities. Thus 67 of the Iddirs joined seven Associations of Saving and Credit Cooperatives (2004).

In joining the Saving and Credit Cooperatives, it was noted that the Government’s Proclamation of Cooperatives provided for the allocation of up to 10 per cent of profit for the promotion of social objectives. This allowed an amount to be allocated to the strengthening of Iddirs or to cover members’ commitments to social objectives at a wider community level.

However legal problems have been encountered. Registration was made difficult by a position held at the time that only grass-roots cooperatives could grow to become cooperative unions. The Iddir Associations then attempted a registration route through the Justice Bureau. However this was unsuccessful because of the relevant, and at the time current, decree did not allow for the registration of second level associations. Additional problems were encountered in that in 2004, Dire Dawe was not a chartered city and the Bureau of Justice did not have the mandate to register associations on behalf of the Ministry of Justice. Considerable time is said to have been spent in following the various avenues to confirm their legal status.

In 2004, it was said that the leaders of the association were advocating for the establishment of a government body that has the mandate to take decisions on disputes that arise between civil society institutions and the government, without the need to go to court.

[Source: Pratt and Earle, 2004]
Further documented examples of the relationships between informal institutions are summarised in Annex 3. Annex 3 summarises constraints and opportunities experienced. Together with the case studies given above and Annex 3 a number of areas are highlighted as helpful the building of successful partnerships with informal institutions. These are:

- A good understanding (by outside agencies) of the informal institutions involved including the roots of their distrust to outside agencies
- A recognition of the limitations of the specific informal institution involved
- The building on current services and skills available through informal institutions rather than a dramatic change in the responsibilities they are expected to take on
- Early and active involvement of Kebele and Woreda administrations to increase their capacity and their understanding of the role the informal institutions are playing
- The early clarification of roles in both the informal and formal institutions
- An appreciation of the policy environment and latest sectoral policies and plans to identify where they are supportive and where obstacles are likely to be encountered.

Possible actions together with areas that need greater clarification are summarised in Table 4 and discussed in the sections below.

**Table 4: Issues and possible actions arising from case studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Possible actions</th>
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| Representativeness of informal institution for the purpose intended? | 1, 2, 3 (in text), 7, 12 (Annex 3) | • Recognition of the changing context in which institutions are operating  
• Identification of institutions with a track record of representation.  
• Realism to the imperfections and limitations of informal institutions  
• Guidelines for Woredas from Ministry of Capacity Building and other Ministries as appropriate  
• Discussion and involvement of informal and informal institutions at the outset  
• Introduction of change at a rate appropriate to the informal institution  
• Avoidance of cooption where there are not clear advantages to the informal institutions |
| Sustainability | 3, 6 (in text), 7 & 8 (in annex) | • Legal clarity of user rights/ownership of assets (roads, water sources, land, natural resources, infrastructure) from Regional & Federal government – e.g. can informal institutions charge for use & under what circumstances. |
| Institutional mechanisms | 7 (in text), 8, 9 (in annex 3) | • Sharing of transparency mechanisms between informal institutions facilitated by bilaterals, NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, Woredas  
• Registration linked with clear benefits to the informal institution. To be developed by all levels of government |
5 Challenges and solutions for social accountability

Decentralisation places increased emphasis on the importance of local level institutions but to date, much of the effort in decentralisation has focused on formal institutions. To be effective, however, formal organisations must be seen in the context of local social institutions. An understanding of the relationships between formal and informal institutions, and between informal institutions and their communities, is essential if formal institutions are to facilitate development at the local level.

5.1 Main conclusions

Five main conclusions are drawn. First the recent history and power structures within Ethiopia have deep-rooted repercussions to the present day. Government structures have a history of centralised power and hierarchical control. Informal institutions have a mistrust of outside agency, particularly from government.

Second, social capital, often built and maintained through collective action, plays a central role in the lives of many rural and urban Ethiopians helping to protect them from risk in an unpredictable environment. Social capital is both a means to reducing vulnerability and an indicator of enhanced agency.

Third, there is considerable potential for complimentarity between formal and informal institutions. The capacity is not available at Woreda and Kebele levels for government to fulfil all that is expected of them. It is therefore essential that efforts are made to build on the strengths of existing institutions. Where informal institutions are strong, there has historically been a temptation to see them as rivals to existing power structures or to exploit them in terms of provision of labour. Therefore attitudinal change is required on the part of formal
institutions to see informal institutions as partners in development, for roles to be negotiated and interference to be avoided where it is not necessary, so that mutual trust can be developed.

Fourth, there is lack of clarity around issues relating to the extent of informal institutions’ powers within the formal system. This lack of clarity prevents an enabling environment in which Woreda and Kebele are confident to partner informal institutions.

Fifth, informal institutions can adapt to take on new roles. However those working in partnership with them should be realistic about the limitations of the institutions’ remit and work at a pace that allows new roles to be integrated with the old.

Sixth, third party agencies such as NGOs and other aid agencies, have a role to play in supporting both local level administrations and informal institutions. However these will always be short-term solutions. As such, a key role for such agencies is in facilitating government administrations and informal institutions to form reciprocal and lasting working relationships.

5.2 Constraints and challenges

A number of key challenges remain. Central amongst these is the age-old dilemma for outside agencies of whether to work with less than perfect existing institutions or to work with communities to build new but often temporary institutions that fit the paradigms of the outside agency.

The advantages of working with existing indigenous organisations are many. Indigenous organisations have channels of communications frequently inaccessible to outsiders, they are often stable using socially embedded structures that have been tried and tested over many years, if not decades, and are understood and trusted by members.

As illustrated by some of the above case studies, it is however, of vital importance to avoid over-idealism. Informal institutions include practices that may be detrimental to specific groups of marginalised people, particularly women and unless initiated and run by women rarely enhance women’s voice within a prevailing male-dominated society. Norms, beliefs and practices held by society are often slow to change. Resistance to change, for example in traditions that support violence against women, is and will be experienced at many levels. Informal institutions are frequently built on existing power structures and as such are designed to maintain the status quo.

Informal institutions may or may not be accessible by the poor.

The stability and trust of informal institutions is frequently built on personal knowledge of the individuals involved, for example, in informal savings groups. This means that scaling up can present problems unless undertaken in a way that allows personal relations to be maintained. Being built on reciprocal trust, structures may be opaque causing heightened conflict when things go wrong or assets go missing.

However documented evidence provides a number of areas where informal institutions have been particularly successful in increasing social accountability and service delivery, in adapting to change and in reaching the poor (if not the very poor). They would appear particularly valuable for communication with hard-to-reach groups, on sensitive topics such
as HIV/AIDS\textsuperscript{66}. Indigenous justice systems, together with their imperfections, are seen as more accessible and comprehensible than their formal counterparts\textsuperscript{67}. Indigenous health systems, for example traditional birth attendants, again with their imperfections, can compliment formal systems as they are accessible locally and respond to psychological as well as physical needs\textsuperscript{68}. Locally-based water resource management systems are essential given the limitations of state capacity in maintaining water points.

It is clear from experience that informal institutions for collective action are adaptable given the appropriate circumstances. Iddirs, with or without outside help, have evolved to extend their services to provision of savings and credit facilities or insurance over a broader range of events. The case study (Box 7) above also illustrates that the structures of Iddirs have evolved to cater for the needs for greater transparency and increased responsibility.

Norms, beliefs and practices held by society are often slow to change. Efforts to change practice will have to occur at a number of levels. Communication is key and hence educational institutions have a vital role to play. Change can to be brought about by formal and informal institutions working in tandem. Good practice in the formal justice system with regards to the equity of justice for men and women (although recognising that poor practice also exists in the formal justice system) may possibly be adapted for use in informal systems. The PTA case study above shows how educational institutions can be enhanced and legitimised through community participation. In terms of holding governments to account for their actions, an empowered PTA is seen as having an important role to play in negotiating with the authorities. Although generally less well developed, health and other sectoral committees can play a similar role. Second level associations as for example in the Iddir case study would appear to have particularly important role to play in both advocacy and ensuring enhanced accountability, despite the difficulties encountered in the case described in Box 7.

Changing abusive practice within the household is difficult. However local, often informal institutions whose members are aware of everyday happenings, can have a crucial role to play in negotiating behavioural change.

5.3 Working with informal institutions

In working with informal institutions, outside agencies need to develop understanding in the following areas:

- A good understanding of the informal institution and the context in which it operates. A clear picture of its current and historical role is necessary to understand the extent of its remit. The organisational structure and role of individuals within the organisation need to be clearly understood and conflicts of interest clarified at an early stage. A knowledge of the representativeness of the organisation is required and although few organisations are likely to be truly representative of all groups in a community, this should be taken into account.

- Attitudinal and behavioural change is required within Kebele and Woreda Administrations. This, to a certain extent, can be supported at the local level through training and incentives but requires related change at all levels of government to

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{66} E.g. Ethiopian Roads Authority, 2001; Mulugeta and Tekele (1994); Iddirs: Pankhurst and Mariam (2000)\\
\textsuperscript{67} Hebo (2003)\\
\textsuperscript{68} The health system in Ethiopia is built on a tiered referral system in which, in many instances traditional healers constitute the un-acknowledged first tier.
\end{footnotesize}
create an enabling environment where participation by individuals and their representatives is actively supported. Block grants made available to the Woreda will go some way to enabling decisions that are appropriate to the local level. Where an initiative is planned with further outside bodies, it is important that Woreda and Kebele administrations are involved from the start.

- Where the policy environment and latest sectoral plans are supportive, it is important that those at Woreda and particularly Kebele levels are aware of these changes. Help with accessing, understanding and interpreting the plans and policy documents is likely to be required at this level.

- Many of the policies within Ethiopia are outdated and increasingly out of step with more recent documents, see for example Regional Development plans vis-à-vis the PASDEP. However some recent sectoral plans are acknowledging the need for greater community involvement through new or revised institutional arrangements, for example education and to a lesser extent health. Models, in for example, education, can be used to illustrate the benefits of greater community involvement in other sectors, for heightened accountability and improved service delivery.

5.4 Potential opportunities and entry points

A number of entry points can be identified. These will vary from area to area and sector to sector, being specific to the socio-cultural context and recent successes and failures experienced. However some areas are as follows:

- Key sectoral plans such as in education, health, agriculture and water do provide opportunities for working with informal institutions.

- Where a degree of trust has been established, this should be built upon. DAs (agricultural extension agents) who are frequently residing in the Kebeles form one entry point. Where PTAs have a working relationship with the formal education sector is another.

- The Kebele remains the government structure closest to citizens in Ethiopia and as such forms a key entry point to building trust between the Ethiopian state and its citizens. The Kebele should have a key role in making citizens aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Kebeles are, and will remain for many years to come, drastically short of resources. However measures to build mutual trust between Kebeles and Kebele residents will be essential if trust is to be built at other levels. Emphasising the facilitation rather control functions of the Kebele administration will be crucial to enhance the legitimacy of formal institutions to their populace. The example provided by Yeka cleaning services provides an example where the Kebele Administration provided support within their means to a fledgling informal institution.

- Inter-Kebele learning. Where examples of successful Kebele facilitation occur, the Woreda has a role, through existing structures, of encouraging such learning in areas such as citizen participation from one Kebele administration to another.

- There are women in positions of authority in informal institutions, government and the private sector in Ethiopia. They are and have been playing a part in changing attitudes in Ethiopia. The education sector has a higher number of women staff and women in positions of authority relative to other sectors. The formal education sector
would seem an appropriate entry point to systematically communicate female achievement, involving women from both within and beyond the education sector.

- Regular exchanges, over issues that are important to the community, between government officials and traditional leaders will highlight further entry points where collaboration is to mutual benefit. To build trust such encounters will be through structures that are meaningful to citizens and their representatives rather than necessarily attempting to formally incorporate them into government structures. This is likely to be of particular importance in pastoral areas.

- Training and follow-up is an important entry point for both informal and formal institutions. Where training topics are of relevance to representatives of both formal and informal institutions, joint training will not only increase capacity but also enhance a shared language and facilitate exchange.

- There are a number of areas where the Kebele and Woreda administrations can add value to functions carried out by informal institutions and yet be within current resource constraints. Such areas might include arbitration of disputes between one community and another, marketing and publicity. In this way Woredas and Kebeles can facilitate contact with the world between the immediate vicinity. Where the spread of telecommunications has reached the Woreda or even the Kebele, use of these should be made to maximise communication beyond the Kebele.

- With the caveats noted earlier, informal organisations such as Iddir (and other related bodies such as Kire) that have a track record of providing services to the poor, should be supported together with an enabling legal environment, training and communication as appropriate.

5.5 Areas for further investigation and action?

A number of areas are identified above as opportunities to enhance working relations between formal and informal institutions, However a number of areas remain where there are gaps in the existing knowledge, where the position of government vis-a-vis informal institutions is unclear, inappropriate of misunderstood by key stakeholders and where further action is required.

First, case studies 5,6 and 7 merit further investigation to bring findings up to date and assess their achievements over time. In particular a number of specific issues arising from case studies 5,6 and 7 are worthy of further investigation:

5. Sustainability
Have the examples given in these case studies survived over time? Have they proved institutionally, socially and financially sustainable? Have increases in resources available to the institutions increased or decreased their collaboration with state institutions?

6. Inclusivity
Greater detail on how the poor are included in informal institutions: what mechanisms are employed to ensure the poor’s involvement in activities and in decision making? For example, Yake services employ mechanisms for setting advantageous rates for poorer households. How is this achieved in practice? Are such mechanisms perceived as fair by poorer and wealthier households alike? Is the Kebele administration involved in explaining this system? Would it be advantageous or disadvantageous for the Kebele to assist in such a system? In the Iddir system there are examples where poorer members are subsidised, for
example, through differentiated entry fees? Does this increase inclusivity in membership and in decision making?

7. **Institutional mechanisms**
   Although there is a growing literature on the roles and coverage of Iddirs in Ethiopia, there is less documented evidence on the structure of Iddir organisation. What variation exists in methods for choosing leadership positions, in levels of transparency, in cooperation between Iddirs?

8. **Women**
   Institutional mechanisms that enhance women’s empowerment and enhance society’s accountability to women are needed. Examples where women are able to run their own affairs are valuable, see for example the Dalocha water project. However, there is need (not highlighted for the first time here) for greater involvement of women in all levels of government and in mixed gender institutions to allow gender relations between men and women be negotiated. What types of institution have women succeeded in and why?

9. **Pastoralists**
   Institutional mechanisms that enhance society’s accountability to pastoralists are needed, particularly at higher levels of government. How can the legitimacy of government agencies be enhanced in pastoral areas?

Second and more generally, a number of areas have been highlighted in the above examples where informal organisations have encountered constraints in their own development of in their collaboration with government agencies. These are discussed more below:

10. **The development of trust in state organisations**
    There is sufficient documented evidence to conclude that trust in governmental organisations is frequently low. The Kebele administration is seen as key to developing greater trust between the populace, their institutions and the state. Examples where Kebeles have been able to play a facilitating role should be developed and shared. More controversially, the ‘controlling’ aspect of Kebele responsibilities should be revisited and revised where they are not necessary and up to date guidelines produced through Federal government.

11. **Legal environment: Legal and/or ownership rights of assets**
    Greater clarification is needed around who owns infrastructure built partly or wholly by communities. This has important implications for incentives to implement and in maintenance. In some circumstances, ownership may be clear. For example, a school may be built as a community priority through communal labour and then handed over to the state to become a government school under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. However elsewhere, the boundaries of ownership are less clear. Taking another hypothetical example, if a community builds a road from the Kebele headquarters to their community and takes responsibility for its maintenance, can they charge members of the general public for use of the road (to contribute towards maintenance or for some other purpose)? Similarly, if a community or private institution pays for, installs and maintains a water point? To empower community institutions to not only initiate but also to maintain a resource, greater

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69 Under Ethiopian law all land belongs to the state, although in some areas, e.g Amhara with SARDP support greater plurality in rights are being introduced.

70 See for example the case of the Guraghe road building and Dolcha water systems in Annex 3.
clarity (and greater powers) to the community institution, either as sole custodians or in partnership with government, is likely to be needed to provide for future sustainability.

12. Enabling legal environment for non-governmental institutions
A number of the examples given above and in Annex 3 highlight the difficulties of registration for community-level institutions. In some cases this is due to lack of an enabling legal framework. In others it is due to bureaucratic inefficiency. In either case, delays should be reduced and the process of registration linked to benefits in terms of services provided by the administration.

13. Rural-urban linkages
In a number of the examples discussed above and in Annex 3, urban-rural links (and rural-rural or urban-urban links) have been cited as creating a receptive environment to new ideas or enhancing a (rural) organisation through increased capacity or financial resources. Movement of people, enhanced communication particularly through mobile phone technology (including text messaging and money transfer) should not be regarded with suspicion but seen as an area that government can enhance development. Kebele restrictions on movement, perceived or real, should be minimised.

14. Communications and the media
Closely related to the improvement of rural-urban linkages, as highlighted, is the need to see communications through a number of different media, as an aid to development. This will entail a more relaxed view to that currently adopted by the state in relation to communications. Plans by Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation to ensure all households are within 5 km of a telephone within 2 years will go some way to developing such linkages. At Kebele level, the provision of telephones to the private sector (who can make a small profit) rather than limiting communication through governmental structures would seem to be a positive way forward. Increased communication through schools and (a freer) media should also be encouraged.

15. Hierarchy of systems
A number of parallel systems are found involving informal and formal institutions, for example in the health or justice sectors. Recent health sector plans make provision for a tier operating at community level, though not necessarily using traditional structures. Involving community level institutions in such a tiered system is seen as a positive development. In the justice system there is often a dynamic interplay between the formal and informal systems in which the formal system relies heavily on informal systems of justice. This should be encouraged. However areas that present difficulties, in the justice system for example, are in traditional perceptions of women’s rights. Working closely with key stakeholders, this is an area that needs further investigation.

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72 See for example, Hebo (2003); Bevan et al (2005)
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Understanding the role of informal institutions in social accountability, Ethiopia

ANNEX 1 – Terms of Reference

ETHIOPIA
Understanding the role of informal institutions in social accountability
Draft Terms of Reference (TOR) 12 September 2007

Background
Measuring empowerment can be thought of as a complementary approach to top-down reforms because it addresses the capacity of citizens to reinforce change by demanding better governance and hold officials to account. “Empowerment” as a concept moves away from treating people primarily as “beneficiaries,” by treating them as agents capable of effecting institutional change. Empowerment as a means (if not an end in itself) is thus implicit in successful accountability initiatives.

In Ethiopia, the World Bank is supporting the addition of a “demand side” component to the second round of the Woreda City Benchmarking Survey (WCBS II). The World Bank is also carrying out the Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) Project, focusing on oversight of elected local councilors and citizens on local governments. The demand side analysis will capture citizens perceptions of key public services provided at the Woreda and Kebele level and the extent to which they are informed of and can influence delivery of these services whereas the ALCOSA project would complement this by focusing on elected councillor oversight.

Some evidence already exists on the factors influencing the ability of citizens in Ethiopia to hold local government to account for services they are intended to deliver. The limited access to information has been identified as a constraint in repeated studies but many other factors are also involved. A World Bank/DFID (2005) analysis suggests that four key factors influencing local governance are:

1. Incentives from the formal state system that discourage active citizen participation
2. A traditional political culture that emphasizes hierarchy and conformity to authority
3. Particular constraints on women making their views heard
4. The role played by non-state community institutions (NSCI) in providing a voice to citizens and engaging with local government

This latter issue (which has a significant gender dimension) is highly relevant for the WCBS II as the role played by these NSCI is likely to vary widely across the sample areas. A reading of studies by Bevan and Pankhurst (2007), Intrac (2004) and Pratt and Earle (2004) suggests diversity in the type of NSCI, the functions performed, their capacity and the relationship between the NSCI and local government. Other studies have focused on Iddir (burial societies) – a particular NSCI.

As noted above, one of the factors that may determine how individuals engage with and influence public service delivery in any Kebele is the type of non-state community institutions (NSCI) that

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have been established to meet local needs. These range from local social institutions (in the case of iddir originally established as burial associations), locally-organised CBOs (such as water committees), donor or NGO-supported community organisations with a specific development objective through to small scale private businesses focussed on filling gaps in public service provision in their community.

These NSCI may perform a number of functions that influence how local government services are delivered. NSCI functions include providing a mechanism for expressing voice (arguably excluding community-based businesses) and as providers of substitutes or complements to local government services. It is important to note that function is distinct from type as many iddir have remained focussed on their traditional services while in urban areas, some large iddir are using funds to provide collective health insurance.

There is certainly evidence to suggest that the relationship between local government and informal institutions involved in public service delivery varies widely. Bevan and Pankhurst (2007) provide examples of formal institutions co-opting traditional community organisations that appear to strengthen service delivery (such as the judiciary giving responsibility to community elders to resolve disputes). Pratt and Earle (2004) summarise a number of case studies in which formal and informal institutions work together to improve service delivery in rural and urban Kebeles. Yet the authors also describe cases where community-based organisations have been hindered by antagonistic or incapable local government.

While variation in the type of NSCI, the functions performed and their capacity may affect the relationship with local government, a number of other factors (such as local culture and political context) are also likely to be involved. The experience documented in the studies cited above provides an illustration of what works or does not in particular contexts and there is a need to draw out lessons that can inform both local government and development programmes.

**The Task**

The outputs required are:

1. To prepare a background paper (including a non-technical executive summary) based on existing evidence that:
   a. Explains the interaction and relationships between community (often informal) organizations and formal organizations within the Woreda and Kebele that have responsibility for service delivery in these areas. This will help understand under what circumstances informal organizations increase or reduce the legitimacy of formal institutions and how?
   b. Assesses whether there are particular challenges or opportunities for social accountability presented by involving community institutions in the delivery of agricultural extension, water supply, health and education services.

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79 Bevan and Pankhurst (2007)
80 Pratt and Earle (2004)
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ANNEX 2: Woreda organisational chart

N.B (Police, Militia, Justice, Court) at district level are accountable to their respective Regional Bureaus.
### Note for Acronym:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANRS</td>
<td>Amhara National Regional State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Capacity Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FED</td>
<td>Finance &amp; Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPOA</td>
<td>People Participation &amp; Organization Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD</td>
<td>Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoTIUD</td>
<td>Bureau of Trade, Industry &amp; Urban Dev't</td>
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<tr>
<td>BoWUD</td>
<td>Bureau of Works &amp; Urban Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoYCS</td>
<td>Bureau of Youth, Culture &amp; Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoLSA</td>
<td>Bureau of Labour &amp; Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMA</td>
<td>Mass Media Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAO</td>
<td>Women Affair Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Rural Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoA</td>
<td>Bureau of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoCP</td>
<td>Bureau of Cooperative Promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPLAUA</td>
<td>Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRA</td>
<td>Rural Road Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARI</td>
<td>Agricultural Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPPC</td>
<td>Disaster Preparedness &amp; Presentation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS</td>
<td>Food Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERAR</td>
<td>Sustainable Environmental Rehabilitation in Amhara Region</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Annex 3: Brief details of further examples of the relationships between formal and informal institutions identifying opportunities and constraints encountered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief description</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Guraghe People’s Self-help Development Organization (GPSDO) / Guraghe Road Construction Organization (GRCO)</strong>&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Ownership of community resource created?: A key element in the sustainability of the organization was the raising of funds to continue operations. The toll system set up by the organisation, operated for about three decades and served as the main source of funds, for road maintenance and other activities but was removed by local government authorities in 1996. Road maintenance is said to have deteriorated since it was taken over by the government. A key issue for community groups is: what is the extent of their user and ownership rights over the resource.</td>
<td>(i) High levels of social organization and strong urban-rural linkages: Sebat-Bet Guraghes are said to have a long history of a high level of social organization. Migration is a key livelihood strategy, along with the social obligations of Guraghe migrants, and were factors that encouraged the people of Sebat-Bet to undertake associational activities. <strong>Traditional belief system:</strong> elders had the power to convey blessings and curses on the younger generation thus providing incentives to the younger generation to be involved in the organization. <strong>Education levels among elites:</strong> Urban Guraghe elites who had attended an elementary school built by Catholic missionaries were instrumental in the formation of GRCO. <strong>Government support:</strong> The Imperial Government of Ethiopia, through technical and direct material support. The Ethiopian Highways Authority was authorized to cover about 35% of the cost of road construction. This is in contrast to the early days of EPDRF.</td>
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<td>Started in 1961 (with many previous years of preparation) the initial primary objective was the development of transport infrastructure in Guragheland. The focus of the first phase was connecting Wolkite to Emdibir (30 kms) by road, followed by Emdibir to Hosaena, a further 96 kms. The second phase was focused on connecting all Woreda capitals of Sebat-Bet Guragheland to Emdibir. The construction of such a length of road is a major achievement for any community-based organization. In the late 80s activities were expanded to include other socio-economic problems (health, education, water supply, environment) in Sebat-bet Guragheland. The organization is till in existence today though operating under severe financial constraints.</td>
<td>Perception by government that political activity was incompatible with development activities: Some of the policies of the GPDF were contrary to certain core principles of the ruling party, the EPRDF. In addition political divisions occurred in the organization – between those that supported the ruling party and those in favour of the opposition.</td>
<td><strong>Over-stretch:</strong> It was said to be “difficult and exhausting for a community to continuously raise resources to finance every single community project it needed” <strong>Corruption or a perception of corruption among leaders:</strong> It is unclear if and to what extent there was misuse of funds. However lack of transparency of structures. <strong>Dependence on volunteers resulting in lack of capacity continuity:</strong> Out-sourcing of</td>
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unpaid professional support and leadership eas said to have had limitations in inhibiting continuity and lack of institutionalisation of capacity development.

**Marginalisation of some groups** in involvement and decision making: The organization has been criticised for failing to ensure that marginalized groups were involved. In many cases participation on the part of the community consisted of providing labour.

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<th>8.</th>
<th><strong>Sida-Amhara Rural Development Program (SARDP)</strong>: The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has been working with Woredas in the Amhara Regional State to try and improve engagement of local government personnel with communities. The intention is to raise the standard of living conditions of the rural poor through improvement in service provision, promotion of good local governance and the introduction of projects to promote sustainable agricultural development. The programme centres around the Woreda Development Fund which, in the context of decentralisation, aims to strengthen the Woredas and improve their capacity in planning, administering and delivering services. It is hoped that this will encourage communities to discuss problems, prioritise them and then work with the Woredas to ensure their needs are incorporated into local development plans.</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Lack of finance</strong>: Woreda capacity to generate its own revenue was very low.<strong>Frequent transfer of Woreda staff</strong>: This has meant that capacity has to be continually rebuilt. It is unclear whether transferred staff have made use of their increased capacity in new postings.<strong>Heavy workloads at Woreda level</strong>: The woredas’ effectiveness in planning, implementation etc. is said to be constrained by their heavy workload, frequent transfer of staff and delays in funding.<strong>Lack of capacity at Woreda level</strong>: The capacity of the Woredas in some technical aspects of the program was very low or absent. The number of interventions was below that required for a significant impact on poverty reduction or improved food security. Participatory planning tends to remain at the level of consultation with communities making autonomous demands on the Woreda.<strong>Remoteness of Woreda from the community</strong>: without visible results could provoke planning fatigue and discourage the communities from participation. The selection</td>
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| | **Enhanced Woreda capacity**: Despite the difficulties encountered, a rise in skills and prestige of the Woredas and a resultant increase in cooperation and participation of communities is said to have occurred**Early successes in watershed management**: Watershed management interventions show particular promise of community participation and ownership, with the potential to both improve incomes and protect environment in the long term. This intervention is said to also involve women and men working together.**Some success in land registration.**
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<p>| 9. | <strong>Dalocha Women Water Development Association (DWWDA)</strong>: DDWDA has managed since 1996 (until at least 2004) an extensive water supply scheme consisting of two systems. The spring system is based on a 70 km pipeline network with 36 water supply points (known as water kiosks). The borehole system consists of 6 deep boreholes powered by generators and pumps with their own water kiosks. The two systems together supply water to 83 000 people in the project area(2004), in SPNNR. Construction was implemented through an NGO, Action Aid, Ethiopia (AAE) and the project is run by women. It has emphasised a lead role for women in the <strong>Poor relations with Woreda administration</strong>: At least in the past, there is said to have been opposition from the “male-led Woreda authority”. DWDDA has had the provision for an advisory board drawn from various Woreda level government and non-governmental organizations. This body was never formed. <strong>Lack of recognition of the legal status of the organization</strong>: Despite a four way agreement between DWDDA, AAE, the Woreda government and the Regional Bureau of Water, Mines and Energy, there were still challenges to the legitimacy of DWDDA and refusal to recognize the association’s mandate to manage the water project. An earlier <strong>Sense of solidarity and empowerment amongst women</strong>: Not only DWDDA leadership but also ordinary women are said to hold strong opinions about the importance of solidarity among women to protect the water scheme and keep the management of the water scheme under women’s control. <strong>Receptiveness to new ideas</strong>: The area to which the Dalocha community belongs is said to be characterized as open and receptive to new ideas and innovations. This is partly attributed to long-standing and widespread mobility and migration to urban areas and the strong rural-urban linkages. | of projects to be funded by the WDF is finally made at Woreda level, which distances the communities from the decision-making process. <strong>Reaching the marginalized</strong>: Although measures have been put in place since 2004, at that time it is said that Woreda personnel have lacked the ability to incorporate issues of gender into planning processes. <strong>Source of technical support/ the downplay of the Zonal level of government</strong>: The review team (2004) saw a need to strengthen the zonal level as a focal point for the technical support to the Woredas. A lack of zonal and regional support to Woreda finance officers and accountants, in particular, was also noted. <strong>Lack of capacity at community level</strong>: Planning and decision-making capacity at the community level is constrained due to undeveloped grassroots democracy, high illiteracy levels and lack planning data is lacking. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>running and governance of the water scheme from the very beginning. The sponsor, ActionAid, has invested heavily, not only in the infrastructure, but also in developing the capacity of a women, often illiterate, to manage the programme.</td>
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<td>Woreda administrator attempted to disband DWWDA and replace it with some of kind of a cooperative organization under the control of the Woreda government. For three days the DWWDA office was closed and the distribution of water was interrupted.</td>
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<td>Power struggles between local government and DWWDA over control of resources: It is said that “the issue of power and control over resources is a central part of the explanation for the problematic relationships between DWWDA and the Woreda government”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent and rapid turnover of staff in the Woreda administration has led to lack of continuity and failure to devote time and effort to follow up and familiarization with DWWDA resulting in lack of partnership with the Woreda. Relationships that have been formed have depended on a personal rather than an institutional basis.</td>
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<td>Lack of formal education among DWWDA membership: Most ordinary members, as well as leaders (general assembly as well as board members) were illiterate at the time DWWDA was formed. There are concerns about the sustainability of the project due also to its size and complexity. Board elections have not been run, said to be due to lack of suitably qualified candidates.</td>
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<td>Dependency syndrome: The high level of investments made by AAE in terms of infrastructure and in capacity building has undoubtedly led to the success of the project. However there are concerns that DWWDA was overly dependent on NGO support.</td>
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<td>NGO support: Concerns have been expressed about dependency. However it is undoubtedly true that the project would not have been achieved without the support of AAE including their political clout and protection both at the local and regional level.</td>
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<td>More recent local government recognition: The current (2004) chief administrator has indicated that the Woreda administration recognizes DWWDA as an independent and legally registered association mandated to manage the water project (as long as it is well managed). The administrator also accepted that the water system is well managed.</td>
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<td>Kebele water conflict resolution committees. These committees consisted of elders, religious leaders and kebele members with a remit to tackle man-made problems on the water systems, resolve conflicts and ensure the protection and safety of the water distribution system, were said to be successful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 10. Save Your Holy Land – An initiative to preserve cultural and historical heritage:

Established in 2000 by a group of university graduates, the initiative draws on local cultural concerns and priorities in order to address initially, damage to the historic rock hewn churches in Lalibela. The internationally recognized site had suffered from environmental degradation and an influx of destitute people begging from tourists. Lack of government efforts to address these problems were seen to be the original motivation for the group.

The group have managed to achieve their original goals by organizing voluntary clean ups, and reforesting a buffer area, they have been motivated to build on this initial work to develop several other initiatives, including cross-generational work with local elders and young people as well as work with youth around HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. Forums have been set up that promote exchanges of experience between elders and the younger generation and have provided a space for the local community to talk about emerging social changes and problems.

**Lack of technical support from the Woreda:**

Although the group has had strong support from the Woreda administration in the form of a steering committee to coordinate government and NGO activities in the locality, the Woreda administration lacks relevant expertise and funds and is said to be unable to provide much practical assistance to the group. For example, advice on the effects of trees grown near the foundations of the churches was sought but not forthcoming.

**Bureaucratic obstacles:** The process of registration took over a year before the group achieved formal registration with the federal Ministry of Justice, as required by law and is said to have nearly caused the group to abandon its efforts.

**Resource constraints:** Although initially seen as having advantages in that the group focused on sensitization with the community, lack of financial resources has seriously affected their progress towards the realization of their objectives.

**Based on locally recognized need:**

Despite having few external resources, success of the project is attributed to it addressing a locally recognized and shared need.

### 11. Formal and indigenous institutions for settlement of land dispute among the Arsii Oromo, Southern Ethiopia:

Disputes over land are a frequent and serious problem in many parts of Ethiopia. Among the Arsii Oromo people of Kokossa Woreda two main institutions are present for the settlement of land disputes: The formal or state structures most commonly used are the office of the Kebele Chairperson (most commonly used formal structure) or the office of the Woreda administrator. Alternatively land disputes can be heard by the indigenous land dispute institution made of elders and notables from the local community (jaarsa). Land dispute committees from neighbouring “neutral” ethnic groups can also be involved where

**Corruption in the formal system:** From interviews the researcher (Mamo Hebo) found that interviewees believed they could win a case in the formal system but this depended upon either paying money to the officer in charge or by paying others to give false testimony. Therefore the formal system was seen by respondents as both expensive and frequently unfair.

**Negative interaction between informal and formal institutions:** Results in undermining the justice process and duplication of effort.

**Hierarchy of systems:** It was said that in local Arsi custom, that is “wrong” to take a case first to government before presenting to the local jaarsa. Therefore in local culture, attempts were usually made to settle the dispute through informal institutions.

**Reconciliation:** Customary dispute settlement was said to go through three stages: a) the matter is discussed; b) attempts are made to settle the matter and c) a stage of reconciliation. The third step – reconciliation is missing from the formal system. Therefore disputes settled through the formal system are seen as incomplete.
there is a need for greater neutrality.

At both the Kebele and Woreda level, there are formal judicial structures: the Kebele Social Affairs Court and the Woreda court. However these were not used for land disputes in the area studied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive interaction between informal and formal systems: this happens when both institutions seek to settle disputes (circumstances under which this happens are not described)</th>
</tr>
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| 12. | **Yegof Mountain: State and Community forest in South Wello:** In this example Pankhurst describes some of the tensions that exist between the state and community institutions in managing local natural resources using an example located near Kombolcha town, South Wello. She describes how indigenous natural resource management institutions are unlikely to exist or rather their function is generally carried out by other social institutions. She argues that resource management institutions although clearly localized cannot be understood in isolation from regional, national and even global interactions. The few examples of community forests that remain in South Wello have often derived their backing from religious leaders and institutions and the forests are limited in scale. The study describes a number of attempts by the state, under different regimes to co-opt local leaders and institutions to their own agendas. The history of forest management has been characterized by state imposition and resistance by local communities. The study concluded that state involvement has “tarnished the legitimacy” of local institutions. |
|---|

| Co-option of indigenous institutions by subsequent state regimes: E.g, Attempt to co-opt the leader of local funeral associations into handing over culprits (during the Derg era) Repeated co-option attempts by the different state regimes has led to mistrust of governmental agency. Indigenous and state priorities in conflict: Local priorities have been to obtain pasture for livestock and state-led afforestation interventions have often been seen as a threat to pasture resources. Conflicts in perceptions of land rights: Establishment of state forestry on what was considered ‘rist’ land – land on which taxes had been paid and their were claims by descent. Under formal law, all land belongs to the state. Misuse of formal leadership positions: Forced resettlement of people from the area during the Derg period. Leadership positions were used to send “rivals and enemies to resettlement” from the state forest and other areas. |

1. Source: Abebe in Pratt and Earle (2004); personal communication with representatives
2. Source: Mussa in Pratt and Earle (2004); personal communication with SARDP staff.
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Source: Pankhurst (2001)