Factors Contributing toward Chronic Food Insecurity among Women in Rural Ethiopia

This report is the output of an internship with CARE Ethiopia’s Chronically Food Insecure Rural Women Program Design Team as part of a masters degree at Northumbria University (UK)

Kevin McBriarty

May 2011
Contents

1 Introduction .................................................. 3
  1.1 Background ........................................ 4
  1.2 Relevant Theoretical Literature .................. 17

2 Methodology ............................................. 26
  2.1 Research Questions ................................ 26
  2.2 Research Methods ................................ 27
  2.3 Constraints ......................................... 33

3 Results ....................................................... 36
  3.1 Overview of Study Areas ......................... 36
  3.2 Human Condition .................................... 36
    3.2.1 Farmland ..................................... 36
    3.2.2 Crop Issues .................................. 39
    3.2.3 Water and Technology ..................... 41
    3.2.4 Infrastructure ................................ 42
    3.2.5 Alternative Incomes ......................... 43
    3.2.6 Productive Safety Net Programme ........ 48
    3.2.7 Health ........................................ 49
    3.2.8 Education ..................................... 52
  3.3 Social Position ...................................... 53
    3.3.1 Marriage and Causes of Female-headed Households 54
    3.3.2 Taboos ........................................ 57
    3.3.3 Access to Information ....................... 58
    3.3.4 Aspirations ................................... 58
  3.4 Enabling Environment .............................. 60
    3.4.1 Health ........................................ 61
    3.4.2 Trade ......................................... 63
    3.4.3 Employment .................................. 63
    3.4.4 Capital ........................................ 65
    3.4.5 Productive Safety Net Programme .......... 66
    3.4.6 Agricultural Productivity .................. 66
    3.4.7 Participation ................................ 67
    3.4.8 Population Growth ......................... 68
    3.4.9 Vision ........................................ 69
    3.4.10 Geographic Information System ........... 69

4 Conclusion ............................................... 71

Appendix 1 – Case Studies 1 to 20 ....................... 75
Appendix 2 – Specific Kebele Needs ................... 97
Appendix 3 – Location of Sites ........................ 98
Appendix 4 – Demographic Data ....................... 99
Appendix 5 – Tools .......................................... 110
Appendix 6 – Focus Groups 1 to 16 Summaries ....... 115
References .................................................. 131
The Researcher

For 6 months, from July to December 2010 I have been working with CARE as a voluntary intern to assist the Chronically Food Insecure Rural Women Program Design Team (CFIRW PDT) for my Northumbria University masters dissertation.

Assisted by the advice and support from the CFIRW PDT, this research consisted of firstly a document review followed by field trips to West Hararghe and then South Gondar.

This report is the result of that research and is intended to influence and benefit the CFIRW PDT and all of its stakeholders.

Contact email: kevin.mcбриarty@blueyonder.co.uk

Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to CARE Ethiopia staff and specifically Moges Tefera and Alix Carter for providing this opportunity. A thank you goes to all of the CFIRW PDT for their comments and input, and provision of documents. Gratitude is further expressed for the provision of resources and transportation.

In West Hararghe CARE office in Asebe Teferi, particular thanks goes to Asrat Bekele and Abiyot Mulugeta for their efficient and friendly support. Also thanks goes to Berhanu for his considerable help in organising and interpreting interviews in the field in Doba. Thanks also to all other staff who co-ordinated, interpreted and provided transport.

In South Gondar, special thanks goes to Abebaw Kebede for his assistance in scheduling all field interviews and provision of transport. Thanks also to all those who helped arrange field interviews, and especially Alemtsehay Mengesha for all interpreting and assistance throughout the whole study.

Great appreciation is given to all administration staff interviewed who gave up their time to provide information and especially to the rural women and men who stopped their usual work to give information for this study.

Finally, a thanks goes to the Northumbria University staff: to Dr. Janaka Jayawickrama for help in the initial stages and to Dr. Samantha Jones for suggestions on the final report.
Factors Contributing toward Chronic Food Insecurity among Women in Rural Ethiopia

Abstract
Memories persist of the great Ethiopian famines of 1973 and 1984, which have left indelible images in people’s minds. Ethiopia has moved on and changed significantly since then yet food insecurity continues to affect millions of its inhabitants. This study investigated the causes and factors of chronic food insecurity among the most vulnerable rural women using a qualitative approach, and undertook 20 in-depth interviews with rural women and 16 mixed gender focus group discussions in the two mountainous locations of West Hararghe and South Gondar. The findings show that there is no unique dominant cause for chronic food insecurity but that individuals have their own unique set of factors. The results highlight a number of new issues and challenge current views and approaches to food insecurity while suggesting areas for future development; and land shortages or degradation, population growth, too much or little rain and access to credit are among the many problems raised. A heavily gender-biased culture puts women and girls at distinct disadvantage but the underlying problems lie elsewhere. Also, the population is heavily dependent on rain-fed farming and the erratic weather, but solutions do not just lie in improving yields. Future development programmes must find sustainable and ethical ways for increasing microfinance and for creating non-agricultural opportunities for income generation. Included in the appendix are twenty case studies, demographic data from government officials and summaries of all sixteen focus groups.

1. Introduction
This research is the output from a six-month internship with CARE Ethiopia to assist in CARE’s newly formed programme development into overcoming chronic food insecurity among rural women.

Ethiopia, once famous for its tall and long lived people and a land of mystery, for the last few decades has become famous for another reason – famine. Hunger and Ethiopia have become inextricably linked in the world’s media and despite the input of food aid and the proliferation of non-governmental organisations since the mid 1980s life in rural Ethiopia continues to be some of the harshest in the world, with
millions requiring food aid every year (WHO, 2005, FAO, 2010). This study seeks to find the contributing factors of part of this problem so to guide future development.

There are many factors that have contributed and these are covered in the following background section. Agricultural decline has received much attention by researchers in addition to the pressure of rapid population growth and climate change, leading to degradation and deforestation. The background therefore investigates these and other relevant issues so as to provide an academic and historical setting so that a sense of the changing aspects of rural Ethiopian life can be appreciated.

This is an essential component in understanding why Ethiopia is in its current predicament, and together with the results section, which are largely about the present, can assist in forming cross-cutting future programmes for both long-term and short-term needs. However, this research has a particular focus: that of the issues for rural women living in two specific mountainous sites in West Hararghe and South Gondar.

Rural women are typically seen as one of the most vulnerable groups, and as such CARE’s progress will be measured against this group. This is not to say that males are not included, but that any improvement in all community members’ conditions must be reflected also in the women’s status.

The two sites of West Hararghe and South Gondar were selected because they are under CARE’s management. Both are mountainous and have a history of food insecurity but differ in that West Hararghe is a safety net beneficiary while South Gondar is not. West Hararghe is predominantly Muslim and is a cash-crop area but South Gondar is Orthodox Christian and mainly food-crop based.

1.1. Background
Ethiopia is a land of extremes; as one of the largest countries in Africa it covers an area of approximately 1.1 million km$^2$ with an estimated population of 80 million (WHO, 2008), ranking second only in population to Nigeria. With a population growth rate at about 2.7%, its population is one of the fastest growing in the world (Alene & Worku, 2009, Ararso et al., 2009), but is similar to many other sub-Saharan African countries. Yet, it is one of the poorest nations in the world and every year an

Ethiopia is distinct from other sub-Saharan countries in its terrain (See figure 1). Straddling the Rift Valley the country has a geologically recent volcanic history which has created a mountainous environment criss-crossed with steep ravines. This is significant as it means Ethiopia’s terrain is difficult to traverse, leaving many rural locations isolated. This isolation, both past and present, affects not just markets and availability of new techniques but also the attitudes and identity of the people themselves. Moreover, Ethiopia was further isolated over the centuries through being predominantly Christian but surrounded by Moslem countries.

![Figure 1. Mountainous terrain of Ethiopia (highlighted).](source: Wikimedia Commons (2010))

The country continues to have a very weak infrastructure, so much so that the country has the lowest road density per person in the world (ITU, 2002). Weak infrastructure has a number of impacts including lack of access to resources, to markets and education and health care. The result is that rural life has in many respects remained unchanged for centuries, including that of gender inequality.

**A Brief History of Ethiopian Politics**

As such, development of technology and ideas has been slow. Ethiopia has both experienced radical change, yet in other ways has stagnated. Those members of the population now in their late forties or older will have lived through three entirely
different types of regimes. Haile Selassie was the last of a long line of emperors that claimed decent from the Biblical King Solomon, and was deposed in 1974 by the Communist Mengistu Hailemariam. The new government, known as the Derg overturned the old feudal system with powerful landowners and brought in new land reform where all land was owned by the state. In 1991, the Derg too was overthrown to be replaced by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), led by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

This period has also seen three major famines, the first of which was in 1973 in the district of Wollo (Devereux, 1988). This was followed in 1984 by the most famous “Band Aid” famine, again afflicting Wollo, which captured the attention of the world’s media (BBC, 2000). Food aid poured in, and continued to do so for subsequent years. The perception, and this continues, is that the famine was the result of drought (see USAID (2009) for example), and more recently that climate change is the main contributor. Lessons were learnt and measures were put in place to prevent such happenings repeating, yet in 1999/2000 another famine again was being reported by the world’s media.

Since 1980 Ethiopia has been food deficit, requiring food imports either as aid or purchased. As stated earlier, every year approximately 5 million are in need of emergency food aid (FAO, 2010), and in 2003 that rose to over 10 million, or about 22% of the population (Negatu, 2004). Decades of aid, while undoubtedly has saved lives, has not strengthened Ethiopia against future food security threats.

![Figure 2. Per capita agricultural production (index) for Ethiopia, 1970-2000.](source: FAO (2001))

Despite three different political regimes each with very diverse political objectives, since the 1970’s Ethiopia’s food per capita production has shown a steady decline (see figure 2) (von Braun & Olofinbiyi, 2007). In conjunction with this is a continual
rise in the number of people that are in need of food assistance. Even in good harvest years food aid needs to be delivered, suggesting a deeper problem than only production shocks (Devereux, 2000). For three decades there has not been one year when a certain portion of the population has not been affected and in need of aid (Adenew, 2004). Ethiopia is not new to famine, as table 1 shows and Coates et al. (2010) cite claims that famine struck Ethiopia about once per decade, but recent times has seen a substantial increase.

**Agriculture**

Ethiopia remains one of the most rural countries in Africa with only 17% of the population urbanised (UNFPA, 2009). Agriculture accounts for 89% of employment (Devereux, 2000) and is mostly dependent on rain-fed smallholder farming. With very limited off-farm income, these households must produce all of their own food and are at the mercy of any climatic or other shocks, leaving many in a highly vulnerable state and chronically food insecure.

In addition, food access is not a constant within a household (a frequent smallest unit of studies), but can vary depending on such factors as income earner, gender and age. Food availability is dependent on location and livelihood strategy, and crucially dependent on entitlements to food. “If a person lacks the means to acquire food, the presence of food in the market is not much consolation.” (Sen, 1987, p.7). Despite this high level of dependence on rain-fed agriculture, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has stated:

“The agricultural sector remains our 
Achilles heel and source of vulnerability ... Nonetheless, we remain convinced 
that agricultural based development remains the only source of hope for 
Ethiopia (2000).” (Cited by Devereux et al. (2005), p.121)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Numbers of people affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964-1966</td>
<td>1.5 million people affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1974</td>
<td>2-3 million affected About 200,000 killed Emperor overthrown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-1979</td>
<td>1.4 million affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2 million affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-1984</td>
<td>8 million affected As many as 1 million killed Groundwork laid for overthrow of the Derg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1992</td>
<td>About 0.5 million affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>7.6 million affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>10 million affected 70-100 thousand killed Primarily pastoral areas with widespread livestock losses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>About 13 million affected – in need of food assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>12-14 million affected (including PSNP “chronic” caseload)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Coates et al. (2010)
The Ethiopian economy is dependent on low productivity rain-fed agriculture. Ten years on from that statement, Ethiopia’s prospects show little sign of improvement and food aid continues to come in to feed the millions of food insecure people.

This is not to say that some progress has not been made. In 2005 the Ethiopian government brought in the Programme for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) which has a strong focus on food security. Most notable in this regard was the introduction in 2005 of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), a part of the Food Security Programme (FSP), which was set up to target food insecure areas. Aid can then be delivered through food-for-work, cash-for-work (for public works) or by means of direct support. The overall goal of the FSP and PSNP is to assure food supplies, stimulate markets, build assets and rehabilitate the environment (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2009b). This is currently being superseded by the government’s five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) for 2010 – 2015.

This signifies a shift away from relief based programmes to disaster risk management. In July 2010 a new Disaster Risk Management policy will come into effect, managed by the new Disaster Risk Management / Food Security Sector (DRM/FSS), which is within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Coates et al., 2010). Nevertheless, even though these programmes are saving lives and are the source of hope for creating sustainable livelihoods, they also hide the shear scale of Ethiopia’s problems. Without the food aid, Ethiopia would have suffered its greatest humanitarian disaster. With the food aid, millions of lives have been saved but remain in perpetual poverty.

**Population**

In 1868 the population was interpolated as 6.6 million (Nyssen et al., 2009), where today it is estimated at over 80 million (WHO, 2008) and since

![Figure 3. Population and population growth](Source: World Bank (2010))

Figure 3. Population and population growth
1960 the population has almost quadrupled (see figure 3) (World Bank, 2010). At first sight this might appear to support a simple Malthusian principle of more people/less food, but of course there are many other factors coming in to play (Malthus, 1798). Indeed, other countries have undergone similar population growth but without becoming food deficit.

As a measure to bring population under control, in 1993 the EPRDF introduced the National Population Policy (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1993). Two of its aims were to increase the use of family planning from 4.0% to 44% by 2015, and to reduce the fertility rate of 7.7 children per woman to 4.0 by 2015.

This has had partial success, and use of family planning in 2007 has risen to about 33% among married women (CARE, 2010), and fertility rates are currently about 5.3. Despite this, Ethiopia’s population will continue to increase, albeit at a slower rate. The population has a young profile, hence even with the achievement of the targeted fertility level the population growth will remain high.

At current rates, the population is estimated to grow to 118 million by 2025, and to 170 million by 2050, however, food production shows little increase (Ararso et al., 2009). Ararso et al. (2009) adds that Ethiopia (and other sub-Saharan countries) have the necessary land and water resources to support the population but these are only used to a limited extent due to poor, or absent, water management practices.

If the focus remains on improving rain-fed agricultural yields, through water harvesting and short-growing high-yield crops, then Ararso et al. (2009) estimate that by 2025 Ethiopia will have an annual food deficit of US$ 16.3 billion, compared to US$ 5.2 billion in 1995.

However, under one scenario where the focus shifts to irrigated agriculture, the estimate for 2025 becomes a surplus of US$ 2.3 billion (Ararso et al., 2009). Some assumptions for growth rates of yield and expansion were necessarily made by the researchers, nevertheless it is clear that efficient water management can play a vital role in reducing food insecurity. If the government of Ethiopia is committed to agriculture then rain-fed agriculture alone will not be sufficient to feed the population.
Investment in irrigation has been shown to reap results in such examples as Bangladesh and India (del Ninno et al., 2007).

**Land Tenure**

With a finite amount of arable land, rapid population growth and a high dependence on smallholder rain-fed agriculture, land shortage for food production is reaching critical levels. An estimated 40% of households have less than 0.5 hectares of farmland, and this is inadequate to sustain a family (Devereux, 2000). In the 1960’s the average plot *per person* was 0.5 hectares, but by 1999 it was down to 0.21 hectares, and continues to decline (Alene & Worku, 2009).

Land ownership policy has gone through a number of changes over the past three decades, and continues to be debated. Between 1976 and 1991, the Derg government confiscated all rain-fed farmland for redistribution. This was to reduce vulnerability and poverty, and bring equity and efficiency. Land was henceforth owned by the state, and could not be bought or sold. After the overthrow of the Derg, the EPRDF continued with the state ownership of land, and began its own redistribution (Devereux et al., 2005). Land distribution has taken place as recently as 1997, but the government claims there are no further intentions to do so (Coates et al., 2010, Guinand, 1999b).

Critics argue that fear of future redistributions acts as a disincentive for investment on the land. Those in favour of private land ownership state that this would allow for land to be used as collateral against loans for investment, or that land could be sold, thus creating capital for alternative investments and allowing larger farms to develop. Maxwell and Wiebe (1999) cite previous studies that suggest an inverse relationship between farm size and productivity. If employment opportunities are limited then more family labour is applied on-farm, and also requiring less supervision with lower transaction costs. However, they go on to state that when markets function well, large farms have superior access to credit, technology, irrigation and output markets. Therefore the relationship between farm size and productivity takes on a U shape, with medium size farms being less productive.

However, the Ethiopian government is firmly against any plans to privatise land, which it says would result in the “urbanisation of poverty” (Devereux et al., 2005).
This is a valid criticism as it would almost certainly lead to the destitute being compelled to sell their land at distress prices. This would benefit the wealthy who would accumulate land, while leaving the destitute without even the basic land safety net, albeit small in many cases.

In a study by Bewket and Sterk (2002), with a sample size of 50 households 84% were in favour of the state ownership of land but that time periods for redistribution should be at intervals of 15 to 20 years. Certification, that guaranteed occupancy for 20 years, could be one solution to redistribution fears that may act as a disincentive for farm investments.

**Climate Change**

Climate, especially climate change, is regularly listed as a major contributor to the food insecure state of Ethiopia and drought remains the top priority by the government (Coates et al., 2010). Farmers also reflect this in their claims that the weather is indeed different to what it was a few decades ago (Amsalu et al., 2007, Oxfam, 2010). However, evidence does not bear out any significant change in rainfall, although some changes in the pattern of rainfall have been observed.

Oxfam states (2010) that according to the National Meteorological Agency, average countrywide annual rainfall trends have remained more or less constant between 1951 and 2006, but with high variability. Likewise, Nyssen et al. (2009) state that historical information and measured climatic data show that rainfall conditions in the late 19th century were similar to those in the late 20th/early 21st century. In a previous study Nyssen et al. (2004) provide data again showing no trend in rainfall over the last one hundred years (See figure 4).

Figure 4. Time series of annual precipitation (P): area-average (1– 11 gauges) over the Blue Nile basin. The smooth curve is obtained using a 10-year Gaussian filter.

Cheung et al. (2008) provide compelling evidence in favour of no significant change in rainfall in Ethiopia since 1960 (see figure 5). The study also states that due to scarcity of historic data, previous rainfall studies have produced contradictory and perhaps misleading trends. When certain watersheds did show signs of rainfall decline

Figure 5. Ethiopian Annual Rainfall

Source: Cheung et al. (2008)

Figure 6. Variability in Belg and Kiremt Rainfall

Source: Cheung et al. (2008)
in the *meher/kiremt* (main) rainfall, a corresponding rise was seen in the *belg* (small) rainfall. As figure 6 shows, the *belg* rain exhibits a naturally high level of variability.

For the present times, if rainfall has not appreciably altered over the previous decades, then it cannot account for the high level of increased vulnerability and chronic food insecurity. However, such a high reliance, as is seen today, on small-scale rain-fed agriculture, with a known erratic weather pattern, can only lead to repeated shocks and stress.

**Land Degradation**

According to Shiferaw and Holden (1999), soil erosion is the most serious environment problem in Ethiopia. Similarly, Amsalu *et al.* (2007) state that land degradation in the Ethiopian highlands is considered to be one of the major problems affecting agricultural development and hence food security. For a country that is predominantly consisting of smallholder producers, and in the absence of non-agricultural incomes, the ability of the land to produce sufficient food is of paramount importance. However, Devereux *et al.* (2005) state that it is not soil productivity *per se* that is the problem, but variability of yields and erratic weather.

Land resources are the most important natural resource for Ethiopia, and land degradation is one of the major problems for food security but knowledge about the long-term dynamics of land resource use is limited (Amsalu *et al.*, 2007).

Population increase inevitably leads to changes in land use, both positive and negative, and is reflected in the reduction of allocated land per household. Plots may be subdivided and fragmented for offspring, but also many remain landless which is a problem that particularly affects the youth (Coates *et al.*, 2010).

Amsalu *et al.* (2007) conducted a study of land resource use in the Beressa watershed, approximately 140 km north-east of Addis Ababa in which they investigated land use changes from 1957 to 2000. The area is mountainous ranging from 2700m to 3600m and is one of the more densely populated regions of the country, with a very high livestock density. From 1957 to 2000 the population underwent a fourfold increase, but crop yields showed very little improvement.
Most notable changes over the 43 years were the decrease in natural vegetation (83% reduction) but this is compensated for by a 51% reduction in bare land, which was converted to cropland, plantations or grazing land. Plantations saw a 495% increase, while cropland grew by a modest 10%, with the abandonment of the use of fallow land (Amsalu et al., 2007).

Pressure for cropland, which saw a per capita decline from 1.96 ha in 1975 to 0.53 ha in 2000, forced people to use more marginal land. Of concern, is the use of the steeper slopes for cropland. With natural vegetation removed, soil erosion and downstream flooding increased (Amsalu et al., 2007).

To compensate for yields not keeping pace with population, many farmers sought alternative incomes. These included dairy cattle, tree planting and manure selling. The markets favoured dung-cakes, and these where sold as fuel in order to provide an income for food purchases. The consequence of this was that dung was no longer being used as fertilizer but burnt for fuel, thus soil nutrients are steadily removed from the landscape in addition to erosion from rainfall (Amsalu et al., 2007).

With population pressure forcing people to use marginal land, erosion from heavy rainfall becomes an increasing problem. Expanding cultivation into previously unused steep slopes is a major factor in soil erosion (Amede et al., 2001, Bekele & Drake, 2003, Bewket, 2007, Bureau of Agriculture & GTZ, 2004, Tefera & Sterk, 2010). Female-headed households are more likely to be unfairly given such inferior plots that have poor soil quality or are on steeper slopes, but legal challenges can be slow or biased (CARE, 2010).

**Deforestation**

Over the last half century there have been significant land use changes, including deforestation and cultivation moving into marginal areas. However, one remarkable study which compared photographs taken in 1868 to ones in the present, makes the extent of deforestation open to question (Nyssen et al., 2009).

Nyssen et al. (2009) used photographs taken by the British during the “Abyssinian Expedition” against emperor Tewodros II. Figure 7 shows the study area.
Their analysis showed that many of the places featured have more tree coverage today than in 1868, and they challenge the view of Ethiopia’s lush past. As no studies on tree cover were carried out prior to 1900, it is not known how much of Ethiopia was naturally forested (Nyssen et al., 2004).

To what extent this extrapolates to other areas of Ethiopia is unknown, but highlights the need for caution against assumptions that population pressure necessarily leads to land degradation. Change happens, but can be both positive and negative.

**Figure 7. Location of the studied sites.**  
**Figure 8. Bolango: tree coverage has improved.**

**Figure 9. Wadela plateau: terraces constructed.**

Source: Nyssen et al. (2009).

**Soil and Water Conservation**

The inability of smallholder farmers to consistently produce adequate food lies at the heart of Ethiopia’s food insecurity in conjunction with rural settlements having almost no off-farm employment opportunities that can provide an alternative income. Irrigation and other soil and water conservation (SWC) methods are massively underutilised, but could bring a range of benefits. Not only is production increased, but wealth status also improves and farms that use irrigation are more likely to hire more labour and therefore benefits the landless (Gebregziabher et al., 2009).

For soil and water conservation methods to be successful and sustainable it is vital to win over the hearts and minds of the farmers, without which any measures will be doomed to long-term neglect (Tefera & Sterk, 2010, Bekele & Drake, 2003). Previous attempts, such as with early food-for-work schemes, have used a top-down approach
with the result that SWC structures built were abandoned or removed after completion (Bewket & Sterk, 2002). Later attempts have used a participatory approach but this frequently means little more than ‘participation by consultation’, where decisions and designs are made elsewhere (Bewket, 2007). Real participation is needed to ensure that projects are specific and relevant for each location and that farmers have ownership and feel empowered. Past schemes have used forced labour or coercion by development agents, creating long-lasting aversion to SWC measures (Bewket & Sterk, 2002, Bewket, 2007) and ill-conceived projects have caused more erosion than they prevented, such as when a bund breaks (Bewket & Sterk, 2002).

Few studies exist on farmers’ perceptions to SWC measures, and data on women’s attitudes or participation is almost completely lacking. The most recent of which (Tefera & Sterk, 2010) from West Hararghe surveyed 50 farm families, but only 3 were female-headed.

In addition to real participation, farmers’ awareness of erosion and its link to reduced productivity is an essential component for success. This is not sufficient however, for farmers also need the means to affect change, which can be financial or labour availability (Bewket, 2007). Kessler (2007) provides a detailed description of successful efforts in Bolivia of community acceptance of SWC methods, achieved through a series of phases. The first of which is to change community perceptions and awareness and to form community cohesion, with the aim of generating a sense of belief that the community members (men and women) are able to change their environment for the better.

Dercon and Christiaensen (Dercon, 2004, Dercon & Christiaensen, 2007) show that farmers can be very risk averse, and understandably so. With such marginal incomes that are highly susceptible to the erratic weather, any investment that fails to produce returns could push a household into an irreversible decline. So, despite investments into irrigation and improved techniques being a route to a better livelihood, many farmers opt for the status quo (Holden & Shiferaw, 2002).

Change implies aspirations for a better lifestyle. The remoteness of households can be a significant barrier to the creation of aspirations, which require some knowledge on the desired outcome, and the means (or belief in the means) to achieve it. Women
especially, can be insulated from contact with the wider community and in addition receive a poorer level of education which impacts on their means. If knowledge of what is possible is restricted, and women are also frequently excluded from dissemination of information from community services, then the desire for any change will be diminished (Bernard et al., 2008).

For the most part, those that do wish to improve their farm will either require savings or credit to do so, and for most it will be the latter. Access to such credit will vary from location, wealth status and gender, and again, despite the predicted returns being favourable, the risk can be too great. Penalties for failing to being able to repay a loan can be severe and lead to loss of household assets, imprisonment or even the abandonment of the household (Coates et al., 2010).

1.2. Relevant Theoretical Literature

Food Insecurity Concepts
Since the large global famines seen during the 1970’s the conceptualization of food insecurity has gone through a number of phases and shifts, starting with a national or international scale where the emphasis was on food availability. Three primary shifts have taken place; a) a global outlook to a focus on households or individuals; b) a move from food availability to that of livelihoods and entitlements and c) a move away from objective indicators to more subjective perceptions (Maxwell, 1996, Barrett, 2002).

Thus the early focus was on the adequate production of food on a macro scale, despite the fact that famines were taking place in the presence of sufficiently stocked markets. With the work of Sen, Poverty and Famines, the concept of food entitlements was born and henceforth food insecurity would be seen as more than just about food production (Sen, 1981). Food availability decline (FAD) was joined with the concept of food entitlement decline (FED). This also shifted the focus away from macro to a micro scale, where the unit under study was the household or the individual (Maxwell, 1996, Anderson & Cook, 1999, Sen, 1981, Barrett, 2002).

The second shift was that of a more holistic approach with a focus on livelihoods rather than only food availability. It was increasingly recognised that individuals under the stress of food insecurity may actively choose to reduce food intake either
for themselves or other family members so as to improve long-term livelihood strategies (de Waal, 1997, Walker, 1989, Devereux, 1993).

The third shift was away from objective indicators to the more subjective feelings of deprivation (Maxwell, 1996). Individual calorie requirements will depend on a multitude of factors, such as physical size, age and workload, and also on the perceived notion of what is sufficient in that particular environment.

The result of these shifts are more diverse, adaptable, flexible and individually relevant strategies to overcoming food insecurity, and the current Food and Agricultural Organisation’s (FAO) commonly quoted definition of food security is:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”


For Ethiopia and its many subsistence farmers, FAD continues to be a major component of food insecurity where trade is minimal and most food is produced for home consumption. However, FED is becoming increasingly dominant as land per capita reduces and other livelihood strategies are taken up.

Devereux (1988) sums up the FAD and FED theories: either people go hungry because they lack adequate entitlements to food, or they go hungry despite having adequate entitlements in theory, which they cannot actually convert into food because of, say, a failure of markets to respond to demand signals.

Problems Faced
Devereux (2000) summarises conventional wisdom on the causes of food insecurity in Ethiopia as:

- Landholdings are too small - although (or because) unusually evenly distributed - to allow most farming households to achieve food production self-sufficiency;
- Population increase reduces landholdings further and places intolerable stress on an already fragile natural resource base;
• Soil fertility, already very low, is declining due to intensive cultivation and limited application of yield-enhancing inputs;
• Recurrent droughts add food production shocks to abnormally low yields;
• Limited off-farm employment opportunities restrict diversification and migration options, leaving people trapped in increasingly unviable agriculture.

Figure 10 provides a schematic illustration of the Institute of Development Studies’ (IDS) sustainable livelihoods framework which can be applied and adapted for each particular circumstance.

![The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework](image)

Figure 10. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework. Source: IFAD (2011)

The diagram in figure 10 has no specific starting point, but instead is a collection of feedback loops, and critically these are positive feedback loops wherein a certain trend will influence outcomes so as to reinforce that trend. For the poor this can be a downward spiral into destitution.

For the rural Ethiopian poor all five radials of the livelihood pentagon are weak, especially financial, natural and physical. Furthermore, shocks are severe and frequent, institutions are weak and gender-biased, thus strategies are extremely limited. All aspects of the framework need strengthening, and the ways in which this can be achieved is central to this study.

**Ways Forward**
In light of all of the above concerns, Devereux *et al.* (2005) have concluded that Ethiopia, at a national level, faces four possible pathways:

• Intensification of smallholder agriculture
Livelihood diversification
Commercialisation of agriculture
Depopulation

**Intensification.** Many of Ethiopia’s food insecure farmers are caught in a low risk poverty trap, unwilling or unable to take the risk of higher yield techniques (Dercon & Christiaensen, 2007). Ways to improve this can range from the simple to the more complex. For example, simple methods, such as reduced tillage, can make substantial impacts on reducing erosion (Amede et al., 2001). Introduction of more complex SWC methods must gain acceptance from the farmers that will use them; for any of the methods to be successful the first step is with farmers, men and women, to want change.

Many services continue to act through a male head of household (CARE, 2010), and some recent SWC programs have excluded female-headed households (Bewket, 2007). Men and women must be included in genuine participation, so as to take ownership of the SWC methods that are adopted. As previous schemes have involved some level of coercion by development agents, the development agents must be trustworthy and of excellent standard (Kessler, 2007, Bewket, 2007).

**Diversification.** In parallel with intensification, off-farm opportunities need to be increased. As interest in developing off-farm incomes tends to be higher among women, such schemes would also act to improve women’s status (Block & Webb, 2001, Zewdie, 2003), however, female uptake in micro-finance enterprises remains low (CARE, 2010). Furthermore, female participation in credit schemes can have a statistically significant impact on nutrition of women and children, but far less with male participation (Doocy et al., 2005). However, government “livelihood packages” such as beekeeping, goats or dairy products have been promoted but these invariably require the use of credit. For the very poor, the risk can be too great and with further shocks could result in an even worse situation (Devereux et al., 2005, Coates et al., 2010). Coates et al. (2010) during one day at a Tigrayan market, found that two thirds of livestock sold was for the purpose of repaying debts that had gone awry, and in some cases belonged to close relatives. Even more disturbing, some members of their focus groups had served time in jail due to inability to repay loans. Another option was to move away in the hope of not being tracked (Coates et al., 2010). In a related
study, from a sample of 246 people, less than 1% of credit loans were used to start a business, the majority were used to buy livestock (68%) or food (23%) (Maxwell et al., 2009).

Promotion of growth of small towns could further enhance diversification. Proximity to towns or markets has been shown to significantly affect households’ income (Devereux et al., 2005, Devereux & Sharp, 2006). Diversification need not only apply to household level but equally to larger scales, up to national level. For example, tourism remains unexploited despite the numerous, and unique, attractions Ethiopia has to offer. In 2005/2006 tourism, even without any marketing, still accounted for 13.9% of GDP (AfDB/OECD, 2007).

Commercialisation. Commercialisation of agriculture would go directly against the Ethiopian government’s current stance on land rights. Although, allowing the sale of land would allow entrepreneurial individuals to accumulate land, so combining tiny plots into large commercial farms. Whether these would be more productive is debateable, and it would remove the land safety net for those rural households that sold up (Devereux et al., 2005).

Depopulation. Resettling people is not new, and was controversially carried out by the Derg during the 1984/1985 famine. The principle is to move people from unproductive land to more favourable areas, but in practice it can be politically motivated.

Such measures break kinship ties, and social capital has been shown to reduce vulnerability and can act as a horizontal informal safety net (Devereux, 2001, FAO, 2000). Even if successful, resettlement can only be a temporary measure as the people that leave are rapidly replaced due to population growth. Settlers are likely to repeat mistakes and degrade the newly settled land also.

A more appropriate alternative, suggested by Gedamu (2006) could be to resettle people into villages within their own community, so as to concentrate people into one locality. This would stimulate the creation of villages which would bring greater market opportunities while also improving access to essential services.
Other than moving people to more productive areas or villages, greater effort is needed to slow the rapid population growth. Attitudes may be changing, and in a study based in North and South Gondar, Alene and Worku (2009) collected data that showed over 90% of women interviewed believed there were too many people (in the towns, villages and rural areas). Similar numbers also believed that birth control should be used, although some negative views towards this persist (Alene & Worku, 2009). In this North and South Gondar study, over 90% of the women were in favour of government legislation to limit family size.

**Individual Pathways Forward**

For the individual or household, there are also four similar ways forward: extensification, intensification, diversification and migration (Malmberg & Tegenu, 2006).

Extensification was undertaken until recent times, but due to population pressure from the 1990’s this has meant cultivation of marginal lands. Even these areas are no longer available to the new generation, and as a consequence find themselves landless (Malmberg & Tegenu, 2006). Other than by resettlement, extensification is no longer an option for the majority of rural people.

Intensification of farmland can take a variety of forms. It can result from simple measures of changing farming practices (such as reduced tillage), an increased frequency of planting or the use of inputs such as improved seed or fertilizer. New crop types could be tried and also soil and water conservation methods, including new technologies.

Diversification can be either on-farm or off-farm. On-farm strategies could involve livestock, horticulture or sales of fruit and vegetables. Off-farm options fall into two categories: waged labour or self-employment. The former requires less capital but brings fewer returns, while the latter involves higher risk but greater rewards.

Migration: this can be daily, seasonal or permanent but is not a sustainable solution for rural communities.
The Role of Gender in Ethiopia

The causes of food insecurity are not shared equally, in Ethiopia the role of gender significantly impacts on opportunities. Women are disadvantaged through traditional norms and cultural practices. Almost all of household tasks are carried out by women and girls, such as collecting fuel wood, fetching water, cooking, washing, cleaning and childcare. The head of the household is traditionally male and is the principal decision maker (Ogato et al., 2009).

Ogato et al. (2009), in a study based in the district of Ambo, show that in many of the farming tasks women do equal measures, but the workload is considerably more for hoeing and weeding especially in the absence of any technology. They also highlight significant gender differences in perceptions of causes of production problems. Women in female-headed households have an even greater workload than those in male-headed households.

It is not only tasks that are unequally distributed within households, Hadley et al. (2008) provide evidence of the difference in food allocation, which may be exacerbated when eating is done from one pot, as is common in Ethiopia. Their results showed that in severely food insecure households, adolescent girls were far more likely than boys to suffer food insecurity. This also comes at a vital time in their growth and could have lasting effects. Women and girls nutritional status not only affects the health of themselves but also that of offspring and hence the community at large (Pan et al., 2009).

Early or forced marriage and high levels of divorce can expose women to greater vulnerability. Female headed households in particular may be subject to discrimination and stigma attached to widowed or divorced women. This leads to lower levels of participation, fewer opportunities and in some cases inferior land, with lower quality soil or higher degree of slope (CARE, 2010). In a survey carried out by the United Nations, it was found that female-headed households had a 35% chance of being destitute, compared to only 8% for their male counterparts (UN, 2005). Reasons for a household losing the male head are from death, divorce or that the husband has left to find work or been resettled. Cultural taboos against women ploughing or climbing trees (for honey) also prevent female-headed households from competing on
equal terms and can force them into exploitative sharecropping agreements (CARE, 2010).

Education can hold the key to shaping one’s livelihood strategies, but again women and girls are at a disadvantage. The work burden of household tasks such as fetching water, prevent girls attending school, and girls are the first to be pulled from school at times when the household is under stress. Those that graduate from primary school are often prevented from attending secondary education due to fears arising from travelling to, or living in, a local town. Girls are exposed to the dangers of rape or early pregnancy (CARE, 2010). The young women that they become are put at a severe disadvantage for generating an income and employment, and many other aspects of life. Education can also be an effective method for reducing fertility as use of contraceptives is higher among educated women (Haile, 2004).

Finally, box 1 states the consensus of strategies that is needed for Africa to improve its food security status of its inhabitants.

**Box 1. Food security in Africa: a consensus strategy**

1. A primary focus on supplying vulnerable people and households with secure access to food: individual and household needs take precedence over issues of national food self-sufficiency or self-reliance.

2. The overwhelming necessity for peace and physical security, given that war is the single greatest cause of famine in Africa.

3. The importance of poverty-reducing economic growth: poor rural and urban people need secure and sustainable livelihoods, with adequate incomes and reasonable buffers against destitution; poor nations need buoyant economies and adequate foreign earnings, in order to provide jobs, acquire agricultural inputs and, where necessary, purchase food.

4. Within agriculture, growth strategies are needed which lay particular emphasis on generating jobs and incomes for the poorest groups, including those in resource-poor and environmentally degraded areas. Agriculture and rural development strategies should usually favour labour-intensity, though recognizing that some groups, especially female-headed households, may be short of labour and require more capital to increase productivity.

5. A balance between food and cash crops is likely to be the best route to food security, following the principle of long-term comparative advantage rather than of self-sufficiency for its own sake. However, the potential income gains from cash cropping should not be sought at the expense of measures to reduce risk, through diversification; and policies are required which maximize the benefit of cashcropping to the poor.

6. Efficient food marketing is needed, to store and distribute food, at reasonable prices, to all parts of the country in all seasons and in all years. In the long term, the private sector may acquire and redistribute food surpluses over time and space, efficiently, competitively and without excess profit.
However, the state retains a key role, as catalyst of the private sector, as buyer and seller of last resort and as controller of relief buffer stocks.

7. More effective and efficient safety nets need to be established, by strengthening community institutions, introducing new targeted food and nutrition interventions, and improving famine preparedness and response, especially at the local level. Improved targeting can limit the cost of these social security interventions, especially where the target group is small relative to the population and where administrative costs can be contained, for example, by geographical or self-targeting approaches.

8. Famine preparedness is a critical need in many countries, involving not just early warning, which is often adequate, but also improved capacity to respond. Possible measures include early decisions of when to import food, small, locally-based stocks of food for relief distribution, relief works that can be activated quickly, special programmes for vulnerable group feeding, early water and health interventions, and special programmes for rehabilitation.

9. Strong international support will be essential, through a more favourable trading environment, debt relief and greater and better-focused aid flows. Food aid can play an important part, but needs to be integrated more closely with financial aid and linked more closely to food security efforts, for example, by better management of counterpart funds.

10. Finally, food security planning should follow a "process" rather than a "blue-print" approach, with large-scale decentralization, a bias to action over planning, the encouragement of risk-taking and innovation, and the fostering of task cultures not role cultures in multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral planning teams.

**Final Remarks**

Ethiopia’s current problems of poverty and food insecurity stem from decades of lack of investment and development, spanning three radically different types of regimes. With one of the highest global population growth rates, this has now reached a critical level.

A very weak infrastructure and almost complete reliance on rain-fed agriculture means that alternative income opportunities are very few. Remoteness also leads to decreased education and awareness, which in turn exacerbates the cultural norms of placing women in an inferior position.

The causes of chronic food insecurity among women are numerous and deeply routed into Ethiopian society. To overcome them will require long-term planning, commitment at all levels, coordination and vision.
2. Methodology

2.1. Research Questions:

1. What circumstances led up to the chronically food insecure situation? In addition, what are the factors that contribute in causing households to become (and remain) female-headed (FHH)?

2. What are the barriers, especially for women, which hinder adoption of new livelihood strategies that would increase income and assist them in overcoming chronic food insecurity (CFI)?

Objectives

- Identify problems (perceived or real) and causes to existing food insecurity.
- Identify causes for loss of male household head.
- Find possible achievable community based solutions to alleviate food insecurity.
- Identify barriers that hinder success of food insecurity reduction schemes.

Research Philosophy

This research holds as key the view of Amartya Sen’s (Sen, 1981) that food security is a combination of food availability decline (FAD) and food entitlement decline (FED) through such means as loss of income and market access.

The research also views the chronically food insecure state that Ethiopia is experiencing is less to do with changing weather patterns as it is with changing social behaviour and land use.

Coming with a Western perspective, it is recognised that the greater population of Ethiopia will have a fundamentally different outlook on life and its processes but that there can be agreement and a merging of views, not conflict. Of significance is the researcher’s prior knowledge of the potential solutions and ways forward. For many of those living isolated rural lives, particularly women, these options may not be apparent nor sought.

Every person (including the researcher) will perceive situations in a different light, and there is no one correct interpretation and this is used to establish common patterns and associations (Mason, 2007). However, the culture is ancient and complex and due
to the rural nature combined with remoteness, access to information, knowledge or even news is severely lacking. It may be found that religious and supernatural influence perceptions, but it is also possible, even likely, that community members may have a very objective and practical view which has aided them in surviving many shocks over the years.

It has increasingly become aware by researchers that entitlements are not equal for all members of a household and as such the intra-household factors must be included. Among adults, it is women who are have the weakest entitlements and therefore the aim of this study was to interview key categories of women.

This is not to say, however, that men will be viewed more negatively than women, but rather that some differentiation will be applied to identify issues for all individuals (Neuman, 2006).

2.2. Research Methods

The aim of this research was to identify contributing factors of food insecurity, and to investigate intra- and inter-household relationships. Therefore, a qualitative approach has been adopted for the primary data, which involved 20 semi-structured interviews and 16 focus group discussions. The output from the interviews will further be used to generate 20 case studies (appendix 1 and appendix 6).

The advantage of a qualitative approach is in its ability to delve deeper into personal circumstances and opinions, how people feel and what family challenges they have faced. Focus groups compliment the depth of individual interviews by providing opportunities for participants to raise new and unexpected issues and allow snowballing of ideas to take place, in addition to observing inter-gender issues. This enables group dynamics to take effect and discussions will be allowed to run their natural course (Finch & Lewis, 2003).

As the subject under study is chronic food insecurity, an element of history and how situations have changed with time is necessary. Quantitative data for this is incomplete or unreliable and may contradict the experiences of those living through it.
Secondary quantitative and qualitative data is used where it is deemed appropriate, for example with local or national government statistics of food production, or rainfall data. Among predominantly agricultural communities, the physical environment underpins food security but is only one of many factors. In this instance, for such physical data, an objective approach is employed that will compliment the qualitative data. Additionally, the research takes a holistic view, of time and space, to provide a context in which to place the qualitative data obtained and the themes derived (Neuman, 2006, Walliman, 2006).

To get truthful and open opinions and viewpoints from people it is essential that the researcher gained acceptance from the community. The living conditions of the inhabitants are harsh and some element of pride can prevent details from being told. Therefore a rapport had to be established, along with trust and participants had to have a full and clear understanding of the aims of the research.

Once this is was achieved, initial observations of community life and the status of individuals began. An observational protocol was used consisting of a divided page: one side for descriptive notes and the other for reflective notes (Creswell, 2009).

**Sampling Strategy and Design**

This research is a qualitative study, involving twenty semi-structured interviews with women using a purposive sampling method, each lasting approximately one hour. Additionally, sixteen focus group discussions of one to two hours with men and women were carried out in such a way as to allow people to feel free to speak (see Tools, appendix 5).

The impact group under investigation consists of chronically food insecure rural women, so the sampling method sought female representative members of the community. Criteria for selection included various marital statuses, divorced and widowed, health and age. Women from both female-headed households (FHH) and male-headed households (MHH) were sought, and also of varying wealth categories, therefore success case studies are also included. Interviewees that represent certain key aspects were chosen, so that those aspects of livelihoods can be analysed. In this way the sample does not necessarily represent the larger community but highlights mechanisms within it. This group was categorised into four parts: female-headed with land and without land, plus male-headed with land and without land.
Quota and purposive sampling was carried out so as to represent the proportions in the communities at large, thus the largest proportion were married and more farmers than landless were included. All individual interviews were with women but half of the focus group discussions included men (see figure 11).

The sixteen focus groups were divided into four groups of four from the following categories: FHH, MHH (women), mixed gender landless and mixed gender (see Study Sites below).

All adult members of the community were to be represented but children were not included, as they have no part in decision making. There was not significant diversity in ethnicity at each study site, but different ethnic groups were covered by the two target areas (Mason, 2007). Quota sampling ensured that key categories were represented (Mack et al., 2005).

Although food insecurity of rural women was the focus, it is vitally important to get input from men as no community can be fully understood without considering all those that live within it. Half of the focus group discussions were of mixed gender and it was here that men could voice their opinions in addition to the development agents and administration staff who invariably are male.

Questions were constructed so as to be open, clear and non-leading. Care was also taken to avoid questions being judgemental or presumptuous, and to not cause anyone offence (Laws et al., 2003). Questionnaires and templates can be found in appendix 5.

Local government officials, village elders (where present) and household members were all included in interviews and focus groups. The method of recording will be to electronic record the conversation, while taking notes in case of equipment malfunction (Creswell, 2009).
Study sites

The field research was carried out by one researcher with the assistance of an interpreter. Two zones were chosen: West Hararghe and South Gondar and within these three woredas were selected (see appendix 3).

West Hararghe

Hararghe lies in the eastern part of Ethiopia, near the administrative centres of Dire Dawa and Harari. The highland areas are the only places where conditions are suitable for rain-fed agriculture. The landscape can be classified into three zones: the lowlands, the *kolla* (below 1700 m.), midlands, *weyna dega* (1700 – 2500 m.) and the highlands, *dega* (2500+ m.). Higher altitude production is more crop based, whereas lower regions are more livestock based (Guinand, 1999a).

Both the *belg* and *meher* (*kiremt*) seasons are used, but high variability in rainfall is a major hazard for farmers who consist mainly of smallholders. The main crops include sorghum and maize and there is an increasing trend for cash crops such as chat and coffee (Guinand, 1999a).

Farmers, besides having difficulty in accessing seed in time, delay preparation so that erosion due to wind is reduced and intercropping of maize with sorghum is practiced. This is not recommended as both crops must compete with each other (Piguet, 2003).

*Chat*, although a cash crop and therefore brings in an income, is becoming an increasing social problem as men take various times during the day to chew this mild narcotic (Zewdie, 2003). Once harvested, chat must be sold within 24 hours and consumed within 36 hours, so an efficient road infrastructure is essential (Guinand, 1999a).

Locations of Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

The study included the kebeles of Tokuma Meta Lenche and Lenche Wodesa in Doba woreda, and Arba Hora, Wachu Eltoke and Medicho 9 in Chiro woreda.

- 10 in-depth individual interviews with women from female-headed and male-headed households (HH), both with and without land
• 8 focus group discussions (FGD) covering 4 categories; female-headed, women in male-headed HHs, mixed gender landless and a mixed group from any category
• Key informant interviews were carried out with Woreda Administration, the Land and Environmental Protection Office, development agents, micro-finance institutions and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

South Gondar
Parts of South Gondar are some of the most remote areas in Ethiopia. Population density is high and the land is unable to sustain it. The climate is hot and the land is rocky and arid with poor soil quality and very little irrigation. The terrain is mountainous and often inaccessible during the rainy season. Farmers rely on the main (meher) rainy season but many have been forced to seek cultivatable land in marginal areas with steep slopes, leading to increased degradation (Guinand, 1999b).

Off-farm opportunities are few, and only 14% of the population engage in such work (CSA, 2005). Many of the households survive only with the assistance of food aid, but with frequent delays or even not arriving at all, farmers are forced into using ever destructive coping measures (Rami, 2002). Previous schemes to improve productivity through such methods as food-for-work have been of questionable effectiveness. Construction of stone terracing and bunds, done without the consent of the communities, lie in decay and serve as a haven for rodents which eat the precious harvests (Guinand, 1999b, Rami, 2002).

Road construction has improved access and brought business, but also has led to young girls migrating to prostitute themselves (Rami, 2002). Particularly vulnerable are the old, disabled, widowed, abandoned or divorced women, who are more likely to be landless or in the lower wealth categories (Guinand, 1999b).

Locations of Interviews and Focus Group Discussions
In South Gondar the woreda of Farta was selected and within this six kebeles were included: Buro, Kolay, Askuma, Sahirna, Kanat and Wukro. The format repeated that used in West Hararghe.
• 10 in-depth individual interviews with women from female-headed and male-headed households (HH), both with and without land
• 8 focus group discussions (FGD) covering 4 categories; female-headed, women in male-headed HHs, mixed gender landless and a mixed group from any category
• Key informant interviews were carried out with Woreda Administration, the Land and Environmental Protection Office, development agents, micro-finance institutions and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

The locations of each interview and focus group are displayed in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CARE premises</td>
<td>Mx1</td>
<td>Mx – mixed landless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokuma Meta Lenche</td>
<td>FH2, MH1, FH1, Mx3</td>
<td>MH – male headed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenche Wodesa</td>
<td>FHL4, FH4, MxL4</td>
<td>NM – newly married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arba Hora</td>
<td>NM1, NML1, FM1, FH1, MH1</td>
<td>Mx – mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wachu Eltoke</td>
<td>MH1, NM1, Mx1</td>
<td>MxL – mixed landless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicho 9</td>
<td>FH10, MxL3</td>
<td>Suffix L – landless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokuma Meta Lenche</td>
<td>FH11, MHL12</td>
<td>All interviewees were female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Askuma</td>
<td>NM13, FH14, FH14</td>
<td>Focus groups were female unless stated as mixed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE premises</td>
<td>FH16, MxL20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahirna</td>
<td>FH11, Mx12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanat</td>
<td>MxL13, Mx14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wukro</td>
<td>MxL15, Mx16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Location of Interviews and Focus Group Discussions.

Each specific study site was selected by CARE but covered a diverse range of habitats. Remoteness was an important element, and this was reflected in settlements varying in distance from main highways and distance from major markets and amenities. Each site had its unique characteristics including crop types, PSNP support, altitude, slope, water access, market access, community participation, health facilities and cultural practices (see table 3 and appendix 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West Hararghe</th>
<th>Chiro</th>
<th>Safety Net</th>
<th>Altitude (masl)</th>
<th>Distance to town</th>
<th>Distance to road</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arba Hora</td>
<td>PSNP</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>1.5 hrs</td>
<td>cash crops</td>
<td>drought</td>
<td>Good amenities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicho 9</td>
<td>PSNP</td>
<td>1720</td>
<td>0.5 hrs</td>
<td>0.1 hrs</td>
<td>cash crops</td>
<td>drought</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wachu Eltoke</td>
<td>PSNP</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>cash crops</td>
<td>disease</td>
<td>Remote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Gondar</td>
<td>Farta</td>
<td>PSNP</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>cash crops</td>
<td>Sizeable village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Askuma</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2510</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>hail, disease</td>
<td>Remote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buro</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2560</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>drought</td>
<td>Remote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanat</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2610</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>erosion</td>
<td>Near road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelay</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2316</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>0.2 hr</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>drought</td>
<td>Near road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahira</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2730</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>0 hrs</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>disease, drought</td>
<td>On highway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wukro</td>
<td>non-PSNP</td>
<td>2740</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>food crops</td>
<td>disease</td>
<td>Remote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Study sites and key characteristics.
The sample selection process was sensitive to gender, and actively sought input from female-headed households. Ethiopia has traditional differences in gender roles and these therefore put different pressures on daily life. Class differences were also acknowledged, from those in decision making posts, to the lowest income members.

Interviews were conducted with the assistance of an interpreter, from CARE staff or a personal colleague. All conversations were recorded electronically for storage on computer, but paper notes were also taken. Video, if there was a need for visuals, of landscape and crops were also taken using small and portable equipment. Electronic data is stored in two secure backups.

Following the transcribing of the recorded interviews and focus groups, analysis of the data was coded according to the various concepts that have become apparent during the study (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996, Mason, 2007).

### 2.3. Constraints

#### Scale and Timing

Six months were allocated for the study in Ethiopia. The timetable was set by CARE Ethiopia and was from 7 July to 15 December 2010. A full literature review began in the UK in June 2010 and was completed in Ethiopia by August. This overlapped with the design of questionnaires and focus group topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>Design of questionnaires and templates</td>
<td>Scheduling of field research</td>
<td>Interviews and focus group meetings in site 1</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Interviews and focus group meetings in site 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Timetable of activities for 2010
Processing and analysis of data started at the earliest opportunity, during the data gathering period in late September (see table 4).

**Limitations and Risks**

As a single researcher, the greatest limitation was that of time and scope of the study. A relatively small number of interviews were conducted compared with other studies. To compensate for this, each interview was in-depth and personal to gain insight to specific situations.

Language was a major limitation, causing delays and confusion, with the consequent loss of information. All individual interviews and focus groups required an interpreter, sometimes two, and therefore the researcher only received information chosen to be passed on by the interpreter. Questions asked may not have been interpreted precisely, and similarly respondents’ answers may likewise not have been interpreted exactly as intended. Because responses were not reported back as word-for-word, direct quotes from respondents could rarely be used.

Other limitations were choice of locations. This was under the control of CARE staff, at their convenience and expense, so the more remote kebeles were not visited. This also meant that all interviewees had some involvement with CARE projects so the study is not representative of Ethiopia in general.

**Costing and Budgeting**

In addition to time, money limited the length and scope of the survey. It was not anticipated that the research would require significantly more funds than day to day living costs. A sufficient budget was available for six months of living and travelling in Ethiopia.

**Ethics**

By the nature of the research, participants live in extreme poverty. This raises ethical issues of vulnerability and expectation. Interviewees were offering up valuable time so it is imperative that this is not used wastefully. Also, tact and respect were of top priority.

A major ethical issue was in regard to gender and being able to access people for open and honest opinions. To overcome the problem of a partner or employee censoring a
person’s view, it was always preferable to conduct the interview without intimidation from anyone else present – pausing where necessary.

All participants were asked to sign a consent form, written in English. The form stated that all information will be held in confidence and that any contributions may be withdrawn on request (Mason, 2007). All data is held in a secure environment, password protected or locked depending whether electronic or paper.

Two problems could arise: the participant may be illiterate and there may be a level of distrust of outsiders asking questions. To overcome this, a trusted friend or family member would confirm what the form said, and that the motives of the study were in no way threatening but rather are intended to highlight solutions. If a friend explains on a participant’s behalf then their signature will also be required to confirm this. Particular attention was given to ensure participants understood the nature of research.

It would be hoped, but yet to be determined, that any identified possible solutions or improvements could be conveyed back to the community to aid in future planning. The final report is not intended for the participants as negative comments may be misconstrued. Also, it may be possible for individuals that are from close-knit communities to be identified.

**Policy Implications**

The results of the research are intended to fill in gaps of current knowledge in relation to how to manage the problem of chronic food security. This information will be combined with other studies to assist CARE Ethiopia in developing its long-term programme to reduce chronic food insecurity.
3. Results

Due to the diverse range of factors covered in this research the results are presented in three sections: human condition (physical issues), social position (cultural and behavioural issues) and enabling environment (needed or already existing beneficial conditions). These are further subdivided to aid referencing and though categories have some overlap, they form distinct areas of investigation.

3.1. Overview of Study Areas

The sites chosen have similarities in that they are mountainous, prone to drought and have large proportions of the population food insecure. Table 5 shows the basic demographic data which was provided by the respective Woreda Administrations and Land and Environmental Protection Offices (see also table 3 and appendix 4). See also appendix 2 for specific needs found in each kebele.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Altitude Ranges</th>
<th>Population (2009)</th>
<th>Average Plot Size</th>
<th>PSNP Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Birth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Hararghe</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>189 460</td>
<td>0.6 ha</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>2.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midland</td>
<td>146 595</td>
<td>0.375 ha</td>
<td>18 %</td>
<td>2.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Gondar</td>
<td>Lowland</td>
<td>261 290 (2008)</td>
<td>0.754 ha</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>2.7 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Basic demographic data of the three study sites collected during the study.

3.2. Human Condition

3.2.1. Farmland

Up until recent times, Ethiopia’s agricultural system has relied upon families expanding their farmland by offspring claiming new land. In the last few decades this system has broken down with no more suitable agricultural land available and instead parents, in order for their children to have land, must fragment their own farm into ever decreasing plots.

Farm sizes are now of insufficient size, even under ideal conditions, to sustain a family and if land is to be inherited by offspring then they must either acquire a portion of their parents’ land otherwise they become landless. As stated above, the average farm size in Farta is 0.754 ha, in Chiro it is 0.6 ha and Doba has the lowest at 0.375 ha. This has the effect of pushing people onto more marginal areas, often onto...
higher land with steeper slopes, while at the same time those on existing plots try to maximise their production and in doing so may overexploit their plots.

New land is no longer allocated, except in the cases of landless groups being given degraded land to grow trees and grass. The role now of Land Use Allocation Committee (LUAC), which consists of five knowledge community elders, is to intervene when there is conflict over existing boundaries. This too is becoming obsolete with the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping. In Chiro woreda this is now complete but for Doba and Farta it is due to begin within a year.

Efforts to control degradation in Chiro and Doba include a limit on the degree of slope for land that can be used as farmland. Any land steeper than 35° or 30° in Chiro and Doba respectively must not be used for farming but will be reclaimed for tree planting. Farmers on such land will be moved and according to the Doba Land and Environmental Protection Office, will be resettled in the west of the country.

In Chiro woreda 32 landless groups have been created, each consisting of up to 20 people, and involving a total of 553 landless people from eight selected kebeles. Each group is given 2 ha of land and a certificate which lasts eight years with the aim of reclaiming degraded land for tree and grass growing for firewood and animal forage, and must not be used for farming. Doba has a far less extensive scheme with only 2 landless groups totalling just 27 people, which is furthermore only in urban areas. Farta has no organised landless groups, and also no data on landless numbers were available.

All of the farmers interviewed rely on rainfall as their source of agricultural water; none were using any form of irrigation. Some expressed the desire to do so, such as using a water pump or drip irrigation but were unable to implement this due to lack of capital.

“If I got a loan I would buy a water pump and grow more chat, mango, oranges and pumpkins.”

Tamima, case study 10, Chiro

With farmers being dependent solely on the climate means that any fluctuations will have an effect on productivity. Besides drought, paradoxically heavy rain was
frequently stated as causing severe damage to crops and for those in highland areas (particularly Farta) hail was one of the most serious hazards which caused large losses.

“Hail is the biggest problem and causes 90% damage.”

Mari, case study 13, Farta.

Main farm problems stated by the fifteen farmers interviewed varied considerably and are shown in table 6.

Heavy rain has led to extensive erosion, so countermeasures such as terracing and stone-faced bunds are used. Knowledge of such methods was widespread and all those interviewed were aware and in favour of such structures. Criticism from farmers was that these methods, although beneficial, are not sufficient in halting the erosion and the structures themselves get destroyed in the rain.

“One plot is steep and eroded caused by farmers uphill having poor terracing and cutting trees. I use terraces, bunds and grass to control erosion but it’s not enough.”

Asraday, case study 15, Farta

These conservation methods are built by local people, in Chiro and Doba usually through Public Works, and in Farta which is not PSNP they are built through the initiative and effort of individual farmers.

It was observed that these structures are of simple design, and that the terraces do not produce horizontal tracts of land but merely form barriers along contours and it was observed that the use of terracing was far more extensive in Chiro and Doba than in Farta. Figures 12 and 13 contrast terraces between the massive development project in the Loess Plateau in China (an area of about half the size of Ethiopia was terraced), with that of small-scale development in Ethiopia.

This is in no way to belittle the considerable efforts by the Ethiopian government and local communities, but is to highlight the different scales of implementation – and ultimately productivity.
3.2.2 Crop Issues

Crop diseases and pests were stated as the biggest causes of lost productivity, but these differ greatly among the three woredas studied. In Doba farmers, male and female, explained of a disease they call “honey”, which is a fungus effecting mainly sorghum but other crops also, and causing 40% or more damage. This disease occurs when sorghum is repeatedly planted on the same plot, and therefore can be controlled by crop rotation. However, most interviewed were unaware of any methods to control this disease, but in addition, many farmers knowing repeatedly plant sorghum rather than rotating because sorghum provides a more profitable yield.

In addition, stalk and head borer pests (Army Worm and Ball Worm) are a newly developing problem causing large crop losses. As with the fungus there are known ways of controlling this and that is by effective ploughing and removal of stalks. Again, many of those interviewed were unaware of this method, particularly women.

This highlights a breakdown in the chain of communication from the Natural Resource Management Office and the Land and Environmental Protection Office to the development agents (DA’s) who have the direct contact with the farmers. The organisational structure is such that the Land and Environmental Protection Office conducts environmental studies which then influences the Natural Resource Management Office. This in turn, passes information on to the DA’s who then disseminate that knowledge to the local population, but the DA’s also have direct contact with the Land and Environmental Protection Office.
Farmers’ information comes from a variety of sources and for the women interviewed these were DA’s, CARE, family and radio, but that this information may come indirectly via their husbands. For female-headed households they complained that the DA’s do not visit them (see 3.3.3).

In Farta there were no reports of the “honey” fungus but instead a condition said to be caused by the wind was reported. This, known as “bicha wag” (Yellow Wag) predominantly affects wheat and makes the crop dry in appearance and the seeds crumble to dust.

“We have a problem bicha wag that affects the wheat. It is new this year and causes 100% loss.”

Focus group 16 participant, Farta

The Land and Environmental Protection Office explained that this, and Army Worm, can be combated through spraying with chemicals.

In Chiro and Doba the awareness training given by CARE was apparent, and contrasted sharply with that of Farta. Interviewees in Chiro and Doba were knowledgeable on diversification options including sheep fattening/reproduction, bee keeping and growing of vegetables. Enthusiasm to take up these ideas was high but that they were unable to do so due to lack of capital – a universal complaint among all those that took part. In Farta, however, ideas for diversification were fewer and mainly consisted of sheep fattening.

Chiro and Doba, unlike Farta, are well-known for being cash crop areas where chat and coffee is grown. Fields of chat were common, as was the chewing of this mild narcotic. Chat growing or trading is seen as highly desirable and profitable, and thus was a frequent goal of many of those interviewed.

“A man called Dinay has a house of good design and standard, he has land and grows lots of chat. I hope one day to grow chat to sell.”

---

Table 7. Side effects of chat (khat)
Source: Balint et al. (2009)
Chat is a double-edged sword, on one hand bringing in revenue and on the other bringing social harm. However, chat that is sold locally does not bring money into the area but may instead deprive households of food. For a food insecure area it is ironic that the hope is to grow not food but a recreational drug. If the produce is destined for export then it will be a valuable resource, but if it is largely sold on the domestic market then this will not bring income in from outside and will actively damage the social wellbeing of the area. In Asebe Teferi this was already apparent with many long-term users of chat having behavioural issues, and one user explained that the cost of this drug is 20 or up to 50 ETB per day (16 ETB (Birr) = US$1). See table 7 for a list of side effects from prolonged chat use (Balint et al., 2009).

Of the individual interviewees, a total of 15 were farmers. The use of chemical fertilizer was common, which was being applied by 11 farmers, but only 4 were using improved seed. Most (11) were growing vegetables, a new strategy coming from CARE’s awareness training, but in Farta this mainly consisted of potatoes for household consumption. Less than half (7) owned their own ox.

3.2.3. Water and Technology

In focus group discussions, when asking about causes of rain shortages, many women attributed this to a change in the climate. However, when pursued further it was evident that climate, as in large scale weather systems, is not what they had meant. This change was said to be because of deforestation, so it is local watershed ecosystems that have changed, not necessarily the climate in general.

Lack of water, or rather the lack of retaining water, is the prime reason for low production. Methods of overcoming this include terracing, pits, bunds, micro-basins and ponds. A DA in Doba (animal science), when asked about long-term vision, explained the plans to create ponds in the kebele. This, however, will increase the malaria risk so there are additional plans to expand the education on malaria and to provide free medication. According to the Land and Environmental Protection Office in all three woredas, ground water is present throughout all areas but as yet this is largely unexploited. The sustainability of this water would depend on its quantity and use, whether it is used for domestic purposes or more demandingly for irrigation.
The fetching of water for household consumption also necessitates that many women must walk for maybe as much as five hours per day carrying 20 litres of water on each trip. 1 litre of water weighs 1 kg, therefore the women carry 20 kg loads.

“The water is not clean. In the dry season time is lost fetching water, it takes three to five hours each day. Depending on family size we need two to three jerricans [20 litres each] every day.”

Married women focus group 7 participant, Wachu Eltoke, Chiro

For pregnant women this poses a danger of miscarriage and prolapse. This water comes from springs or rivers, and may not be clean, and at times of the year when water is scarce, fighting was reported. An interesting new affordable device produced by Wello could alleviate some of the hardship in fetching water. The WaterWheel can hold five times more than a jerrican and is pulled rather than carried (Wello, 2011).

Farm technology was observed to be of a low level, with for example, most harvesting being done using a sickle which is the most inefficient means of cutting crops, and even this is sometimes lacking. Better methods that utilise technology which is still many centuries old would reduce both time and effort needed for such tasks, such as scythes or threshing machines (Crawford, 2003). Many also must grind grain by hand, and provision of grinding machines was requested at several sites, as were other machines that would increase productivity of textile or other craft-based work. Contrary to reports claiming reluctance of women to accept new technology, the DA’s told that women are more likely than men to accept and interviews with women revealed a strong desire for all new ideas and methods.

3.2.4. Infrastructure
This study covered kebeles that ranged from having direct access to main roads to ones in more remote regions that lay a few hours walk from main roads or towns. Due to the limitations of available resources (time and transport) the kebeles that were more inaccessible could not be included. Most rural people live in such places, far
from roads and towns but inferences can be drawn from the kebeles that were covered.

The lack of roads and transport result in fewer market opportunities, less influence from outside and added difficulty in acquiring medical treatment or access to information. In Wukro, Farta, for example, which lies a modest 8 km from the main road and town of Kimir Dingay, it was told that the cost to transport a sick person is 200 ETB.

Roads that serve these communities are of a very rough nature, and often impassable during the rainy season. Construction of roads in Farta was observed to be of superior quality than in Chiro or Doba, being constructed of small rocks with the road having a defined edge. Nevertheless, all rural roads are suitable only for a 4x4 vehicle, and not general transport, and as most people travel on foot they are of limited use. In Wachu Eltoke, Chiro, quality of roads was of high concern but the precise reason for this remained unclear as the only transport owned in the area was donkeys. Such terrain poses a serious challenge for road construction due to the mountainous nature and erosion from heavy rain, causing roads to become damaged and impassable soon after completion.

Pack animals offer an alternative to vehicles, and have little difficulty in traversing rough terrain and primarily these consist of donkeys, horses and camels. In West Hararghe camels and donkeys are mainly used as the landscape is mostly lowland and midland, whereas in Farta it is donkeys and horses that are seen. For the poor, these are expensive assets that as yet they cannot afford.

### 3.2.5 Alternative Incomes

Opportunities for non-farming incomes are extremely limited and waged employment is almost non-existent other than harvesting and weeding. The main barrier preventing alternative employment is lack of capital, a problem repeatedly stressed by all people in all areas studied. Many times the participants in the study exclaimed that they have the strength, skills and time for work but lack only the capital.
“We have the power, we have the skill, we can do everything. The main problem is capital. We carry wood daily, the road is difficult and no water. We are strong.”

Focus group 6 participant, Arba Hora, Chiro

Furthermore, opportunities increased in direct relation to proximity to towns or other market centres. This was highlighted most vividly in the cases of Arba Hora kebele and Medicho 9, both in Chiro woreda. Both of these kebeles have similar degraded terrain in lowland areas, and Arba Hora lies about 6 km from town whereas Medicho 9 is about 4 km. However, livelihoods in the two kebeles are at opposite extremes; Arba Hora has little water, no electricity and no trade other than the desperately difficult selling of wood for as little as 7 Birr a day (under US$0.50) and it was the poorest of all sites visited. The site in Medicho 9 in contrast has piped water, satellite TV and good quality housing. The primary difference is that Medicho 9 lies very near the main road and has regular taxis, but Arba Hora is accessible only over rough terrain passing through a river.

“We get back at 10pm and see our children and are crying and pray to God: when will we get out of this kind of life? We are jealous of the town people, their children are healthy.”

Focus group 6 participant, Arba Hora, Chiro

“Our minds are always collecting wood.”

Focus group 6 participant, Arba Hora, Chiro

Rural villages, when of sufficient size can act as marketing opportunities for trading between other market centres, but when houses are highly dispersed this opportunity is lost. Evidence of this was seen in Lenche Wodesa, Doba, which was a village of sufficient size to allow trading between nearby market towns, thus allowing the single Merima (case study 4, appendix 1) to earn a living to support her son.

The small community visited in the kebele of Sahirna, Farta, highlights an interesting point. This community was directly beside the main highway to Wollo in the east yet the road provided very little income opportunities. Access to the town of Debre Tabor was no easier here than in more remote places as transport is still lacking and without anything to sell to passing travellers, most vehicles pass straight through. The degree
of remoteness in Sahirna was also brought to light during lunch there – the people had never heard of fish (in Amharic) and had to be shown a picture from a child’s school book despite it being readily available in the town one mile away.

For the landless the lack of options is of particular concern, and invariably leads to low income. Choices are few – mainly petty trade or the renting of land but some have chosen migration to find work. In Farta woreda several accounts were given of the dangers from malaria, yellow fever and snakes for people who migrate to the town of Humero (Himora) near the Sudanese border. In the research involving ten interviews and eight focus groups, two young men were reported to have died there, and during a focus group discussion another returnee was lying sick on the ground with what was presumed to be malaria. In the cases of both the young men, it left their households struggling to manage without their support (see case study 15).

When faced with such limited choices it may be anticipated that forced migration to live in towns or cities will result but this was not found within this study. Such migration was not a desired option as most people prefer to remain with their home community and similarly resettlement also was not a desired strategy. However, daily migration to a local town was a frequent livelihood strategy, usually by men.

A common livelihood choice for the landless is to rent land from other landowners, and this can be purchased either in cash or by sharecropping where the owner receives a set portion of the produce. The standard practice is to divide the produce 50/50, and given that these plots are of below average size means that they cannot produce enough to sustain the household.

“We pay 100 Birr [~US$6] per harvest for land and give 50% to the landowner... We have made terraces and bunds but it does not produce enough.”

Izab, case study 12, Farta

Furthermore, these plots may be temporary so any conservation methods undertaken may have to be repeated elsewhere. From the opposite perspective, such land may be rented out by a female owner, someone who is unable to supply the necessary labour, and so forced to take a loss of 50%.
Table 8. Off-farm Income Generating Activity Options

To a lesser extent, other income generating activities undertaken are shops, craft or textile work but these were all of small scale due to the limited local markets, but potential future opportunities. Table 8 lists all income generating activities that were discussed during interviews and focus groups, with the approximate level of interest each generated (quick polls were taken during focus groups).

In Chiro and Doba Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA’s) were well established, with monthly or half-monthly meetings. These serve as focal points for training and community initiatives, and also to encourage saving as a resource for finance. As a source of capital it was said by participants that VSLA’s are too limited, offering no more than a few hundred Birr, which is insufficient for starting business. Those that have very low incomes are excluded from VSLA’s because they cannot afford the small contribution (even just 3 Birr a month) and as such the very poor become excluded from training and VSLA discussions.

The amount of capital that was generally required was of the order of 1000 to 2000 Birr, mainly to buy sheep, cattle or beehives. Without access to savings then the only sources of capital are from loans or gifts. Attitudes in this regard differed significantly between West Hararghe and South Gondar. The primary loan provider in West Hararghe is the Oromiya Credit and Saving Share Company (OCSSCo) and in South Gondar loans are chiefly through the Amhara Credit and Savings Institution (ACSI).
OCSSCo suffers from lack of human resources and is mainly serving urban environments. According to the OCSSCo office in Asbe Teferi, Chiro, they have plans to expand into rural kebeles over the coming years. For this reason the rural population wish for, but cannot get loans.

In contrast, in Farta ACSI have widespread coverage and many of those interviewed had taken previous loans. When asked if a future ACSI loan was a solution to the lack of capital most replied emphatically that they do not want that. Reasons were fear of not being able to repay, fuelled through knowledge of failed loans and the dire consequences of loss of assets or imprisonment and even suicide (reported in Sahirna, Farta). It is also possible that there is an expectation of gifts or interest free loans coming from CARE, thus influencing participants’ responses. Nevertheless, for farmers and landless alike, availability of capital is of top importance if communities are to move away from reliance on rain-fed subsistence farming.

Both OCSSCo and ACSI have policies of prioritising the poor, and especially women. They share an aim or eradicating poverty by stimulating growth of income generating activities. Loans are not intended for non-profit purposes and therefore are not for the buying of food or other household use. Both also provide loans on an individual or group basis (interest from 10-18%) and provide training and advice prior to any loan being taken. If a group member defaults on a loan then all members are liable and face penalties. Neither was willing to divulge information on default rates or the consequences, but instead repeated they provide thorough advice to avoid such failures. Case study 15 shows that unforeseen events are always possible, causing hardship and difficulty in loan repayments, no matter how well a business plan is designed.

Alternative sources of loans are from rich farmers who charge interest rates of anything between 10 and 100 percent. The church (Orthodox) also can provide loans, and in the case of Buro, Farta, charges a high rate of 50%.

In regard to income generating activities (IGA’s), female-headed households, without the constraints of a husband who may disapprove of out-of-home activities, hold some
advantage. The burden of childcare applies to both married and single women as it is rare for a husband to undertake this role.

If the problem of lack of capital is overcome, then other issues develop. The saturation points of the proposed income generating activities need to be determined. The land has a finite capacity for carrying sheep, for instance, and unregulated sheep fattening could lead to further degradation, in addition to increased risk of disease.

3.2.6. Productive Safety Net Programme

Farta woreda, despite its levels of poverty and food insecurity, is not considered a food insecure woreda eligible for PSNP support. An oversimplified selection method has left thousands of vulnerable people without any food support.

Elsewhere, in Arba Hora, Chiro, complaints were that the PSNP assistance has been cut to six months and they are therefore now unable to bridge their yearly food gaps. Also in Arba Hora another issue was raised:

“We do not get PSNP because we are newly married so we must wait until next year for the next assessment.”

Halima, case study 8, Arba Hora, Chiro

PSNP assistance comes in two forms: food aid or cash handouts, and is provided by two methods: through public works or direct support.

“I get 3 months food aid and 3 months cash. Cash is not good because it is not enough – 6 months food is OK.”

Tamima, case study 10, Chiro

If cash is to be given then its value should be determined using an up-to-date calculation of inflation.

In West Hararghe, food gaps were successfully bridged through provision by the PSNP (except Arba Hora, Chiro). In Farta this is not available and food gaps spanning the winter months were filled by the eating of potatoes and cabbage, with the possible addition of wild foods.
In addition to food gaps, many households interviewed said they do not have enough tools or domestic equipment. Farmers often do not have ploughs, spades and picks, and homes lack cooking utensils, blankets, mattresses and even clothes (it was observed in Farta that shoes are mainly a privilege for men).

“We don’t have enough to eat, just two small meals each day. We do not have enough household equipment and the children fight at meal times because we only have one plate.”

Tegab, case study 16, Farta

3.2.7. Health

Illness and disease was the greatest area of vulnerability for the landless, but also of high priority for those with land. There were wide discrepancies between the delivery of health care between the sites visited but all places had an accessible health post.

Women are especially vulnerable due to childbirth and their heavier workload, and in Farta the health status was disturbingly poor. In focus group discussion 12 in Sahirna kebele, Farta consisting of seven women; four women were seriously ill and others said they just have “normal” illness. Two were directly due to issues around childbirth, one of which, it was told, resulted from medical incompetence in Debre Tabor hospital due to poorly skilled medical staff. Another woman had tuberculosis but had no access to affordable medicine and none were able to get any treatment for their conditions. The worst was of a woman with an assumed prolapse, who shockingly had her innards protruding outside. For women who do not have enough to save a few Birr a month, travel to Debre Tabor or Bahir Dar for hospital treatment is impossible.

“There is a massive health problem. We have no money or local health stations, so is a big problem.”

Sahirna focus group 11 participant

“...no training for ear problems, even for our eyes, just basic information about trachoma.”

Sahirna focus group 11 participant

“We always worry about what if one of the family member have a problem we don’t even have money for treatment.”
Sahirna focus group 12 participant

A poor diet was one attributed factor, as it is not varied and in small quantities, with meat being a luxury. Households that do produce eggs or milk usually do so to sell and not for household consumption.

“We eat injera and sorghum two times a day and milk if the cow is in calf. We have meat only at holiday times such as Easter.”

Fantaye, case study 17, Farta

Injury is also a health hazard for those collecting wood:

“The mountain is steep, it is easy to slip and injure a leg. The hospital is far and expensive so we rely on traditional massage.”

Halima, case study 8, Arba Hora, Chiro

Health care provision varied considerably over the sites visited. The main role of the health posts is in supplying family planning, vaccinations, malaria treatment and first aid. The health extension workers also provide training on health and hygiene. Interviewees in Doba all had mosquito nets, but in Farta nets were old and damaged or not supplied at all. Health Extension posts supply a first level of medical care, focusing on preventative measures. Even so, basics such as provision of antibiotics, blood pressure monitoring and maternity care are unavailable and any curative treatment beyond first aid is not provided. It therefore comes as little surprise that in CARE’s report on the underlying causes of poverty that the Health Extension service was ranked lowest by women (CARE, 2010).

Free treatment is not generally available, although in Arba Hora, Chiro, the women there claimed that they were able to get a certificate from the health extension post which would entitle them to free treatment in Chiro hospital. In Farta woreda, the woreda administration explained that 500 to 800 people are selected at kebele level for free treatment, which must then be approved by the woreda administration. With a population of some 261 000 people this accounts for only 0.3%, and is limited by the woreda administration budget.
The lack of health care provision is a major contributor to the creation of female-headed households. Among the eight female-headed household interviews conducted, five had resulted from the death of the husband due to some (usually unknown) illness (See table 10).

Provision of family planning by the health extension service has the main goal of slowing the rapid population and a steady increase in coverage has been seen from the 17% coverage of 2001 (FMoH, 2003). Doba reported 28% coverage while Chiro gave the figure of 20%, but no data was available at the time of the study in Farta.

Family planning, however, will only reduce the population growth if people choose to have fewer children and the population will continue to grow if families have more than two children. Within this study, ideal desired family size varied from as few as two children to as many as seven children, with most settling on three or four as the best size. This would imply that family planning will not significantly reduce the population growth and further measures are required; according to the Central Intelligence Agency’s World Factbook population growth now stands at 3.2% (CIA, 2010).

Problems with the family planning methods themselves were also reported. The women in Kanat, Farta claimed that due to poor diet the family planning injections or tablets made them sick, and that without food it doesn’t work.

“Back then [when married 20 years ago] I used family planning but it is not 100% working.”

Tebebe, case study 19, Farta

This criticism was later backed up by additional empirical evidence that the various methods of family planning do not work reliably.

Widows and divorcees are stigmatized and come under pressure not to use family planning from other women in the neighbourhood. Married women talk, they reported, if they use family planning because that can only mean that they will steal their husbands. This would further imply that family planning provision is not confidential.
Within the limits of this small sample size for this study, all women had access to family planning and understood its importance. This is largely due to CARE’s involvement and training and is not indicative of the more remote kebeles. But overall, there was a disturbingly high number of women interviewed with health problems, particularly in Farta. It was frequently reported that people suffered from migraine and headaches, with stomach problems also being common.

3.2.8. Education

The importance of educating children was recognised by all those interviewed and quality and availability of schooling ranked as a high priority. Female-headed households are particularly burdened by the expense of schooling, of fees, uniforms and school equipment. The bulk of this cost comes at the end of the most difficult period, that is following the winter rainy months of July to September and this causes great hardship in the home. For female-headed households this often leads to the dissatisfied children being verbally abusive to their mothers because they cannot afford to provide for all of their children on an equal basis.

Boys are favoured over girls, but many households educated all equally. Nevertheless, it was common among those interviewed for boys to go to school while girls are married young, such as with Hindi (case study 5) who has fours sons in education, but all three daughters are married instead.

Data from all three woreda administrations give the following enrolment figures (table 9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chiro</th>
<th></th>
<th>Doba</th>
<th></th>
<th>Farta</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 8 grade</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 12 grade</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>No high schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. School Attendances by Gender

For primary school grade 1 – 8 boys have a marginal lead over girls, but subsequently girls’ education drops considerably as at this age many get married.

During focus groups in Kanat kebele, Farta, another issue was described. The women there were in despair because their children were failing their classes. This was said to be due to the children being malnourished and confused, they become unhappy and go elsewhere. Mothers were struggling to provide the fees and equipment but all in vain.
3.3. Social Position

When asked directly, almost all women responded by saying that they are equal members of the community, but that this was not the case previously. Observations suggest otherwise, as most women would not talk freely when men were present but equality is a subjective concept and depends on expectation within a culture.

In all mixed-gender discussions men, usually older, always dominated the topic of conversation and showed greater confidence. During site visits it was common to see community meetings taking place and these rarely involved women. Furthermore, those in authority are also male – a characteristic reflected in CARE’s own field offices. However, women stated that they do take part, and the kebele Task Force of Wachu Eltoke, Chiro, for example, was composed of an almost equal four men and three women.

Men and women in Chiro and Doba were actively involved in community projects, mainly through PSNP and public works. Kebele Task Force meetings take place every two or three months, and it was said that both men and women attend.

In Farta there was much less evidence of community activity. Focus group discussions on what projects are taking place usually began with silence or with people’s hopes for future plans. Women had distinctly less to say on this subject, but the men in the mixed focus groups told of compost and terracing groups.

Although the levels of participation in West Hararghe were high this still appears to be, as Bewket (2007) calls it, “participation by consultation”. Designs are made at government level then communicated through the Task Force or DA’s to the people. Decisions as to what needs developing are still made at community level but full control and ownership is lacking and true participation as outlined by Kessler (2007) is yet to take place.

In rural Ethiopia one institution above all others dominates, and this is the clergy. Religion is at the heart of rural life and serves as a focus for meetings and social interaction. While bringing many benefits, the religious institutions hinder the farmers with the insistence of observance of religious holidays. Farmers in the study
complained that on average about fifteen days per month are lost due to religious holidays, and that on these days no work is permitted.

“We don’t work half of the month, like from 30 days 15 days are holidays so we can’t work.”

Fantaye, case study 17, Farta

“Today is a holiday [Wednesday] so we are not working. Yesterday was St. George’s day so no work. Tomorrow is another holiday but we can harvest but we cannot plough.”

Sahirna focus group 12 participant

This is a tremendous burden and a lost opportunity to already under-producing communities. Dominated by the religious institutions, the clergy must be involved if any change in this condition is to take place.

3.3.1. Marriage and Causes of Female-headed Households

The system of marriage is heavily male-biased and removes women’s freedom of choice. Culturally, it is standard practice that daughters do not automatically inherit their parents’ land unlike sons, but acquire land through means of marriage. Young girls, commonly aged about 14, are married at their parents’ discretion although the age can vary considerably. Some are getting married later in their early twenties but others at a shockingly young age:

“First my parents made me marry when I was six or seven years old and I moved out but then I returned home because I refused to stay with the husband after two years. She took him to court then got I divorced and went to school.”

Eneyebaye, case study 11, Farta

Eneyebaye (aged 17) remarried at age 11 and now has a son. Marriage breakdown is common (data on divorce or widowhood rates were unavailable), with death of the husband being the most likely reason for a female-headed household among the twenty women interviewed, eight of which were selected because they were in female-headed households. Cause of death is often unknown, four cases were from a sudden illness and one other was said to be malaria. With this in mind, the health of
all household members is of vital importance because sickness and death may force a family into hardship (See case studies 2, 3, 4, 15, 18).

With the two remaining widows in the study, the first lost her husband because he was executed five years ago for being a government opponent and the second woman’s husband is presumed to have died when he was fighting as a soldier for the Derg over twenty years ago (see case studies 10 and 14).

For Merima (case study 4) the household became female-headed when her husband was resettled and communication was lost, and the three remaining cases were due to divorce. Fatima’s divorce (case study 3) was due to being forced to marry the brother of her deceased husband, but this man was already married and then became abusive. Mari (case study 13) had three successive divorces because after every marriage her father would retake the land. The final divorced woman, Tegab (case study 16) had two divorces, both because the husband was physically violent towards her (see also table 10).

In Chiro and Doba, according to the Land and Environmental Protection Office, following a divorce any land owned is divided equally between the two parties.

“On divorce the land is divided 50/50.” — Doba Land Office

In Farta this is not the case but rather the land is divided according to the ownership that existed prior to the marriage.

“Following divorce it depends on the condition before the marriage.”

— Farta Land Office

This puts women at a distinct disadvantage because many (or most) begin as landless, whereas males are more likely to inherit parents’ land. Both systems will have pros and cons and need to be analysed further but neither takes any account of children produced during the said marriage, and of who then becomes responsible for them. It is women who almost always remain responsible for the children and therefore are in greater need but the current systems favour males.
Table 10. Reasons for Female-headed Households Losing the Male Head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study number</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Separated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>Then forced to marry his brother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd husband was resettled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Executed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Left because wife’s father took land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Died in army</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In one interview one woman took her ex-husband to court for either land or child maintenance because he has subsequently been given land.

“I went to court because I had two children from him. The court decided a 25 Birr award per month for one child. He only paid for one year ... he bribed the court so does not pay.”

Tegab, case study 16, Farta

This woman has no support to raise a challenge and therefore must provide for the child herself.

Culturally, widowed women are seen as deserving of community support whereas divorced women are not. Both, however, provoke jealousy from neighbouring married women who may use insulting words but in general stigmatisation was not a widely reported problem but exclusion from access to information was.

For newly married couples the expectation is to produce a child at the earliest opportunity, and for this reason the use of family planning is disapproved of. However, from the six newly married women interviewed, none had children. One was unable to have children due to a medical condition while the other five were resisting the pressure and were all using family planning until they were in a better financial position.
Many of the women who were divorced or widowed expressed the desire to remarry (although some did not), but said they were unable to find new husbands.

“We want to remarry but cannot find husbands. The men marry younger women.”

Focus Group Discussion 2, Tokuma Meta Lenche

Owning land is a major attraction for a prospective husband, consequently those with little or no land struggle to remarry. But the main reason stated was that culturally men marry the younger women, not those of similar age which therefore leaves older women with few options.

3.3.2. Taboos

Among the female-headed farmers the most significant problem was one that has a cultural rather than natural origin: in all areas studied it is not socially acceptable for women to plough. This is a major constraint to preparing fields for planting on time for the season. Single women therefore had to resort to begging neighbours and waiting until everyone else has finished their ploughing, otherwise they must pay someone to do it for them.

“I have no plough or sickle so I rent from a person in Debre Tabor for 40 or 50 Birr and I work eight hours on others’ land.”

The elderly Berke, case study 14, Askuma, Farta

This taboo against women ploughing was seen in both Muslim dominated West Hararghe and in Christian dominated South Gondar. It therefore seems to be routed in Ethiopian rural culture rather than brought in by any religious group. When the women were asked for solutions to this problem, they did not respond by saying how women could plough in the future but instead accept this cultural norm and stated the solution is to share the land until a son can plough. None of the women interviewed knew of any other woman who had ever ploughed, and none had the intention of doing so in the future.

During interviews every effort was made to provide a setting where the women would feel free to talk, away from the attention of men so that they could discuss openly what gender related problems they experience. Despite this, few rated discrimination
or stigma with a high priority. Caution should be exercised over interpreting this but except for the above issue regarding ploughing, the issues of the most immediate concern were applicable to both (or all) genders, i.e. lack of land, capital and employment.

3.3.3. Access to Information
The vast majority of households, over 90%, rely on farming as their main income and as such access to agricultural information is of high priority. This can come from a range of sources: from the government it is via the DA’s, from non-governmental organisations (NGO’s), family, friends and radio.

The organisational structure of the DA’s is such that each kebele is appointed three DA’s and each is specialised in a different subject. These are animal science, plant science and natural resource management and each DA is then responsible for a third of the kebele’s households. In an interview with the Tokuma Meta Lenche, Doba DA, he explained he was responsible for 13 villages and information was disseminated through community meetings, focus groups, house-to-house visits and through the use of model farmers (which are usually male).

Though DA’s interviewed stressed that they include all people equally, women from female-headed households felt differently. In focus groups they complained that the DA’s do not visit them and they therefore do not get agricultural information.

“The DA’s don’t visit us on our fields and sometimes stigmatise us on giving information on our productivity.”

Female-headed household focus group 2 participant, Doba

Information may come indirectly through neighbours, or through CARE but for the poorest farmers who may not even be able to afford the small VSLA contributions there may be no information. In addition, farmer training centres focus only on male farmers, resulting in married women and female-headed farmers being excluded.

3.3.4. Aspirations
Access to information and knowledge of what could be is a key element of aspirations. This research set out to investigate the size of aspiration windows and aspiration gaps for both the individuals and relevant organisations (Bernard et al.,
2008). The Agricultural Office shared somewhat the same vision as CARE, that is to eradicate poverty and free farmers from backwardness and dependency, and to improve livelihoods. This would mainly be through enhancing agriculture and encouraging income generating opportunities, the most far-sighted idea was that of utilising ground water.

For the individuals interviewed, hopes for the long-term future usually consisted of obtaining a better income and upgrading the home to have a metal roof.

“I want to replace my roof with corrugated metal and send all my children to school.”

Mixed focus group 1 participant

The most visionary interviewees hoped to own a hotel or shop, or to live in a town but the majority had far more modest aims. When asked who should be responsible for developments and change, the response was that it is the government and CARE (or other NGO’s) and this was because the local people said they did not have sufficient knowledge on such matters.
3.4. Enabling Environment

CARE’s program goal for overcoming the chronically food insecure state of rural women is stated as:

*Chronically food insecure women are empowered and have achieved sustainable livelihood security.*

To achieve this, a Theory of Change has been drawn up which represents the changes needed, and the routes through which this will be done, over a time period of a decade or more. Table 11 below details this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains of Change</th>
<th>Pathways of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Institutions (formal and informal) are responsive to women’s priorities and accountable to upholding their rights</td>
<td>1.1 Creating and strengthening women responsive institutions&lt;br&gt;1.2 Promote forward accountability within development actors and community based institutions&lt;br&gt;1.3 Advocate that institutions are responsive to the needs and priorities of the CFIRW Impact Group&lt;br&gt;1.4 Identification of policy and legislative gaps and implementation and enforcement of existing laws and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Households attain access to and control over resources for expanded sustainable livelihood options and social services</td>
<td>2.1 Increased availability and access to quality social services&lt;br&gt;2.2 Strengthen and establish community based organizations&lt;br&gt;2.3 Economic empowerment of women through diversification of livelihood options&lt;br&gt;2.4 Build local capacity to control and manage agricultural and natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural and social norms support women to claim their rights</td>
<td>3.1 Involve traditional and religious institutions in addressing social barriers&lt;br&gt;3.2 Raise aspirations of women and the most vulnerable groups&lt;br&gt;3.3 Protection of the most vulnerable groups’ rights&lt;br&gt;3.4 Equitable household decision making and resource distribution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Theory of Change for CARE’s Chronically Food Insecure Rural Women Program
The first **pathway of change, 1.1** from table 11, aims to increase the responsiveness of institutions to women. In this, CARE itself must show an excellent example with an attitude of equality and equal employment opportunities. In practice though, for whatever reasons, the staff in field offices are predominantly male and this does not provide a good role model for aspiring women. While it must be said that the majority of staff showed excellent attitudes, in a very small number of cases some gender-bias was seen (women should not be working in the field).

CARE’s training and support was praised by all involved and without doubt such initiatives of providing sheep improve lives tremendously. One area of caution arose however: because of support received by CARE some women were being denied access to perform current livelihood strategies of grass collecting. Although the net result is an improvement to the individual’s life, this is a matter of concern (see case study 16).

Under **pathway 1.3**, female-headed households are being bypassed by DA’s and are not getting the agricultural information they need.

Under **pathway 1.4** on policy, two main issues resulted from the research: policy on division of land after a divorce and child maintenance. Policy on divorce differed between the woredas studied, and none took into account who became responsible for the children. Corruption was reported which led to the court’s decision not being enforced.

### 3.4.1. Health

Domain 2 of table 11 lies at the core of this research’s findings, that is lack of resources and livelihood options. Under **pathway 2.1**, access to health services is the most pressing need, as many interviewees were sick but had no way of obtaining treatment. Health Posts provide only minimal support while clinics and hospitals, for those who can afford them, still only have limited resources.

The government’s third Health Sector Development Plan (HSDP III) (FMoH, 2005) had the goal of creating health care access for all through a four tier system. The establishment of the lowest tier Health Posts throughout the country has given rural people health care where none had existed previously.
The role of the Health Post extension workers is a modest one, and benefits mainly women and children through vaccinations, training and first aid. Free health care remains a distant dream except for malaria, but nevertheless the state of health of many in this study was of serious concern. Ill health is the greatest vulnerability of the poor and much more support is necessary especially for maternity care.

If free medication or treatment is not possible, then greater efforts in preventative measures are needed. Knowledge of the environment and farming techniques demonstrates a sound understanding of the physical environment; unfortunately the same cannot be said for knowledge of medical conditions, where superstition reigns.

Knowledge is the first line of defence, to avoid becoming ill and, in the event of becoming ill then to understand ways of remedying it. The first step is to teach that disease is caused by physical pathogens, and not by other means, and that each has specific mechanism that can be combated through hygiene, other methods and then through medication if necessary. Education could begin in schools and from there be disseminated, else from Health Extension Workers or other institutions.

**Pathway 2.3** – economic enhancement – is vital for overcoming poverty but this need not necessarily be focused only on women. Whole communities must prosper and in doing so will provide greater opportunities for trade and employment. While it is important to emphasise women’s empowerment and so bridge the gap, it should be recognized that at best this can only bring women up to the status of men. It is not the underlying cause of food insecurity among rural women, but is one of many factors.

The challenge is to bring all members of communities up to a food secure level. Figure 15 is a schematic diagram illustrating the gaps that need to be filled to reach

![Figure 15. Schematic diagram of food security gaps for men and women](image)
food secure levels and can be split into two broad categories: women’s empowerment and economic and agricultural development.

3.4.2. Trade

The wealth of Ethiopia is clustered in the cities and towns. Roads, like arteries carrying nutrients around the body, carry trade and hence wealth out from the capital and major towns but this seldom penetrates rural society. Trade lies at the heart of livelihood strategies, but trade is almost completely lacking among the subsistence farming communities who are predominantly growing crops for their own household consumption.

The current income generating activities being established, such as sheep, goat or cattle fattening, honey production and vegetable production are a first step in moving away from traditional farming and provide income opportunities for those with little or no land. Availability of waged labour is minimal, in part due to the small size and low production of the local farms, and also due to the lack of any other industry within daily travelling distance. Many farmers and landless alike would prefer to have steady and reliable employment in a factory than continue their current lifestyle and expressed the hope this may happen in the future.

   “People who have kids want help to send their kids to school, so they want schools but people like us who have nothing first we want to change ourselves – a job. Especially the young people with no land but are capable of working, so a factory would be one [way].”

   Sahirna focus group 11 participant

   “I would prefer not to work on the farm but work in a factory. This is steady work.”

   Tebebe, case study 19, Farta

Most respondents wanted to begin or expand sheep fattening or reproduction, but that lack of capital was preventing this. If such numbers of people did take up this income activity then it is unclear to what extent market prices and demand would change. In addition, as mentioned above, this would have a negative impact on the environment as the need for forage would increase.
Others interviewed wished to pursue the career of merchant trading crops and wood or general shop traders, selling commodities such as sugar, salt, coffee and soap and other day-to-day items. For these, transport and market access are of vital importance, but again lack of capital is hindering their development. For home markets to expand it is necessary to raise the general wealth of the entire area, of which most are farmers. Ongoing programs to improve productivity need to be combined with diversification options; these together will generate trade and market opportunities.

“Before [we rented land] we had only the shop but there are not enough customers here.”

Yizab, case study 20, Farta

Transportation of goods is a key element of trading, and this in mountainous regions is difficult and slow. To provide road access for the majority of rural communities would require a road building program of vast scale, and is not a feasible solution in the near future.

The main form of transport in rural areas is either by foot or by pack animals, which can carry greater loads. Rarely are animals used to transport people, except in the case of horses. For all societies prior to the invention of cars, animals were the only means of transport yet trade has thrived for centuries. Increased availability and use of such means could provide the stimulus for trade and provide greater income opportunities.

As Gedamu (2006) suggests, resettlement on a local scale or other means of encouragement, could lead to the creation of villages which can provide better market opportunities than dispersed houses. Likewise, creation of such small towns along main highways could act to help distribute wealth more evenly away from the financial centres to within reach of the rural inhabitants.

Infrastructure, besides roads, applies to tele-services also. Of these, electricity is the most basic need, and without it work production decreases, children’s education suffers and alternative forms of lighting have adverse side effects. At some sites solar power was requested for lighting the home, which would be a cleaner alternative. Mobile phone technology is not currently being utilised but is an opportunity for future development (see 3.4.6 below).
3.4.3. Employment
In order to spread out the wealth from the towns and cities it will be necessary for many more employers and businesses to be present in rural areas. If natural resources permit, then processing factories would be an excellent (and sought after) means of employment. Again infrastructure is a problem on two counts: firstly that of businesses getting goods in and out of the area and secondly that of workers being able to access such employers.

Irrigation and the continuation of improved farming methods could also result in the larger and more prosperous farms requiring addition labour. Currently irrigation is almost entirely unused and groundwater is largely unexploited.

3.4.4. Capital
As stated, capital was the overriding concern of all those interviewed, stopping both farm development and alternative incomes. Some said they needed more training but the majority emphasised that they have the skills, knowledge, strength and time, they just need capital.

Gifts or interest free loans are not feasible solutions when millions of people are involved. Loans in kind can be highly beneficial and cost efficient when done such as with sheep given in a revolving fund. However, this has a limitation as to how many people can be covered in any one time and thus could take many years to reach all those in need.

Loans with interest are likely to be the only realistic way to reach a large population but in this, managing risk is fundamental. Encouraging the take up of loans from ACSI or OCSSCo (or other micro-finance institutions) is to knowingly expose vulnerable people to the risk of loss of assets or imprisonment. Alternative strategies to manage and share this risk must be found if capital is to be provided on a wide scale.

One such strategy is that of Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP), an Italian funded NGO that has been established in Ethiopia for 24 years. In West Hararghe, CISP’s goal is to support children and adolescents in matters of health, education and livelihood. One way it achieves this, besides revolving loans in
kind, is through provision of loans to the child’s household. Legally, only official
government loan providers may provide loans, and a few years ago OCSSCo was
concerned over CISP’s projects. After consultation, CISP now works through
OCSSCo, where OCSSCo provides the loan and CISP covers all interest.

3.4.5 Productive Safety Net Programme
The Production Safety Net Programme (PSNP) is a highly effective means of
supporting and assisting those most in need. The PSNP can prevent destitution and
starvation while at the same time encourage community participation in development
programmes. However, targeting of PSNP beneficiaries begins at woreda level, where
woredas are selected as being food insecure or not. This leaves many of the poor, who
have the misfortune of being in a food secure woreda, unable to obtain any support.
This applies to all woredas, but Farta is an even more extreme example with a large
portion of the population in clear need.

Newly married couples must wait until the next yearly assessment before they qualify
for PSNP support.

3.4.6. Agricultural Productivity
Controlling and managing agricultural resources, as of pathway 2.4, remains at the
forefront of plans as over 90% of the woreda populations are farmers.

The effectiveness of training and awareness building by the combined efforts of the
DA’s and CARE is demonstrated by the fact that all farmers interviewed were using
some form of SWC and most were using compost plus other beneficial techniques.
For example, out of 15 farmers, 11 were using chemical fertilizer and all were using
bunds where necessary. However, in training sessions it was observed that all
attendees were given an exercise book and pen but for women who are commonly
illiterate it may be more appropriate to provide ready-made pictorial aids.

From the focus groups, with regard to agriculture, supply of improved seed and
fertilizer was the most common need, with irrigation and water pumps coming next.
From individual interviews, some expressed the need for better quality terracing and
bunds as these are insufficient in preventing erosion at present. Disease, however, is
an ever-present threat and it is vital that solutions are disseminated to all those that need it.

Mobile phone technology for agricultural or business use is currently totally absent. Text and voice services can be used for farmers to improve yields and profits and such technology has been used successfully in places such as Bangladesh and Kenya, which also adds a positive contribution to women’s empowerment (Muriithi et al., 2009, Bhavnani et al., 2008, Duncombe, 2007)

For those reliant on agriculture the current efforts are having positive results, and it is likely yields will increase. But, with no more land available and the population continuing to rise unabated, plot sizes are too small to provide enough produce to ever escape from poverty. For those that are landless and for the coming generations, improved agricultural production will have little benefit and they will be dependent upon alternative incomes. A focus on agricultural solutions may increase vulnerability by creating greater dependence on weather-based incomes.

For those of us that are city-dwellers, when we need to increase our income we do not dig up the garden for vegetable production. Instead we either train or find alternative employment, and occasionally self-employment. Rural inhabitants lack the first two of these options, while the latter is usually very limited also. This must change if such numbers of people on such little land are to live an acceptable standard of life.

3.4.7. Participation

Significant levels of participation were seen in Chiro and Doba, but less so in Farta, and this mobilizes the population into taking action and bringing about change. Major decisions and plans, though, were carried out at government level and then this was communicated through meetings with the community. True participation is when the community itself accepts full responsibility and ownership, and through a built-up awareness of the problems and opportunities can form far-sighted goals (Bewket, 2007). The religious institutions can also play a part in this, as these are the dominant groups for rural people.
Pathway 3.1. Religious institutions are at the heart of community life and as such can exhibit tremendous influence on attitudes and behaviour. As stated above, these could bring communities together for participation on development themes.

Religious and traditional institutions need to contribute to overcoming social barriers, particularly those of early marriage, abuse, family planning use and choice of family size. Marriages at school-age were common in this study, thus depriving these young women of an adequate education. Reasons for divorce also need addressing as this leaves women struggling to bring up children single-handedly with less or no farmland. The willingness of the clergy to embrace these changes is open to question, as some have expressed outright hostility to family planning (Alene & Worku, 2009), and some of the very harmful practices CARE is combating are explicitly stated as laws in the Bible (see for example Deuteronomy 22:28-29 for the horrific law that a rapist must marry his victim and pay her father). Nevertheless, those institutions that exhibit forward thinking and contribute in open discussion and debate so to stimulate change and development should be sought.

It may be possible, for instance, to dedicate a religious holiday towards some productive purpose, say the Virgin Mary day for family planning, or another holy day for tree planting and so on.

3.4.8. Population Growth

Ethiopia’s rapid population growth has been a recognised problem for many years, and thus the government set the target of 44% for family planning coverage by 2015 (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1993). With only a finite amount of cultivatable land available and 84% of the population rural, population pressure in the absence of alternative incomes is the number one reason for rural poverty. Fragmentation of land can not continue indefinitely, and the outcome will be that many more are landless.

It is not inevitable that population pressure will lead to greater poverty, provided that trade and employment opportunities are created to compensate.
Family planning alone will not solve the population growth problem and so development programmes at all levels must integrate reasons for family size choices into their plans.

**3.4.9. Vision**

In all sixteen focus group discussions, the concluding question was that of what was needed in both the short-term and the long-term. This had two purposes: to directly find out what the communities needed most and indirectly to determine the extent of forward thinking and vision (pathway 3.2). Long-term answers were of the order of expanding on existing practices and availability of capital and it was apparent that the communities’ vision was rather narrow and limited. This is not unexpected as most of the inhabitants have little contact with the wider world where new opportunities will be learnt.

Long-term vision of the Land and Environmental Protection Office and of the DA’s was also investigated, and this was focused on increasing agricultural productivity by regeneration of degraded land, by firstly using soil and water conservation (SWC) methods and irrigation techniques, then secondly by biological methods. In addition the vision was also to include the expansion of income generating activities.

Change is desperately needed and to create change it is absolutely necessary for all members of communities to give their full backing through genuine true participation.

**3.4.10. Geographic Information System (GIS)**

All woredas visited have implemented or are about to implement Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping of farmland and storage of data on a GIS database. Chiro was the most advanced in this with all GPS mapping being completed and the database established.

GIS is an excellent tool for comparing and analysing demographic data, and can identify links and trends within data. As the Land and Environmental Protection Office in Chiro admitted, they are not expert in the use of GIS:

“We don’t have the training or manuals.”

Chiro Land & Environmental Protection Office
It was evident that this is currently a missed opportunity for those working in development programmes. Full and detailed data has been collected but the structure of the database does not take full advantage of this. For example, using GIS it should be possible, and a simple task, to identify all female-headed farms and determine average size. Or, to highlight all farms above a certain angle of slope and compare the gender of the head of household. Unfortunately, at present none of this is possible because such fields as gender have not been inputted into the database, so the only way to identify gender is to know if the name is male or female (i.e. not automated).

Expert training is necessary if this valuable resource is to be fully utilised.
4. Conclusion

Ethiopia’s problems are deeply ingrained and varied, and a look at the sustainable livelihoods framework shows that rural life is weak on all areas of the diagram. Some issues have a cultural or institutional basis while others are more indicative of the decades of lack of development.

Urgent issues that need immediate addressing are access to seed and fertilizer, and solutions to taboos against women ploughing. These contribute significantly to unnecessary poor farming performance. Longer term, health and water access need to improve as these pose as dominant areas of vulnerability which furthermore impact on women and children more than men.

Previous studies have implied that attitudes to soil and water conservation methods have been largely negative resulting in structures that were built using public works being later left to decay. This research however has not found this to be the case in the areas visited, and thus the focus of the research shifted with two main problems becoming apparent.

The two main overriding concerns are:

- Subsistence farming continues to be rain-fed
- Few IGA’s exist, and almost all have an agricultural basis

Both of these problems must be overcome if livelihoods of the rural poor are to ever improve, but efforts should be directed to all members of the community. Greater wealth among farmers, including the wealthier, will have a direct bearing on opportunities for IGA’s and conversely, more IGA opportunities will relieve pressure off farmland.

Therefore, it is imperative that irrigation is developed on all farms, and not just the poorest otherwise climatic variation will always threaten livelihoods. Evidence cited in this study shows that minimal blame can be laid on climate change, it is livelihoods and practices that must change. Groundwater was reported for all study sites and is a potential resource for the future.
Access to credit is central to overcoming both of these problems but the current practices by ACSI and OCSSCo are not endorsed in this study. New ways of managing risk need to be developed so that future catastrophic failures for individual households are to be avoided.

Population growth continues to be one the main pressures on rural livelihoods and will continue to do so for many years to come. Great improvements have been made in acceptance and uptake of family planning methods, but this is not a solution in itself. Firstly, in discussions the effectiveness of the medicine is questionable which could negate all of the progress made. Secondly, family planning can only help reduce population growth if families prefer to have fewer children but lack of incentives and cultural norms hinder this.

The causes and factors of rural food insecurity in Ethiopia stem from both food availability decline (FAD) and food entitlement decline (FED) (Sen, 1981). Farmers remain predominantly subsistence farmers where food is grown for household consumption but with the ever decreasing plots of land this is leading to a downward spiral into destitution and dependency. Poverty throughout kebeles means few alternative sources of income, whether waged or self-employed, resulting in the poorest being priced out of the market.

Observation of the sustainable livelihoods framework highlights the vulnerabilities of Ethiopia’s rural poor. Shocks are frequent and increasing and trends are negative, institutions are weak and difficult to access, and all this leaves few livelihood strategies.

With regard to the livelihood pentagon (see figure 16) and rural women, it is clear that their livelihoods are very weak on all five aspects.

![Diagram of livelihood pentagons for FHH, farmers, FHH, landless, MHH, farmers, and MHH, landless.](image)

**Key:** P=Physical, S=Social, H=Health, N=Natural and F=Financial

*Figure 16. Schematic diagrams for rural women (for relative comparison).*
By far the weakest radial, and greatest expressed area of concern, was that of finance and access to credit and this constrains all other aspects of the pentagon. Remoteness, cultural norms and gender bias leaves women with weaker social assets than men, made worse by heavy work burdens. At the very least women need to be included more by DA’s in dissemination of farming information.

Women are exposed to further stresses because of the additional heavy workload they are traditionally expected to undertake, and pregnancy and childbirth pose as significant health hazards. For female-headed farmers the cultural norm that only men plough means that field preparation and planting is not done in time then, with the lack of on-farm labour, the result is poorer yields.

For women, the disadvantages begin in childhood where their subordinate role starts. Young girls must carry heavy water containers and are less likely to be sent to school. But far more damaging is the practice of marrying girls at a very young age, the youngest in this study was 6 but the average was around 14. This prevents any further education or employment training.

Returning to the four ways forward at the national level of Devereux et al., (2005), this research holds the view that a focus on agricultural intensification creates the danger of increased vulnerability on a FAD framework, and it cannot resolve Ethiopia’s problems in the long term. With over 90 percent of rural inhabitants depending on agriculture, it may seem obvious to concentrate on such livelihoods, but it is this agricultural domination that is failing to sustain higher population densities. Livelihood diversification must be drastically improved if future generations are to enjoy an acceptable standard of living.

High population need not hinder prosperity, but for that to be so then trade and employment must exist as viable career routes. It is vital that economic development takes place that benefits those in remote regions, and that incentives are in place to encourage development (foreign and domestic) away from the major urban centres. Besides improving transport links, availability of capital is an essential component but under current loans schemes many of the poorest will suffer appalling losses leading to loss of assets, imprisonment or suicide. Innovative and visionary means of providing opportunity without the unacceptable risks must be found.
Over the last several years the trend of poverty and lack of development is perhaps turning, driven by the government’s Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2006). Great inroads have been made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and according to the 2010 MDGs Report, all are on track (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2010).

Within this the Food Security Programme has enabled real progress among food insecure regions through its four core components of PSNP, Household Asset Building (HABP), complementary community investment (CCI) – with a strong female focus, and resettlement (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2009a).

The PSNP has been a recognized success and has contributed to reducing the frequency and magnitude of humanitarian disasters for which Ethiopia is famous (see table 1, page 10). Nevertheless, this only applies for woredas selected as food insecure and this still leaves many desperately poor people without PSNP support. But the PSNP is not a long-term solution; it is a means of managing the problem.

Investment, as stated in the PASDEP, is needed but worryingly investment in small scale enterprises away from the urban areas receives just one paragraph. For the rural poor they need urgent and massive change to take place but the focus continues to be on the more visible cities. For example, in 2004/05 2.6 Billion Birr were invested in horticulture but almost all of this is for large scale export and near urban centres (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2006).

However, the new Growth and Transformation Plan for 2010-2015 continues the drive for development, with a new emphasis on irrigation. But the results of this study indicate an overriding need for non-agricultural development so that the rural poor will have increased diversity, greater resilience and far better opportunities for a healthy and fulfilling life.

It is not inevitable that Ethiopia will continue to be food insecure. With coherent and clear long-term plans, with time-specific goals, the lives of the rural poor can improve. NGO’s and the government together must formulate visionary, creative and cross-cutting programmes that will bring stability and economic enhancement to all members of the population.
1. Married at the age of 14, Hanan [false name] has been with her husband for the last 23 years. They support their six children, the youngest of which is five and the eldest is now in 9th grade at school.

They live in Tokuma Meta Lenche kebele, in Doba woreda in West Hararghe Zone, and are a 1 ½ hours walk away from the nearest main market, but there is a more local small market which has a grinding machine.

Hanan says that before getting married life was good but after the birth of her first child life was difficult due to lack of sufficient land. Through the intervention of CARE with training on income generating activities, she says now life has improved and four of her children are able to attend school. Fortunately, the family have had no major health challenges but continue to face food shortages.

Hanan and her family rent 0.5 ha from other people, on which they grow 500 strands of chat. She also has a milk cow, a goat and a plough but her main income comes from honey production where she now owns 11 traditional beehives and one modern hive. Honey production, she adds, is a reliable source whereas the chat relies upon the rain coming twice a year. Despite this, her family only produces five or six quintals and still does not have enough food for as much as eight months a year.

She receives no support from others as all are also food insecure. Participation in Public Works is her only support, and this assists her to allow her eldest daughter to attend high school some 50km away from home.

Hanan is a member of a Village Loan and Savings Association (VSLA) and an afosha group, and she enjoys good social relationships within the community. As a child she reached 3rd grade at school, and today it is her husband who receives capacity building training on income generating activities. Through this she now feels in a position to offer help to those people of a lower status. The more successful households, she believes, are those with oxen, a donkey for transport, at least 2 ha of land and married. Having six children is too much, four or five would be more appropriate but even less is better. Now she uses family planning, but in the past this was not available.

Good examples in the community are those practicing use of compost, petty trading and producing food on time for their husbands.

For the future, Hanan would like to own more modern beehives, but the cost of 1350 ETB is too great for a VSLA loan. In the longer term she hopes to construct a shop so that she can buy and sell various commodities from surrounding markets.
2. Ashibru is a 40 year old woman who lives in Tokuma Meta Lenche, Doba woreda in West Hararghe Zone, with her five children. After sixteen years together, nine years ago her husband suddenly became sick and sadly died from an unidentified illness, and since then she has had to bring up her two girls and three boys herself.

At the beginning of married life, times were difficult, and made worse as there was no grinding machine so everything had to be done by hand. Her husband would work on the farm while she took care of the household and the children. Without any family support, the workload was heavy, and it was a struggle to provide the children with the necessary school equipment.

Also over this time there have been occasions when the children suffered with malaria and sickness with diarrhoea. Now, through CARE, there is a strong saving culture and awareness of the importance of educating children, four of which are attending school.

On her 1.125 ha of land she grows sorghum, maize and haricot beans and some vegetables. She also has a milk cow, a heifer, a goat and three chickens from which she sells eggs in the market to purchase household food. Because culturally women are not permitted to plough, her problem is that she must beg the neighbours to plough her land which as a result planting is delayed.

Ashibru cannot afford fertilizer, and only produces three quintels a year which leaves her with a six month shortage of food. As a Public Works participant, this gap is filled with three months of food aid and three months of cash. The only other support she receives is from family, from her children and brother who lends her an ox.

She feels that widowed women are stigmatized and excluded by the community, but there is no stigma within groups like the Women’s Association. She is also a member of an afoasha and a Village Loan and Savings Association group, and as such she is able to get training on income generating activities, like shoat fattening. She is very happy with the health and development assistance from the afoasha group. She has no education but is now engaged in adult literacy, and continues with income generating activities training.

Ashibru feels that she is at a lower status than others in her community, because she does not get any support and is unable to get credit. Rumours and gossip exist because she is a widow, and hence she cannot use family planning or else people would talk.

Those that do best, she claims, are people who have two oxen, other animals and enough land. The type of person she considers as a role model would be someone who uses compost, proper latrines and who cares for their children.

For the future she wishes to spread these ideas to the villagers through her role as a village representative.
Fatima [false name] is a 30 year old divorced woman who lives in a main market town in Lenche Wodesa, Doba woreda in West Hararghe Zone. When she first got married her role was that of a housewife, and her husband made all decisions, including not using family planning. As a consequence she had four children in quick succession, which meant that she was unable to participate in afosha groups or in income generating activities training.

Following the death of her husband, she was forced to marry his brother. He already had a wife and children and neglected looking after her and even causing damage to existing assets. Now that she is divorced she feels in control of her life and can make decisions for herself. Since the divorce she had a problem with her throat, but after an operation three months ago she has now recovered.

On her farm of 0.5 ha she grows sorghum, maize and haricot beans along with vegetables such as beetroot and tomatoes. She also owns an ox, three goats and two chickens. Additionally she conducts petty trade where she sells her vegetables and buys peppers and herbs to sell in her home village. Due to her reliance on her farm productivity, the months of July and August are difficult times when there is insufficient food. With no family support she relies on the PSNP assistance. Fatima is knowledgeable on farming practices and conservation methods, and utilises them on her own farm, but even with this it is not enough.

Fatima has regular contact with friends and is a member of two well-managed a Village Loan and Savings Association groups and an afosha group. Although as a child she only reached grade 2, she has a good understanding of conservation methods and farming practices, and is involved in training on hygiene and income generating activities. Because of this training she now feels in a superior position to those around her. Before this training she was unhappy with life but today she is very happy. Successful households, she says, are those which speak the truth and share decisions.

Fatima does not know anyone who would be a role model, and emphasises the importance of changing harmful attitudes. Although in general her relationship with neighbours is good, some still use insulting and stigmatizing words.

For the future she would like a shop because her home is favourably positioned near a road. She stresses the need for an attitude of saving and access to loans, and looking further ahead she wants to have a hotel.
4. Merima [false name] is a single 25 year old mother who cares for her 7 year old son. She lives in Lenche Wodesa, Doba woreda in West Hararghe Zone which is a few hours walk away from the nearest markets.

After the death of her of first husband, she spent her time as a housewife while her second husband worked the fields. They were together for seven years until he was resettled and given new land three years ago, and after this separation all communication was lost. Merima was then without land or animals and faced the challenge of supporting herself and her small son.

Despite her visible appearance of lacking confidence, starting after her separation with an interest free revolving fund loan of about 2250 ETB from the World Bank, but starting with no more equipment than a sack, she has created an income through trading papers and hena from markets as far away as Dira Dawa to markets nearer to home. She has hopes of expanding this trade, but cannot get further credit until her existing loan is repaid. Not owning a donkey is also a problem as currently she must pay someone else to transport her goods back to her home, costing 10 Birr.

As a PSNP beneficiary, she has enough throughout the year and only requires minimal support from family. She can send her son to school and her brother, who she also helps, is now attending Chiro college.

Merima has a good relationship with her neighbours but due to her marital status sometimes faces stigma among the community. She is a member of a Village Loans and Savings Association, a honey production group and also an afosha group which she feels is best because it is a social group and benefits the community.

Although she is illiterate, she feels she is in a superior position to others due to the training on income generating activities and honey production she has received which has given her extra know-how and the ability to provide an income. However, she feels that married couples with land tend to do better than others, and she also believes that sending children to school is important for success. If she can get more profit then she considers herself very happy.

Her hope is to expand her business, but to do so she needs access to capital. If she can achieve this then her wish is to own a shop in her home town. She also would like to remarry but cannot because of the cultural attitude. Despite not being able to name someone who she would consider as a role model, she has clear aims for her future ambitions.
In the remote kebele of Wachu Eltoke, Chiro woreda in West Hararghe Zone, which is accessible by vehicle only in dry weather, lives the elderly Hindi with her husband and seven children. Married for over forty years, they have brought up their four sons and three daughters.

Although she states that seven children is too many, it is Hindi herself who wanted that many and it is her husband who would have preferred two or three. All the boys are in education, the eldest of which is now at Awassa University. The daughters, however, are all now married.

Life, Hindi says, started at the time of marriage as she had no education previously. After which she becomes responsible for the household and the care of the children. In the beginning there was a problem with family planning, which then becomes a problem of providing for the children but luckily there have been no health problems.

Hindi and her husband have 0.5 ha of land, which the children also help with such as ploughing. On this they grow sorghum, maize, sweet potatoes and vegetables, and they have one goat. While most is for home consumption, the onions and tomatoes are to sell in the markets which are a two or three hours walk away. Most importantly are the onions, which make 1200 ETB during belg season, and the sweet potatoes which are for the household. But Hindi says this is not enough because of shortages of rain, and providing the children with school equipment is a challenge especially as the school year begins after the most difficult time of year.

The only support she gets is from the children on the farm, but she hopes her son that is at university will offer support after graduating. With the help from the PSNP she says she has enough throughout the year.

Hindi has good social relations with friends and is a member of a Village Loan and Savings Association which meets every fifteen days. She also enjoys being in an afosha group for its social benefits. Because of the support of the PSNP, she now sees her life as good and of equal standing to others and she considers herself as very happy.

She does not know of anyone in her area that she would class as a role model. Her hopes for the future is to start goat trading and selling cow milk, by getting a loan which she says is possible through CARE. With this she will continue sending her children to school so that all of her sons will go to university.
Meserat lives in the kebele of Wachu Eltoke, Chiro woreda in West Hararghe Zone, which lies a two hour walk from the nearest market town of Debaso and one hour to the nearest health facility. Married at age 14, she is now 20 years old but does not have any children because of a medical problem, although she says that the community accept her.

The only challenge when she first got married was that of land, the 0.5 ha that her husband owned was insufficient so they now rent an addition 0.5 ha. Their main income comes from growing sorghum, but has only one season. They also grow haricot beans, maize, wheat, barley, chat and onions, and the onions have two seasons. On their farm they also have an ox, a cow, five sheep, a donkey and five chickens.

Besides from shortages in rain, one of the biggest problems she faces is pests destroying the sorghum, which affect the seeds. This, she says, can cause a loss of 40-50% in production and she knows of no solution. Other problems are lack of land, necessitating renting of additional land. To pay for this, 2400 ETB, she sells the belg season onions.

Meserat has good social networks and is in an afosha group because it is sociable, but she has no desire to join a Village Loan and Savings Association group. Educated to 8th grade she now does not take part in any education or training but would like to in the future. Meserat feels life is good and considers herself as very happy, and gets on well with her neighbours.

Households, to be more successful, should have smaller families, she says, and family planning is now achieving this. She doesn’t know of anyone who she thinks a role model.

For her future hopes, apart from having children, is to improve her income so that the family can buy land in Chiro town to build a house there.
7. Arba Hora kebele in Chiro woreda in West Hararghe Zone, is a lowland area with poor quality degraded land, lying a two hour walk away from the main town of Asbe Teferi. Here lives Meryem, a shy 15 year old girl who was married six months ago. They do not have any children yet and are using family planning until they are in a better situation.

Before marriage, Meryem says life was good and without worries. But even now, because she has no children, she feels stress free and is able to think for her own needs. Being of married status now means that she is able to attend social gatherings because she is considered a woman rather than a girl.

On their farm of 0.5 ha they have sufficient equipment but lack an ox. The only animal they own is a milk cow so the husband’s family lend an ox when needed. They grow sorghum, haricot beans, maize and chat which provide a mixed income, supplemented by buying wheat to grind then sell.

She is not aware, and has only limited knowledge, of farming problems but does know that effective ploughing and removal of old stalks is important, and of improved sowing methods. Meryem and her husband, because they are newly married must wait until next year’s assessment to see if they are eligible for PSNP support, but she says with some help from her mother and the husband’s parents, they have enough throughout the year.

Meryem sees her friends often but is not a member of any groups because she is new to the area. She feels an equal member in society and classes herself as very happy. She could not name anyone as a role model but has future hopes of getting additional education above her 4th grade so that she can live a better life. She would like to conduct goat fattening but currently is unable to get a loan due to her age.
The newly married Halima lives in Arba Hora kebele, Chiro woreda in West Hararghe Zone, which is a two hour walk away from the main town. She is 22 years old, and even though her husband has no land she wanted to get married regardless. Life, she says, was easier before but she has chosen to be with her husband despite the added difficulties. Married for one year, they as yet have no children but would like two or three if they had some land and a better income.

With only one cow and no land, Halima’s main income comes from selling milk which she does as part of a group of six people. As added security she gives her cow injections to prevent disease. She supplements this income with collecting firewood from a mountain three hours away and then selling it in the town which is two hours away. This, she explains, can be dangerous because it is easy to slip and injure a leg. If this happens then she cannot visit the hospital because it is far and expensive, but instead must rely on traditional methods of massage. The health extension service cannot help with this type of problem, only with family planning, child nutrition and simple first aid.

Her husband helps her by collecting together the wood, however, their income is not enough and they do not have enough money for simple household cooking utensils and a mattress.

She states that not having land, having no education and not being able to get credit means she cannot develop her livelihood. Even work in a restaurant in Asbe Teferi is not possible because she has no experience or skills in such work, so she prays to God that the situation will improve. She never attended school and so cannot read or write, and even if there was some education available she says there are too many problems in life. She adds that if she had the skills then she could do anything.

Halima and her husband do not have enough food throughout the year but are not PSNP beneficiaries because of their newly married status so must wait until next year, and she says that CARE is not helping. Both Halima’s and her husband’s families try to assist and she hopes her brother who has recently graduated from Dilla University will be able to provide support.

Besides her milk group, Halima is also in an afosha group which she says is useful for helping when someone is sick, dies or with wedding costs. She feels an equal part of the community and because she doesn’t have the extra burden of having children she sees her status as medium.

Halima says she is “medium happy”, that is neither happy nor unhappy but hopes for a better future where she can be richer and be free to have a comfortable life, and in the shorter term to have a house with a metal roof rather than grass. When asked to name a role model she explained that a man called Dinay has land and grows lots of chat. His house, she says, is of a good standard and design and that he has bank accounts.

Halima also hopes one day to grow chat to sell in the local area as prices are high. If she could get a loan, for 1000 ETB perhaps, then she would also wish to work as a merchant, trading between markets or to get employment in another area.
Fatuma Hassano is a 35 year old married woman who lives in Arba Hora kebele, in Chiro woreda in West Hararghe Zone which lies a two hour walk away from the main town of Asbe Teferi. She has been married for 23 years and now has eight children, five girls and three boys from ages 3 to 18 but her last child was sadly born dead. Eight children, she says, is too many but in those early times family planning was not available; no more than four children is enough.

Before she was married, life was less stressed and she felt free, and was able to buy clothes and jewellery for herself. But after marriage she had greater responsibility and worries daily for her children and life became very heavy. Originally they had land but eleven years ago her husband was jailed for political issues leaving her alone. At this time erosion caused great damage to her land, removing the soil and making it unusable. At that time other members of the community cut down trees and claimed new land for themselves, but without her husband she was unable to do the same.

Fatuma and her husband were reunited three years ago, but now they are landless and their main means of income is through buying chat off local farmers and selling it in Asbe Teferi, which she says is profitable. As part of a group of three or four people, she buys 1500 – 2000 ETB of chat from local farmers and sell it in Asbe Teferi, and together they make 400 ETB profit. This does not always happen every month but depends on conditions, but sometimes during the dry season where a farmer uses a water pump they are able to make 800 ETB profit.

She also collects firewood to sell which means a difficult three hour walk to the forested area but chat is more profitable work. In addition, she owns one milk cow but is pregnant at the moment. Even so, she and her family do not have enough throughout the year and she cannot afford the school equipment and sufficient food. In the home they lack enough cooking utensils.

Three of her children are attending primary school in the kebele but an older son had to be withdrawn after 8th grade because she is unable to support him in the highschool in Asbe Teferi.

Fatuma is not a member of any groups, and has very little participation within the community. She is not a member of a Village Loans and Savings Association or afosha, because one of her children is in afosha and the rules allow only one person per household. Despite this, she still saves money by her own initiative.

Six years ago she, as part of a group, borrowed 600 ETB from the development agent, which was used on a variety of things. After three years she repaid this including the 10% interest and now would like another loan. Afosha, she states, is not sufficient because the money, which is of a low amount, must be repaid within fifteen days otherwise 10% interest is added. Interest worries her, as she may not be able to repay the money but she would hope to get an interest free loan of 1000-2000 ETB over two years so that she could buy cattle for fattening.

Fatuma never attended school, and the only training she receives now is from the Health Extension Service which provides information on child nutrition. In this
current state, she does not consider herself as very happy, only as medium. For a role model, she named a local man called Dinay, who grows lots of chat and has a good standard of living. For her future, she says she needs capital. She is strong and has skill and is able to work hard to have a better life but to do so she needs money to start.
Near the main road and just 4 km away from Asbe Teferi, lies a small village in Medicho 9 kebele, in Chiro woreda, West Hararghe Zone. In it lives the 30 year old Tamima Amad, who is a widow with six children.

Life used to be, and still would be, fine but five years ago her husband was arrested and killed because he was a political opponent. Now she must single-handedly provide for her children whose ages range from 5 up to 18, and she has been able to send all but the youngest two children to school.

On her 1 ha of land she uses half for growing chat, which is the main income, and the other half for growing sorghum, maize, haricot beans and sweet potatoes. However, already the maize has been damaged from heavy rain. Also she has an ox, four sheep and seven goats and these can provide compost and fertilizer for the farm, but soil fertility remains a problem as this fertilizer can not be transported easily to the farm. Fertility is further decreased by repeatedly growing sorghum, but Tamima explains that she knowingly does this because sorghum produces a greater yield. Her land is flat but she uses stone faced bunds and with teaching from CARE now uses improved planting techniques.

Without her husband and only the children to help, Tamima lacks sufficient labour to farm effectively. Furthermore, it is culturally forbidden for women to plough, so even though she has an ox she must wait until a male cousin can plough for her. This means that planting is delayed and production is decreased.

Because Tamima’s situation was the result of political opposition, the community is sympathetic and supportive. She therefore gets six months of PSNP Direct Support with three months of food aid and three months of cash, but she prefers food aid because the cash is not of the equivalent amount. Last year she experienced an eight month food gap but so far this year is better.

Tamima participates in many community groups, including afosha, women’s groups and iqqub and although not educated, she has had training on saving and managing household assets, family planning and taken part in female-headed household focus groups about social changes of attitudes. Additional training has been in agriculture and early warning, but she does not have direct contact with a development agent. Instead she obtains information from neighbours who have been taught.

But she is not happy with life because her husband is no longer with her. If he had been, she believes, then life would have been much better and the stress has resulted in her suffering from gastric problems. She does not feel an equal member of the community because she is a widow, this causes jealousy and suspicion from married women. Her role model is a divorced woman called Layla who works hard, is successful and is sought after by the local men.

Tamima has various plans to improve her livelihood and income, but to do so she needs capital. One such plan is to increase productivity by buying a water pump, and then intercropping more chat. She also wants to do more horticultural work and grow mango, oranges, papaya and pumpkins. She cannot get a loan, but she says if the women organise themselves into groups of twenty or forty then together they may be able to access loans. In this way, step by step and working hard, she will improve her life and be able to send her children to university so that later they in turn can help her.
11. Eneyebaye lives in the Buro kebele of Farta woreda in the South Gondar zone. Even though she is only 17, she is now married for the second time.

She was first married at the very early age of 6, and for two years she lived with her husband and started school. After that she returned home and had to go to court to get a separation. But, at age 11 she married again, at the arrangement of her family but with her agreement, and all schooling stopped. Two years ago she gave birth to a son, and she considers six children to be a good family size. Currently she uses family planning.

She owns about 0.4 ha of land, which was divided between herself and her brother following the death of her father. Her house is a two hour walk away from the main town of Debre Tabor, and is within easy access of the Buro hospital.

Her family have had no major health problems but she suffers from a stomach problem and gastritis, for which the local health facility has prescribed syrup and tablets.

Although the last few years have been fine, Eneyebaye and her husband don’t have enough equipment, either on-farm or in the home. They have an ox but no plough, and also no scythe. As an addition source of income her husband buys and sells chickens and eggs, but these are not for their own consumption. Because the farm doesn’t produce enough throughout the year, they use this income to buy food and during the winter time between July and September they eat the potatoes they grow. They have enough for two meals per day which generally consists of injera and shiro.

Eneyebaye gets on well with her neighbours and friends but she sees herself at a lower status. As everyone in this area is of a similar low status, she does not know of anyone that could be a role model. But for her future she would like to grow onions and peppers to sell, and to eventually live in a city.
12. Izab, aged 22, lives with her husband and two children in the kebele of Buro, Farta Woreda, South Gondar zone.

Married at the age of 16, they now have a young son and a baby girl, and they live two hours away from Debre Tabor town and the nearest clinic is one hour away.

During this time life has changed little but it is a continuous struggle to provide for the family as they do not own any land. Also both Izab and her husband have health problems: she has a condition known as ‘moynhagen’, a type of blood poisoning which requires periodic releasing of blood. Her husband suffers from migraine every month which last several days.

Being landless and with few income opportunities, Izab and her husband rent land for which they pay 100 ETB per harvest for land producing 6 quintels, and also give 50% of the produce to the landowner. This land is steep and far from their home (two hours walk), so they have constructed terraces and bunds. Even so, this does not produce enough and to maintain their diet of injera and sorghum twice a day, they must borrow money from rich farmers (at 10% interest) to cover the months of May to August.

Four years ago Izab took a loan from the Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI) as part of a group of six people. She received 1200 ETB for sheep fattening but unfortunately some of the sheep died. Unable to repay the loan they had to sell their ox and buy a cheaper thinner one.

Although she is a member of local edir and religious groups, she does not feel an equal member of the community and sees herself as a lower status than others. With almost no education and no training available, she is not happy with the current state of her life. However, despite the previous difficulties with a loan, she would like another loan in future and by this means buy sheep and cattle for fattening, or a milk cow and donkey for transport. Then they can increase their income and be equal to friends and neighbours who own land.
Mari, a 35 year old woman, lives in a highland area of Askuma kebele, in Farta woreda, in the South Gondar zone, situated a three hour walk away from Debre Tabor. She is within easy access to a clinic and 30 minutes to collect water.

Having got married just six months ago, she is happy with her situation but her life has had many ups and downs. This is not her first marriage, she has been married three times previously from which she has three children.

Before her first marriage, her father gave her 0.5 ha of land, but after she married he took it back again. This angered her husband, so after two years together where they had one child, they separated.

Once single, her father gave the land again and she subsequently married. As with the first marriage, her father retook the land and after two years and another child, he too left. Yet again her father gave back the land and yet again she remarried. As before, her father chose to reclaim the land, and after just one year and another child, the third husband left.

At this point Mari remained alone but she found herself unable to protect the land from erosion and degradation. She was hungry and hated life. Then, just recently CARE came and gave her sheep in a revolving scheme, and soon after she met someone who would share the land and life with her. Her new husband went to court to get the land, but eight months ago Mari’s father died. Together they have nine children, but only one of his lives with them and she would like one more child so that they are all related.

With the farm, sheep and her husband’s ox and donkey, they have enough food throughout the year and eat two times a day and the children eat three times, although hail is a major problem which destroys many of the crops. They share the workload and her husband helps in the home too.

Mari says her life has improved enormously, particularly from the assistance from CARE who also gave training. She says she is richer than the people around her and that her neighbours are jealous. Successful households, she states, need land, a strong husband and that couples love each other and work together.

When asked if she could name a role model she named herself as a good example of how to live. In the future she wants to expand the sheep trading, and trade cattle also then use better seed to improve their income. In this way they will save and sell more so that they can upgrade their home: first to a metal roof and then, she hopes, to a two-storey house. Long-term, she wants to give the children a good education and send them to university so that one day they can support her.
For over half a century the elderly Berke has lived in the kebele of Askuma, Farta woreda, South Gondar zone. She cannot remember how old she is, 55+, but adds that the harshness of life makes her look older.

Many years ago she was married, but her husband was a soldier for the Derg and over twenty years ago he went to fight but never returned. So, either divorced or widowed, she has since lived alone and brought up their six children.

Eight years ago tragedy struck when her eldest daughter died, leaving three children, which Berke now looks after. Sadness came again when her son left the area to live in Debre Tabor, thus losing a valuable helper on the farm, and communication was also lost. This was compounded by the death this year of her brother, who used to also help on the land. Berke herself is not in good health as she has a problem with her hips and the pain prevents her from sleeping but cannot afford to go to Debre Tabor for treatment.

Her small farm of 0.25 ha, although good fertility soil, suffers from erosion and lack of maintenance. To plough it she must hire someone from Debre Tabor, three hours away, costing 50 ETB and eight hours of her labour. To supplement the farm income, she weaves traditional baskets, does sewing and makes injera for other people but even so, over the winter months of June to September they don’t have enough, eating potatoes and cabbage. This time is also a challenge as she must pay school fees and buy school equipment for her children, but they shout at her. She believes that four children would be a maximum number, and that three is enough because of the extra burden in providing for them.

Now that Berke’s brother has died, she receives no support from family and as a consequence her land is becoming neglected.

Berke hates fighting, therefore she maintains good relationships with her neighbours. Besides being in a religious group, she is also in a newly formed Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) where she saves 3 ETB a month. She is also attending the recent CARE training, which after five days of attendance entitles her to 300 ETB and 50 ETB added to her VSLA savings.

Berke is thin and tired, and therefore considers herself as of low status, but equal among the community. Long ago she was happy, but now is not but says life is acceptable. Those that do better have more land, have bees and cattle and have a strong person to work – being single is not good.

Her main hope for the future, besides buying an ox, is for her son to return and help her on the land.
15. Living in the highland region of Askuma kebele of Farta woreda, South Gondar, is the 45+ year old Asraday.

She lives a four hour walk away from Debre Tabor and although there is a more local market, it is not always accessible because there is no bridge. A health clinic is one hour away and for water she must walk 30 minutes two times a day to fetch it.

When she was young and before marriage, she was happy, but even after getting married life continued to be satisfactory. Nine years ago the first tragedy struck when their 2 year old daughter died of disease. Her husband also had health issues and suffered from high blood pressure and headaches, but five years ago he became ill with malaria and died. This loss meant she became unable to fully protect the land from erosion and from conflict with neighbouring farmers.

Last year she suffered the further terrible loss of her eldest son, aged 23 who had left the area to seek work far away in Humera, which is in a lowland region near the Sudanese border. Many locals know of this place and explain how dangerous it is, that many die from malaria or snake bites.

On her two plots of land totalling 0.5 ha, she grows maize, sorghum and beans and some vegetables. One plot is steep and is eroded, which she states is caused by farmers further uphill having poor terracing and cutting trees. Asraday also uses terraces, bunds and grass to control the erosion but she says it is not enough. But just as serious, if not moreso, is the damage caused by hail, which can destroy 100% of her crops.

Two years ago floods ravaged her home, threatening the lives of herself and children and in this a calf was killed. It also removed almost all of her household and farm equipment which she still cannot replace them, but CARE’s recent intervention is now assisting in this.

Each day her four children and herself have two meals, but the months of May and June are particularly difficult. At this time they eat wild seeds and then during the main rainy season they live on potatoes and cabbage.

Her two sons are attending school and are now in 2nd and 3rd grade, and her two daughters were married, but subsequently divorced.

Two years ago Asraday received a loan of 2000 ETB from the Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI) for the purpose of buying a calf. This is the calf that died in the floods and now she is unable to repay the loan and in a few months time she will have paid off just 1200 ETB of the 2200 ETB debt. Because of this regrettable experience, she does not want any more loans in the future.

Asraday is now a member of the newly formed Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), in which she saves 3 ETB per month. With this, she hopes to eventually upgrade her house to have a metal roof. In general she gets on well with
her neighbours but is fighting with one farmer over his use of the land and water flow, which is causing damage to Asraday’s land.

Now, with CARE’s support, she considers her status as medium, whereas before life was dangerous and despite all the previous sad occurrences she considers herself as happy and an equal member of the community.

For success, she says the education of children is important, but also having a diverse range of crops and animals for fattening. By saving money she hopes to invest in sheep fattening then later of cattle and through this send her children on to university so that eventually they will in turn support her.
16. Tegab is a 35 year old divorced woman who lives in the kebele of Kanat, which is in the Farta woreda, South Gondar zone. She attends CARE’s training programmes in Debre Tabor, three hours walk away.

Landless, she now has four children, two each from two previous marriages, the first of which was when she was twenty years old. She did not agree to that marriage but her mother wanted it because Tegab was getting older. That marriage lasted seven years but during that time her husband was violent towards her. She wanted a divorce, so although her standard of life dropped, she gained control and freedom over her life.

She remained single for four years but her family was pushing her to remarry because being single with children is not culturally accepted. So, she remarried and had two more children but this husband was even more abusive than the first. Over three years ago they got divorced and Tegab’s brothers built her a house near the family.

After the divorce her ex-husband received about 0.7 ha of land following the death of his father. Tegab went to court to fight for support for his child and the court awarded 25 ETB per month. However, Tegab says that because he has money he has bribed the court and has since stopped paying so now she must provide for the children herself.

At the time of the last land redistribution in 1993, Tegab was 18 years old. At that time her mother put in a request for land but because of corruption, she states, she did not receive any. Until recently her main income came from selling grass from June to November, and selling wood at other times but CARE’s recent intervention has given her three sheep and training. This is a definite improvement but she now has a new problem in that the farmers are now refusing her access to collect grass because CARE is helping her. If she continues, they say, they will fine her 50 ETB.

Throughout the year Tegab and her children don’t have enough to eat, and they have only two small meals a day, supplemented by wild beans. At holiday times her family help and this is the only time they eat meat. They do not have enough household equipment and with only one plate to share the children fight at meal times.

Tegab has a good social life, and mainly talks with friends while fetching water at the local water site. However, because she is divorced, the married women are jealous and suspicious of her. She never received any education, but sees herself of medium status and now that CARE is helping, considers herself as happy with life.

For a role model she named a local man who has land irrigated by a pipe, where he grows lots of vegetables and has a nice house. Her plans for the future are, through CARE’s help, is to expand on the sheep fattening to oxen and cows and also to buy and sell crops so that she can save. Tegab also feels it is important to educate her children to a high level.
17. Fantaye is a 21 year old woman who recently got married just seven months ago. She lives in the Kanat kebele of Farta woreda, South Gondar zone which is two hours away on foot from Debre Tabor.

She did not want to marry but because men continued to pester at her home, and with pressure from her blind mother, she reluctantly accepted. However, now that she is married she says her husband’s behaviour is pleasant and she now loves him.

After getting married Fantaye’s husband was given 0.5 ha of land off his family, and she now manages the household.

Because their farm is small, Fantaye does not want any children yet so she resists the pressure from neighbours to have a child, a decision which her husband has reluctantly accepted. In the future, when in a better position, she hopes to have up to three children.

On their farm they grow a range of crops and potatoes and own a calf, a milk cow and now three sheep which they received from CARE. Being in a highland area hail is one of the biggest hazards they face, but the sorghum also suffers from pests. Fantaye also complains that religious holidays result in them being unable to work on the land for half of each month.

Throughout the year they eat injera and sorghum twice a day, six months of which comes from the farm produce, supplemented with milk when the cow is in calf). For the other half of the year they must use the income from the animals to buy food. Only on special occasions such as Easter do they enjoy eating meat.

Fantaye reached 5th grade at school and now gets training from a local gender group and also from the recent CARE training. She would like to continue her schooling but her husband is not happy with that idea. Fantaye is happy with life but wishes for more development opportunities.

She feels inferior to other people of a similar age as they have received a higher level of education. People that do best, she adds, are those living in big towns like Addis Ababa. A role model she named has a good quality colourful house, and brothers and a sister who live in the USA.

Her hope for the future is to run a restaurant in the main local town of Debre Tabor.
18. Living in the kebele of Kanat, Farta woreda, South Gondar zone, is the 38 year old Tesfu. She is a widow who brings up her six children alone.

Married at age sixteen without family permission, Tesfu and her husband had fifteen years together until he fell sick and died. During this time they produced three boys and three girls, all of which attended school.

Although being a single mother is tough, she resists the pressure and pestering to remarry because she wants to bring up her children herself.

They all live three hours away from Debre Tabor, but have access to a local health clinic. For water, Tesfu must walk 30 minutes, perhaps more than three times a day.

On her 1 ha of land (divided into two) she says she does not have enough equipment, particularly oxen and plough, but also tools such as picks and spades. All of the farm’s produce is for their own consumption, not for selling, but because of the large family size they are hungry despite using fertilizer, compost, bunds and ditches. Six children, Tesfu says, is too many; two children is enough. Two years ago they were eating three meals a day, but now they eat only two and soon she will be forced to sell her heifer. Mostly they eat injera and shiro but because she also has four chickens they also eat eggs.

Until a few months ago the only support she received was the occasional help from cousins with meals, but now CARE is providing training and has given her three sheep. Because of this she feels happy with life, unlike before but nevertheless still sees her status as low.

Besides the local edir group, Tesfu is also a member of a local gender group (saving 4.50 ETB a month) and of the recently created Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) where she saves 4 ETB a month. With no school education, training, she says, is important so that with the help of her children they can improve their lives and livelihoods. A local man is a good example: he has ponds and grows fruit and vegetables. Her hope is to breed cattle and to send her children to college or university.
19. For 20 years Tebebe has lived with her husband in Kolay kebele, Farta woreda in the South Gondar zone.

Now 33 years old, she has four sons, the eldest of which is 18 and a baby girl. Situated two hours from the nearest market and three hours from Debre Tabor, they are near a health post and water pump.

Before she got married life was better because her family are wealthy but once she married she was then expected to support herself. On their ~0.7 ha of land (divided into two locations), this has not been easy with problems of rain shortage and hail throughout. Had she known this at the beginning, Tebebe says, then she would have not got married.

She does not want any more children, three would have been enough. Although she has used family planning it has not been 100% effective, she explained. Fortunately both she and her husband and all the children have not been sick, helped by all having received vaccinations and helped also through her knowledge on health matters.

On the farm they have two oxen, two heifers, two sheep, two donkeys and four chickens and grow sorghum, wheat and teff. Half of the crops are for the home and half are to sell. But because of lack of rain for the last two years they have been forced to reduce from three meals a day to two and will need to sell some of the animals to get enough food.

In contrast to the water shortage on her land, the steep area has suffered from heavy rain and erosion. To combat all of these problems they are using terraces, bunds, ponds and wire mesh, and planting improved seeds given by CARE but even these are not growing.

Nevertheless, Tebebe sees her position as better than others around her and indeed, her house was chosen as a role model for the neighbourhood for being clean and possessing a toilet. Tebebe has also undertaken training from the health extension workers but has no formal education. Without the problems of drought and hail she would be happy, but as it is she says she is unhappy.

For a role model she named herself, otherwise she would name rich people. Because of the poor state of her land she has no hopes but intends to educate her children to a high level so that maybe they will help her. She was unable to get such an education because she got married, and now would prefer to be employed in a factory rather than continue farming.
20. Yizab, aged 18, is a newly married woman who lives in the kebele of Kolay, in the Farta woreda, South Gondar zone.

After completing her primary education locally, she started renting a house in the town of Debre Tabor so that she could attend the high school there. Whilst there she met the man she would later marry. He lived in her home village, and because she was thinking of him and her family her education suffered and she failed to get enough points to progress from 10th grade.

He asked permission from her family and thus were married two years ago. Until they are in a better financial position they have chosen not to have any children yet, and so use family planning.

As both are young neither own any land, but her husband has a local shop. In addition they rent a small 0.25 ha of land on which they grow teff. This land is rented on a two year agreement costing 1100 ETB, but will end next year. Her family owns land but refuse to offer it because they are disappointed that she has stopped school. However, they also own a milk cow, a heifer and calf, a chicken and a donkey which is shared. The shop is the main income, for which the donkey is transport but the problem is that the local market is very limited.

Before they started renting land, the shop was insufficient but with the land then it is enough for two people, Yizab explains. They are able to eat pasta, bread or injera four times per day throughout the year. No support comes from their families or elsewhere, so they must provide for themselves.

Capital is their greatest problem preventing them from developing, but they do not want a loan for fear of not being able to repay it. Employment opportunities are few, so they continue to trade sugar, salt and coffee from Debre Tabor to sell at home. Yizab is not a member of any groups other than a local edir group.

For the immediate future she would like to return to school and continue with her education, then to finish 12th grade and maybe be employed by the government. Because she has no children she is therefore in a better position than others, but those that do best are living in the towns and have better business opportunities.
Appendix 2 – Specific Kebele Needs

Kebele-level Needs
The kebeles visited, while sharing many of the general issues covered in this report, each told of specific urgent needs or problems that are unique to their terrain and conditions. These are listed below.

Chiro Woreda
- Arba Hora - Bridge, water, PSNP for more than 6 months
- Medicho 9 - Water pumps and drip irrigation
- Wachu Eltoke - Water access, roads

Doba Woreda
- Lenche Wodesa - More honey group training, sorghum fungus
- Tokuma Meta Lenche - Need better agricultural information, sorghum fungus

Farta Woreda
- Askuma - Hail, erosion
- Buro - Food & clothes, water access
- Kanat - health care (trachoma), bridge, water access
- Kolay - Fix water pumps, food, grinding machine
- Sahirma - Health care, water pump for irrigation, school items
- Wukro - Fix dangerous power lines, “Bicha Wag”, clothes & food
Appendix 3 – Location of Sites

Below is the location all of the interview locations. Rather than place names, which require local maps and may not be shown at all, it has been decided to instead give the geographic coordinates so that each site can be located easily on any map (or Google Earth).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Degrees, minutes, seconds</th>
<th>Altitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chiro Woreda</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arba Hora</td>
<td>9 07 53 N, 40 51 51 E</td>
<td>1700 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicho 9</td>
<td>9 06 48 N, 40 50 47 E</td>
<td>1720 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wachu Eltoke</td>
<td>9 09 16 N, 40 56 29 E</td>
<td>1935 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doba Woreda</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenche Wodesa</td>
<td>9 11 24 N, 41 00 10 E</td>
<td>1830 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokuma Meta Lenche</td>
<td>9 11 26 N, 40 58 58 E</td>
<td>1760 masl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 17. Map of Chiro and Doba Woredas](image17)

![Figure 18. Map of Farta Woreda](image18)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Degrees, minutes, seconds</th>
<th>Altitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farta Woreda</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Askuma</td>
<td>11 46 46 N, 38 01 49 E</td>
<td>2615 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buro</td>
<td>11 55 08 N, 38 01 17 E</td>
<td>2360 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debre Tabor training centre</td>
<td>11 51 54 N, 37 59 37 E</td>
<td>2630 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanat</td>
<td>11 48 58 N, 38 03 28 E</td>
<td>2610 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolay</td>
<td>11 55 41 N, 37 57 07 E</td>
<td>2315 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahirna</td>
<td>11 49 03 N, 38 06 41 E</td>
<td>2730 masl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wukro</td>
<td>11 51 05 N, 38 11 41 E</td>
<td>2740 masl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 4 – Demographic Data

### Chiro Woreda, West Hararghe zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chiro Woreda Administration, West Hararghe Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information provided by Mr Eyob, 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female population: 96,625  
Male population: 92,835  
Total: 189,460  
Density = 267 people/km²

Birth rate: 2.9%  
Average HH size=5.3

### Households [From Land & Env. Prot. Off.]

| Female-headed households: 5363 |
| Male-headed households: 30,384 |
| Total: 35,795                   |

[From Land & Environmental Protection Office:
Households with land: 5128 female  
                        29,207 male  
Total: 34,335  
                           1460 landless=4% ]

### Terrain [From Land & Env. Prot. Off.]

- Highland (dega): 16.62%  
- Midland (weyna dega): 36.63%  
- Lowland (kolla): 46.7%

Ground water is present throughout Woreda

### PSNP [from CARE data]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registered:</th>
<th>12,100 female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>24,746</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13% of population

### Health

- Family planning: 19,077 women (~20% of all females)  
- HIV and malaria: 27% prevalence  
- 1070 people (?)

### Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1-8:</th>
<th>12,287 female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>29,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

150,505 people are literate
Land & Environmental Protection Office – Chiro Kebele, West Hararghe Zone

Information provided by Mr Sisay, 2010

Chiro – 39 kebeles (Peasant Associations)

Three roles:
- Land use planning
- Administration
- Environmental protection

The Land & Env. Prot. Office conducts studies in micro-watersheds which then influence the Natural Resource Management Office. This in turn influences the public works through development agents. Development agents also have direct contact with the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Average plot size: 0.6 ha / HH
Total land area: 70,962 ha
Cultivated: 29,011 ha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-headed households:</td>
<td>30,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households:</td>
<td>5,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>35,795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With land</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-headed households:</td>
<td>29,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households:</td>
<td>5,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>34,335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landless</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32 landless groups of 20 people each – total of 553 people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each group given 2 ha of degraded land which is not to be used for farming.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE is working in Yabdo and Shembeko kebeles, where each group is given a certificate for 8 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green card</td>
<td>85% complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate with map</td>
<td>(15 kebeles selected, 13 processed, 9 complete and 3 given green cards and certificates)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GPS mapping started in 2003 GC through USAID. Funding stopped in 2008 GC and now is funded by the woreda budget.
Names included in green card are head of HH, spouse and children
If polygamous then additional wives get a separate green card
All land is owned by the government, certificate gives no assurances of tenure
Can rent after 3 years
Land can be reclaimed if barren for 3 years
On divorce, land is divided
Inheritance:
  - Land is passed to sons through fragmentation
  - On death of both parents, land given equally to all children (male and female)
    unless a prior agreement exists

**Land Use Allocation Committee**
The LUAC is composed of 5 older, knowledgeable individuals from a kebele who visit farmers to check if farming is carried out correctly, and to inform the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Previously the LUAC would assist in solving conflicts over land boundaries, where 2 owners must also be present. This is less needed now as all farms are measured using GPS and stored in the GIS database.

The LUAC can also allocate land to women who have no husband.

**Terrain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terrain Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highland (dega)</td>
<td>16.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midland (weyna dega)</td>
<td>36.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowland (kolla)</td>
<td>46.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Areas steeper than 35° are protected and cannot be used for farmland.

**Soil Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soil Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boresat</td>
<td>lithosols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoby &amp; Shetadum</td>
<td>chromic cambisol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gara Nigus</td>
<td>eutic cambisol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wachu zone</td>
<td>eutic kegasoil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gara Nigus #2</td>
<td>marble/granite kendzinias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Doba Woreda, West Hararghe zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doba Woreda Administration, West Hararghe Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information provided by Mr Mohemed Abdul &amp; Sani (delegate), 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Muslim- 98%     Christian- 2%

Female population: 74 763  
Male population: 71 832  
Total: 146 595  
Density = 209 people/km²

Birth rate: 2.89%  
Average HH size=5.0

Households
Female-headed households: 5395  
Male-headed households: 23 782  
Total: 29 177  
FHH=18.4%

[From Land & Environmental Protection Office:

Households with land:  
3785 female  
23 187 male  
Total: 26 972  
FHH landless = 30%  
FHH with land = 16.3%  
2205 landless = 7.5% ]

Terrain
Highland (dega): 1.8%  
Midland (weyna dega): 44.2%  
Lowland (kolla): 54%

Ground water is present throughout Woreda

PSNP
Registered: 15 103 female  
13 943 male  
Total: 26 046  
18% of population

Contingency (20%): 5809  
Emergency: 14 000  
Total: 49682

98 914 people are food secure, but dependent on rain

Health
Family planning: goal was 20581, achieved is 21403 women (~28% of all females)
HIV: 28 people (17 male, 11 female)
Malaria: 18 913 cases, no deaths.
AWD: 4 dead
Infant death rate: 0%
## Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1-8</td>
<td>10 922</td>
<td>15 357</td>
<td>26 279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1-10</td>
<td>11 403</td>
<td>16 727</td>
<td>28 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highschool</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>1851</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Services provided

Education, health, agriculture, rule of law, capacity building, micro-finance
Land & Environmental Protection Office –
Doba Kebele, West Hararghe Zone

Doba – 41 kebeles (Peasant Associations)

Three roles:
- Land use planning
- Administration
- Environmental protection

The Land & Env. Prot. Office conducts studies in micro-watersheds which then influence the Natural Resource Management Office. This in turn influences the public works through development agents. Development agents also have direct contact with the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Development agents: 91

Average plot size: 0.375 ha / HH
Total land area: 70 282 ha
Cultivated: 11 945 ha

Households (from woreda admin)
Male-headed households: 23 782
Female-headed households: 5395
Total: 29 177

With land:
Male-headed households: 23 187
Female-headed households: 3785
Total: 26 972

Landless
2 landless groups, totalling 27 people
Each group given 2 ha of degraded land which is not to be used for farming.
CARE is working in Yabdo and Shembeko kebeles, where each group is given a certificate for 8 years

Certification
Two levels
- Green card ~54% complete (14 556 HHs from 26 972 total)
  Planned to be 100% completed in 2010
- Certificate with map GPS started this year (2010)

Names included in green card are head of HH, spouse and children
If polygamous then additional wives get a separate green card
All land is owned by the government, certificate gives no assurances of tenure
Can rent land but must have more than 1 ha (eg. If 2 ha then 1 ha can be rented). An exception is if the owner lives away or is employed elsewhere, then all land can be rented.

Land can be reclaimed if left barren

On divorce, land is divided – decide by the court

One week to get a decision

Inheritance:
- Land is passed to sons through fragmentation
- On death of both parents, land given equally to all children (male and female) unless a prior agreement exists

**Land Use Allocation Committee**

The LUAC is composed of 5 older, knowledgeable individuals from a kebele who visit farmers to check if farming is carried out correctly, and to inform the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Previously the LUAC would assist in solving conflicts over land boundaries, where 2 owners must also be present. This is less needed now as all farms are measured using GPS and stored in the GIS database.

The LUAC can also allocate land to women who have no husband.

**Terrain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highland (dega)</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midland (weyna dega)</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowland (kolla)</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From woreda admin)

Areas steeper than 30° are protected and cannot be used for farmland. Those that are already farming on 30+° slopes will be moved/resettled.

- Total land area: 70 282 ha
- Cultivated: 11 945 ha
- Forest: 6221 ha
- Communal: 3779 ha
- Enclosures (protected): 18 500 ha
- Grazing (type of communal): 2900 ha
- Bushland: 3600 ha
Farta Woreda, South Gondar zone

Farta Woreda Administration – South Gondar zone

Information provided by Mr Fente Tagu, 2010

Muslim- 1%  Christian- 98%  Other- 1%

2008/09 data
Female population:  125 910
Male population:  135 380
Total:   261 290

97.6% live in rural areas
Birth rate:  2.7%  Estimated population growth rate: 1.86%
Household size: ~4 or 5

Households (2005)
Female-headed households:  5341
Male-headed households:  41 940    FHH=13%
Total:    48 281

Terrain
Highland (dega):  45%
Midland (weyna dega):  29%
Lowland (kolla):  26%    (from Land Office)

Ground water is present throughout Woreda

Health
No health data available at time of visit

Education
Grade 1-4:  16 333 female
            17 945 male
Total:  34 278

Grade 5-8:  9677 female
            9459 male
Total:  19 136

Grade 1-8:  26 010 female
            27 404 male
Total:  53 414

Grade 9-12:  2035 female
            2741 male
Total:  4776

High school: none
Number of Schools
Grade 1-4: 19  Grade 1-8: 39  Grade 9-10: 2  Grade 9-12: 1
There are no high schools or colleges.

Services provided
Democratic government, education, agriculture, rule of law, farmer training, capacity building, micro-finance, tele-services, water.

Free health care is not available except for 500 to 800 people who are identified by the kebele manager as poor, and subsequently approved by the woreda administration.

Free vaccinations and health care for family planning and malaria is available to all.
Land & Environmental Protection Office –
Farta Woreda, South Gondar zone

Information provided by Mr Kanteeba, 2010

Doba – 39 kebeles (Peasant Associations)

Three roles:
- Land use planning
- Administration
- Environmental protection

The Land & Env. Prot. Office conducts studies in micro-watersheds which then influence the Natural Resource Management Office. This in turn influences local development projects through development agents. Development agents also have direct contact with the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Development agents: 3 per kebele (animal science, plant science and natural resource management)

Average plot size: 0.754 ha / HH
Total land area: ~170 000 ha (no exact figure available)
[ 109 925 ha according to CSA ]
Cultivated: 43 482 ha

Households (from woreda admin)

Male-headed households: not available
Female-headed households: not available
Total: 58 064

Data for 2005
Male-headed households: 41 940
Female-headed households: 6341
Total: 48 281 (13% FHH)

With land:
Male-headed households: 46 137 (including 5767 male-only HHs)
Female-headed households: 11 534
Total: 57 671

Landless
No figures available. No details on organised groups available, but some unofficial groups do exist in some kebeles.
**Certification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Green card 77% complete (44,573 HHs from 57,671 total) Planned to be 100% completed in 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Certificate with map GPS will start January 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Names included in green card are head of HH, spouse and children

All land is owned by the government, certificate gives no assurances of tenure
Land can be reclaimed if left barren
On divorce, land is divided – but depends on prior ownership of land before marriage.

Inheritance:

- Land is passed to sons through fragmentation
- On death of both parents, land given equally to all children (male and female) unless a prior agreement exists

**Land Use Allocation Committee**

The LUAC is composed of 5 older, knowledgeable individuals from a kebele who visit farmers to check if farming is carried out correctly, and to inform the Land & Env. Prot. Office.

Currently the LUAC assists in solving conflicts over land boundaries, where 2 owners must also be present. In the future farms will be measured using GPS and stored in a GIS database.

The LUAC can also allocate land to women who have no husband.

**Terrain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highland (dega):</th>
<th>45%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midland (weyna dega):</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowland (kolla):</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cultivated | 43,482 ha |
| Forestry | 9,050 ha |
| Total | ~170,000 ha |

**Major Problems**

- Crop disease (bicha wag)
- Crop pest (army worm)
- Hail
## Appendix 5 – Tools

### Case Study Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age and Gender</th>
<th>Marital status (reasons)</th>
<th>Number of children (reasons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location (remoteness of household, access to markets, health facilities, other)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of family</td>
<td>Health issues (past and present)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot size (including zero)</th>
<th>Livestock owned (purpose)</th>
<th>Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Means of income (past and present)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food gaps (months per year, meals per day, diet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support (education/skills of family)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social networks</th>
<th>Membership of groups</th>
<th>Education level/skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinions about self</td>
<td>Happiness level</td>
<td>Perceived position in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future aspirations (what would you change?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views of other members of the community (who is a role model?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Case Study Template Questions**

I would like to talk to you about what life has been like for you and your family.

- Are you married? Do you have children? And how old are you?
- How far is it to markets? What is the nearest health facility?
- How has life changed over the years? What challenges have you and your family dealt with? [Why a FHH?] [Reasons for family size?]
- How have health issues affected life?

- How much land do you own? Has that changed? Do you own livestock? Do you have sufficient tools and equipment?
- What is your main way of making a living? What problems are there?
- Are there times when you don’t have enough? How many months per year? How many meals a day? What diet?
- Does anyone, such as family, help you? Have some family members got high education or useful skills?
- What other support do you receive?

- Do you meet or see other people often?
- Are you a member of any groups? Which? Are they helpful?
- What grade at school did you reach? Can you get any education or training now?
- How do you compare your position with others? Do you feel you are an equal part of this community? How happy with life would you say you are? [1-5]
- How is your relationship with your neighbours? Are they supportive? What types of household do you think do better?
- Who would you name as a role model?
- What are your future plans and hopes?
- Anything else?
Farming Questionnaire

Who do you get agricultural support from? [DA, ext. serv., NGO, nodes, family]

What size is your farm? [<0.2 ha, 0.5, 1, 2, 2+]

How far is it from the household? [5 mins, 10, 15, 25, 25+]

What do you grow? [wheat, barley, maize, teff, sorghum, haricot bean, chat, vegetables, fruits, potatoes]

What livestock do you own? [oxen, milk cow, bull, heifer, calves, sheep, goats, donkeys, horses/mules, chickens, bee hives]

Is any land rented or shared? [flat, slight, medium, steep]

What is its slope and condition? [poor, medium, good]

What problems do you have on the farm? [erosion, fertility, size, conflict, labour, time, capital]

What are the causes of these problems? What do you think are the possible solutions? Who should be responsible for that?

Have you been told of any ways to reduce these problems? Do you use any methods? [improved seed, fertilizer, compost, legumes, diversification, intercropping, planting techniques, mulching, increased frequency, reduced tillage, enclosures, forestry, technology, stones left in place]

Have you had any SWCs constructed? (Are any SWCs known?) [bunds, ridges, terraces, irrigation, grass]

Have you taken part in any Public Works? Who chose those designs? What is your opinion of them?

How do you expect the HH or village to change in 5 years? (Graduation from PSNP?) What are the major influences?

What do you think of SWCs? Are they useful? Would you choose them?

What is preventing you from using new methods or SWCs?

Questions that may be asked:
What employment opportunities are there? (waged or self-employed)
What self-employment choices are there for you? Would you want to do that?
What are the main barriers for you to starting? [skills, capital, markets, time, health, prejudice, equipment, credit, risk]

Can you get credit? What terms? (iqqub, afosha - edir, savings, informal/formal loans)
Have you taken a loan in the past? What is your opinion of them? Would you take one in the future? What would/did you use a loan for?

Are you a member of any groups? How often do you meet? How useful are they?

---

1 One timad is approximately 0.25 hectares
Non-farming Questionnaire

What is the reason for you not owning land?
Who do you get support from?  [DA, ext. serv., NGO, PSNP, nodes, family, savings groups, other groups]
What is your main means of income?  [petty trade, waged labour, remittance, aid]
Do you have contact with any micro-finance institutions?
Can you get any training?

What are the main problems in this area (for you)?  [no work, no land, prices, discrimination, health, capital, equipment, education/skills]
What should be done about it?
Who should make those changes?
How do you expect the HH or village to change in 5 years? (Graduation from PSNP?)
What are the major influences?

What employment opportunities are there? (waged or self-employed)
What self-employment choices are there for you?
Would you want to do that?
What are the main barriers for you to starting?  [skills, capital, markets, time, health, prejudice, equipment, credit, risk]

Can you get credit? What terms? (iqqub, afosha - edir, savings, informal/formal loans)
Have you had a loan in the past? What is your opinion of them?
Would you take one in the future?
What would/did you use it for?

Are you a member of any groups?
How often do you meet?
How useful are they?
Focus Group Discussion Template

Participation
What recent (agricultural) development programmes have you been involved in?
Who provides the support and how is that support delivered?
Are women included equally? What is your main source of agricultural information?
Have Public Works been constructed here? If so, which?
Which have been most successful? Have you used them yourself or would you adopt any of them? Do they encourage you to adopt new practices?

Problems
What are the problems and challenges you are all faced with (especially as women)?
How does your work burden affect daily life? (What agricultural problems are there?)
What do you see as the causes of those problems?

Risks and Vulnerabilities
What do you see as the main threat to your households or community?
What should be done to reduce those risks and vulnerabilities?

Opportunities
What opportunities are there for improving farming productivity?
What opportunities are there for off-farm incomes?
Which options would you wish to take up?
Are there barriers to taking those opportunities? (Such as capital, savings, loans)

Enabling Conditions
What changes are needed in the short-term to allow you to progress?
What changes are needed for the long-term?
Who should provide support for that? How should it be given?
What activities happening now are helping you most?
Appendix 6. Focus Groups 1 to 16 Summaries

Focus Group 1 – Mixed, CARE premises in Chiro

Participation
Worked on public works, PSNP+ and VSLA’s
DA’s are main source of information, with CARE
PW’s done were for check dams, bunds, plantations, springs and terracing – terracing
is most useful. The water table is up so we will maintain these. Shortage of forest
seedlings.

Problems
Chat and cigarettes (for men), it takes away time and money, up to 5 times a day.
Addiction problems.
No land and no modernisation.
Climate change (ie weather) – this year a big change. Lack of improved seeds and we
cannot afford fertilizer.
Fragmentation of land from population pressure. Less forests because they are cut for
firewood. Family planning should be mandatory with no more than 3 or 4 children.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Hail. For sorghum (and other crops) – sticky stalks known as “honey”, big problem.
Ox prices and meat prices during fasting times.
Some know to minimize “honey” problem by ploughing many times.

Opportunities
Minimize risks by mixing crops. Farmer Training Centre can help.
Need improved seeds, haricot and mixed pulses and reduce the “honey” problem,
which the DA has reported.
More diversification and vegetable growing, more shops.
All are in a VSLA, helps with medical costs. VSLA is an entry point, helps to buy
livestock.

Enabling Conditions
Transform lifestyle to a higher level, metal roofs instead of grass.
Training from CARE.
Reduce harmful practices.
Before was male dominated but now women will stand for their rights.
Send children to school.
Focus Group 2 – Female headed, Tokuma Meta Lenche, Doba

Participation
PSNP+, ASSP, public works for ponds, terracing, roads, schools, health posts, plantations and gabeon structures.
CARE and DAs provide information during public works and VSLA meetings, or home but they say they are not included because they are women. Non-PSNP not included.
Successes are the classrooms, health posts and seedling planting. Everyone has used them.

Problems
Targetting of PSNP – one woman was missed.
Shortage of rain, thanks to God this year is good.
They are excluded from the community and cannot plough so its done late.
Time is a problem and the work burden is heavy, must do all tasks.
The children don’t have respect, they want money for school equipment.
No support for farming issues, ploughing is late and must beg neighbours to plough which is paid for with chat. Must share ox.
No capital for IGAs
Drought depletes assets and capital.

Ploughing – share land until a son can plough. They don’t intend to change this cultural taboo.
Deforestation has caused drought, so degraded land must be recovered. Then can use spring water.
Before, with the forests, the rain was OK.
Water access – 1 hour each way and 3 times per day, no donkeys for transport.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
House is grass, cannot maintain it and doesn’t protect from rain or sun.
Food insecure, rely on the safety net. Some support from family or CARE.
Divorced are dependent on family, they sell items in the market.
Want to remarry but cannot find husbands, they marry younger women.

Opportunities
Diversify into petty trading – vegetables, poultry, shoats, honey or shops.
Need capital, have the time and skill. VSLA is not sufficient.

Enabling Conditions
Need a loan to increase income so as to send children to school.
Kids are working away as shepherds, want them back in the home.
Graduate from the PSNP, with CARE’s support but need credit.
One woman says shop work is most useful but has taken 9 years to get started.
VSLA is very useful, but also afosha, OCSSCo and guza (people assemble to do work for someone).
Focus Group 3 – Mixed, Tokuma Meta Lenche, Doba

Participation

PSNP+, ASSP (for ponds), Result Initiative for family planning. Information from the government and CARE.

Men are more involved in participation, and in ASSP because they are stronger.

Agricultural information is from CARE, DAs, radio and market nodes.

Public works for SWCs, bunds, classrooms and household asset building. Classrooms and health posts constructed, all are useful including roads and latrines. It helps to organise the community.

All are using compost. Planting fruit under bunds.

Problems

Before was no savings and couldn’t pay for children’s medical treatment but now the VSLAs help and they are in good condition.

With PSNP the men work for projects that benefit the local community.

One man said a problem for women is the fetching of water from springs.

Lack of land and fragmentation.

Household chores, female burden and rarely discussed with the men.

Women have no rights and no help during childbirth.

Shortage of rain, bore worms, seed availability, “honey” fungus, insect infestations.

“Honey” is said to be caused through lack of rain and unploughed land, and repeated planting of crops.

Husbands influence against IGA’s so that women continue to work at home.

Risks and Vulnerabilities

Main threat is drought.

Malaria – it affects many lives.

Early marriage – aged 13 or 14.

Too many children and no information on family planning. Choosing to have many children.

Need nets and access to medicine from health extension workers.

Need improved seeds to combat drought but they are monopolised by unions.

More vegetable production for selling in the markets.

Opportunities

Vegetable production and chat growing, chat is most profitable.

Improved seeds can increase productivity.

Animal fattening, honey production and bee rearing.

Improved planting techniques, compost and fertilizer (but too expensive).

Shoats, eggs, trading coffee and chat from farmers to consumers, shops.

Health is priority.

Credit schemes for capital, so woman can reclaim rights.

Enabling Conditions

Better housing, solar energy for lighting.

Educate children to 12th grade.

Women to be more part of farming (one woman stated).

Households to change ways and not rely on support. Use help of neighbours for construction.
Focus Group 4 – Mixed Landless, Lenche Wodesa, Doba

Participation
PSNP, PSNP+, VSLA and honey production groups.
Public works for terracing, bunds, pits, planting forest seedlings, cultivating seeds, collecting stones, classrooms, health posts and roads. Preparing demonstration sites. Terracing is best.

Problems
Before CARE life was dangerous and people didn’t save. Now save 5 Birr/week.
Work burden.
Sickness.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
July and August are difficult times and need money for September for school, and market demand is high for school items.
Id comes soon after and must buy clothes for the occasion (mandatory).

Opportunities
Now from CARE have IGA ideas: shoats, vegetables, honey, chat.
All are in honey production group which has 9 modern beehives. Learning how to rear bees; one colony can create 24 and each sells for 500 ETB.
They have the materials and know-how and it helps to increase income. There is a market problem for honey so want to take it to further markets.
Want to construct mill grinding equipment.

Credit is only given in kind.
Can get loans but OCSSCo don’t come here.

Enabling Conditions
Want to rent land for vegetable production.
Want to expand honey production.
Want to share work, men and women, so men work on land and women on honey, and knitting.
Mill grinding.
Need a loan provider then can develop themselves.
Most useful is vegetable production – not known until now.
Can sell tomatoes for 2000 Birr for 1st harvest in the towns.
CARE’s training has made a big difference. Need more and need training for accounts. Group gives 10 Birr towards training.
10 members but only 9 hives, not enough.
Curating training is all theory, needs more practical work.
Need more than training on just bees.
Focus Group 5 – Male-headed, Wachu Eltoke, Chiro

Participation
(Silence at first) – weeding and 5 people on public works.
Training on saving from CARE
Health training on nutrition and childcare.
DA’s on use of compost.
Check dam construction, bunds, seedlings and seed preparation – these are used and they encourage them.

Problems
Lack of rain. Fetching water (which is not clean) – time lost doing this. Need a protected spring and night storage.
Distance to market and poor roads, travel when children are in school.
Family size this determines time.
All except newly married using family planning.
Chat takes away time.
Stalk borers and sticky “honey” fungus. Borers caused by unclean land but fungus cause is unknown.
Household decisions are discussed.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Shortage of rain.
Road conditions – 11 from 18 have a donkey.

Opportunities
Use compost and fertilizers.
Change to improved seeds to improve fertility.
Sugar cane for petty trading and sell salt, cigarettes, alcohol and eggs from market towns.
Buy oil to trade elsewhere.
If had enough money would trade: goats, hens, vegetables, honey, textiles, pottery.
Problem is no capital.
Also women not being able to plough.

Enabling Conditions
If good production then improve house to metal roof, or buy a donkey.
Diversify activities.
With participation vegetable planting and animal fattening.
Government and NGOs should build roads and water development.
VSLA helps.
PSNP helps beneficiaries.
Focus Group 6 – Female-headed, Arba Hora, Chiro

Participation
Training from CARE for health – family planning.
Also forestry seedlings.
VSLA for savings.
More efficient traditional stoves, less smoke and 2 outputs (wood).
Now after CARE, all are equal.
Public works for roads. No water so it was reported and a pump was sent but it is not enough and there is fighting over water.
PSNP has been cut and now everyone is hungry. 6 months is not enough.

Problems
Widows are helped but divorced are not supported.
Long distance to go and cut wood – 3 hours each way and very heavy.
No income, food or crops.
All collect wood to sell in Chiro market: rainy season 15 ETB/day, dry 7 ETB/day
Get home at 10 pm. And children are asleep and hungry. Jealous of town people.
At first had no knowledge of family planning but now it is used.
All have nets and malaria medicine.
Don’t stop the safety net.
Before there was the REVIVE project but now there is nothing.
As widows, they cannot pay the school fees.
Too difficult to resettle when not married.
Families are large due to previous lack of family planning.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Our minds are always collecting wood.
No money for saving so none for medical help.
Cannot afford 2 Birr a month for VSLA.
Afraid of afosha because not enough money.

Opportunities
Goats. Groups to collect cow milk.
Honey no good here because bees go away.
Lots of forage so cows are good.
We have power and skill but need capital.
Hot and no water.
Chat – 1 ha gives a good profit (400 Birr).

Enabling Conditions
Capital.
Need a bridge, cut off during rainy season. One child drowned this year.
CISP gave 900 Birr to one person, 700 for calves and 200 for goats.
Focus Group 7 – Male-headed, Arba Hora, Chiro

Participation
CARE helps with food.
Husbands are training with CARE on model farming.
Health extension workers help with health matters.
DA’s talk with husbands.
Planting seedlings, terracing is good because it holds the water. Heavy rain has damaged the terracing.

Problems
Women are not included enough. Not equal information.
Land is poor so cannot educate children, cannot buy school equipment.
No grinding machine, must be carried to Chiro (2 hours away).
Need a bridge and a better road.
No light, no gas and is expensive.
No clean water, 2 hours to fetch.
Must collect wood 3 hours away.
Stalk borers and “honey” fungus – causing 95% damage – long time issue.
It is a problem by God but fixed with medicine (i.e. chemicals)

Risks and Vulnerabilities
If someone is sick then must sell land to go to hospital, otherwise use traditional medicine.
Health Post only helps with first aid but this post can give a certificate for free hospital treatment.

Opportunities
Chat trading.
Goats/cows, milk.
Need capital, already have the skills.
None are in a VSLA because cannot afford it.

Enabling Conditions
Most important is a bridge.
Need capital.
The government should fix these problems.
Focus Group 8 – Mixed Landless, Medicho 9, Chiro

Participation
PSNP, Public works for SWCs. (Most are not PSNP).
Training for IGAs and other activities.
Catholic NGO put in water taps 5 years ago.
Women are equal and life is easier now.
Reclaimed land and seedlings planted.
30 000 pits in an enclosure, seedlings planted, 28 000 survived.
Plans to have a landless group but not yet given land, some individuals have started on growing forage on steep land.

Problems
No land. Fragmentation of land.
Family sizes.
Drought.
Deforestation.
Farmers expand farmland and cause deforestation, hence drought. Therefore need to plant trees.
Family planning will help family sizes.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Family lifestyle is not good, doesn’t fulfil our needs. Schooling may stop.
6 – 8 months food gaps because low productivity.
Dependent on rain.
June to August some do petty trading.
The timing of the school year is a problem.

Opportunities
Have big rivers so irrigation is possible.
Grow market crops – red onions, sweet potatoes.
Animal fattening is very good, or milk cows especially for women.
Maybe bees in the future.
Crafts, such as weaving are good.
Animal rearing.
Education is the best opportunity but is problem for large families.
No loans are available.
No savings groups but plan to start a savings group for all.

Enabling Conditions
Access to credit.
More IGA training.
Irrigation, canals because it is a cash crop area.
Potable water construction.
Communities to act together to solve problems.
Water pumps are needed. Use the groundwater, for the dry season.
Village to village roads.
Focus Group 9 – Female-headed, Buro, Farta

Participation
Government built a hospital.
CARE is just starting here.
Men dominate at home but mainly women are at the meetings.
No public works.
DA’s give information – usually at church but sometimes in the field.

Problems
Lack of water.
No capital.
Family pressure to marry.
No land.
Women cannot plough.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Stress about children and school equipment and fees. Hate September.
Children fight with mothers because jealous of siblings that go to school.
One child is in high school in town, needs 50 Birr/month to live there.
Eat two meals a day but in winter months must borrow money from rich people, 1000 – 1500 Birr for 4 or 5 months.
No VSLA here.
One woman had an ACSI loan of 2000 Birr (at 18%). Was successful, bought an ox but continues to repay.

Opportunities
Capital
Want to open a shop, crop merchant, animal fattening.

Enabling Conditions
Money is needed for capital.
Food and clothes are needed.
Piped water is needed.
Healthcare is OK, but older woman has headaches.
Loans or find employment, sometimes can work for 10 Birr/day.
ACSI, CARE and others for loans. Church lends for household use at 50% interest.
Education and training.
Focus Group 10 – Male-headed, Kolay, Farta

Participation

There is no discussion on any matters.
Nothing from CARE yet (but is new).
No support.
Health Extension is just for service (not training).
Walls and roads are made by the community.
Men dominate, women are not equal.

Problems

Lack of water.
No light.
No grinding machine.
No work opportunities.
Lack of capital.
Lack of land.
Work burden is too difficult. Women do all household work.
Men manage the money.

Risks and Vulnerabilities

Cannot afford to save. No money for hospital.
Afraid of taking loans with 10-18% interest. Maybe if 0%.
Health post doesn’t refer them to town.

Opportunities

Need to drill for underground water.
Employment for weeding.
Shops.
Selling tea or beer.
Crop merchant, using donkeys.
Textiles (would like to buy a weaving machine).
Animal fattening/reproduction.
Land is not good for bees, or for growing vegetables.

Enabling Conditions

Problem is capital.
Need water – cannot even wash clothes. River is not clean and 1 hour away.
Pump is not working.
Another pump is not to be used because another group were involved in its creation.
Training on how to change our lives.
For long-term need light, a hospital and improve the housing.
Government, CARE and church must all work together.
Focus Group 11 – Female-headed, Sahirna, Farta

Participation
There are no meetings.
Plans to start a women’s group to save 3 Birr/year.
CARE is not here.
Government put in a water pump and provided cement, but nothing else, 4 years ago.
Disagreement on whether women are equal.
DA’s meet men and women every weekend.

Problems
No work, no land and lack of food.
No health facility (3 women here are very sick, another has TB).
Doctor in Debre Tabor caused damage in an operation 6 years ago.
No free tablets for TB etc.
Diet is not varied, only injera two times a day. No meat.
One woman’s mother rents land for 50/50. Land is poor quality.
Family sizes are large so fragmentation is a problem. Must rent it out due to lack of labour.
Terracing and bunds are used, and compost and fertilizer. Sick people cannot do the farming.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Lack of money.
Divorced women are poor, no capital or land so men do not want to marry them.
No money to save.

Opportunities
Migrate to the city but most don’t want this.
With donkeys could trade crops in Debre Tabor.
Open a shop, sell salt etc.
Now they help renting farmers with work.
Do not want a loan – afraid about repayments.
One woman borrowed 1000 Birr at 18% but needed to borrow from rich people to pay. Still not repaid so must sell the land.

Enabling Conditions
Need a factory for steady employment.
Need health facilities.
Water pump.
Help with school equipment.
A grinding machine.
The government and CARE should do this but nothing is happening now.
Focus Group 12 – Mixed, Sahirna, Farta

Participation
If one person is sick the people help each other.
There is a terracing group, also for fixing roads, or the church.
Grass group meets monthly.
CARE provides support, and DA and the government. They give information to the kebele administration who passes it to farmers.

Problems
Wind damages crops (past 2 years). A disease that makes the crops dry.
Cattle have died of disease, this is new and there is no medicine, donkeys also.
Lack of oxen for ploughing.
Lots of malaria and yellow fever.
Health clinic is not enough, only for family planning.
No nets and no opportunity to ask for them.
Lack of capital.
No money, even for fertilizer. Only the rich use fertilizer and improved seed.
Some use compost but many don’t have cattle.
No blankets and school equipment.
Many have trachoma and medicine doesn’t work. Church gives advice.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
No money to save. Unable to pay if children are sick.
Wind problem reduces production, called “wurch”.

Opportunities
Need seed and fertilizer.
More terracing on slopes.
Built dam themselves.
Grow vegetables if enough water.
Need drilling equipment to use groundwater.
Plant trees, none being planted currently.

Enabling Conditions
Not interested in ACSI loans. If cannot repay then maybe must leave of be jailed. If one in a group cannot pay then others can be jailed. ACSI takes land.
Need a water pump.
Need improved seed.
Need money.
Sheep or oxen, oxen is most urgent.
Blankets and sheets, and nets.
Want PSNP support.
Need a high school, also teach children to drive.

(8 holidays a month + weekends. It is OK because we love God.)
Focus Group 13 – Mixed Landless, Kanat, Farta

Participation
No landless groups exist.
Do not want a group for degraded land, prefer work in town or rent land.
Meetings take place with kebele administration person, who lives in Debre Tabor, he gives information on HEW and water.
Neighbours meet to discuss malaria but houses are far apart so is difficult.
Before not equal but now men and women are equal.

Problems
Lack of land.
Lack of work.
Tried rearing chickens (ferenji type) but they died of fungal infections.
No capital – some have had ACSI loans which were OK. One for an ox but it didn’t get fat so it was sold again, two others for sheep which will be repaid next year.
Must have land to feed animals.
Health is a problem, no medicine but they have nets.
No improved seed and farmers are not rotating crops.
Men work in town, women sell wood there but sometimes there is no work that day.
Lack of money and food, poor diet, feels older.
Crop diseases but DA has no solutions.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
One man stresses over if he becomes sick who will look after the children.
Rain is too heavy, it destroys the teff crops.
Disease two years ago destroyed the wheat, all types even tritical.
Everyone rents land.
Cannot afford transportation if sick.

Opportunities
Need capital and land for animal fattening/reproduction and growing crops.
Need improved seed and fertilizer.
Migrate for work to Humero but it is dangerous.
Merchant trading.
Employment at harvest time.

Enabling Conditions
Money – as a gift or 0% loan.
Seed.
For long-term need a grinding machine, lighting, metal roofs and a bridge.
CARE puts in water pumps, water dams and roads.
Focus Group 14 – Male-headed, Kanat, Farta

Participation
CARE doesn’t give ideas.
They have a group for compost.
Meet with PA chairman monthly.
Everyone is equal.

Problems
Too busy in the household, cooking, harvesting and collecting wood.
Children fail in school and sometimes go elsewhere – the kids are confused.
Lack of food and money.
On the farm shortages of forage.
Too much rain, crops were damaged and caused erosion.
Terracing works but rain is too much.
Health – trachoma and other eye problems, headaches, stomach problems.
Health post is insufficient.
Family planning causes illness because not enough food (various methods).

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Low productivity.
Children’s food and clothing.
Have land but no food, cry because children not learning, they go hungry.
Improved seed and fertilizer is too expensive – thousands of Birr.
Lack of water on the farm.
Afraid of ACSI loans.

Opportunities
Improved seed and fertilizer.
Ox or sheep fattening, or cows for milk.
With more water – grow vegetables.
Educate children.
Savings groups – a group of neighbours (30 people) save 1 Birr/month each.

Enabling Conditions
Money – as a gift, not even 0% loan.
If more grass then get a cow, or do sheep (not goat) fattening.
Lots of ideas but need capital.
Long-term: water for the farm, a bridge, high school, hospital, water pumps.
Health post only gives tablets and nets, and training on hygiene. They gave trachoma medicine for one year but it is not fixed.
Support should be from government, community is not knowledgeable enough.
The government gave potatoes but now want repayment for them, was free before.
Cannot repay.
Focus Group 15 – Mixed Landless, Wukro, Farta

Participation
With CARE they fixed the water and roads (unpaid). Government put in electricity but it’s not working – dangerous power lines on ground. Young people fixed the health post. Meeting for men and women take place at weekends and government gives ideas. No VSLA’s.

Problems
No land, so cannot get an income.
Water access is difficult.
Lack of money so must find work in town, life is expensive.
Migration to Humero but people die of disease or snake bites. Many go.
CARE gave resources for water pump, people gave time but it failed. CARE won’t fix.

Risks and Vulnerabilities
Lack of food and clothes.
Cannot save money for healthcare.
Lack of farming equipment.
No hospital, nearest is Debre Tabor – costs 20 Birr to travel, 200 Birr if very sick.
No secondary school.

Opportunities
Paid work – making bricks, harvesting, collecting wood, wood for construction or migrate to Humero (main one).
Self-employed – animal fattening/reproduction, merchant, gin shop, clothes, land for a house or farm, bees (not at present).
Partition the communal land (like in Tigray).
Use degraded land for farming.
If possible have a glass factory near Guna mountain.
Need PSNP.
ACSI is too risky – punishment is prison or taking assets.

Enabling Conditions
Government and CARE to help.
Money.
Improved seed for farmers, fertilizer is expensive.
A grinding machine.
Land – if possible.
Food.
Clothes, they are bitten by insects, need shoes and blankets.
Household and farming equipment.
Need new nets and medicine.
Long-term: factory, hospital, schools, roads fixed, lighting (fix cables).
Focus Group 16 – Mixed, Wukro, Farta

Participation

Work on fixing roads, terracing, stone bunds, compost.
Government makes decisions then have community meeting.
Agricultural Development gives ideas to DAs who then give training.
Tree planting and terracing by a trained DA.
Find groundwater (25 – 40 m) using community time and CARE gives materials,
community does digging but not enough energy because of lack of food.
Compost is most successful, also tree planting, terracing and the water pump.

Problems

Lack of food – most important.
Lack of land.
Health problems.
Lack of clothes.
Bicha wag disease destroys 100% of wheat. New this year. Caused by too much rain.
Erosion, the land is splitting. Check dams help but not enough.
Worms (3 types). Need chemicals.
Lack of rain. No solution.
Access by road is a problem.

Risks and Vulnerabilities


Opportunities

No solution known for bicha wag.
Use compost and fertilizer, improved seed and improved animals. Borrow from
government at 18% but if it fails then must migrate or sell land, some people die.
With money: merchant, animal fattening/reproduction, shops, trading coffee, grinding
machine, chickens and eggs, vegetables (but lack of water), bees.

Enabling Conditions

Credit – from NGOs or government for free, or maybe 0% loans.
Not ACSI, not even if just 2% (for example).
Need food and clothing.
Clean water.
Electricity.
Long-term: employment (eg. Factory), PSNP, capital, employment fixing the land,
more dams.
Government and rich people should help and developed countries.
Most important is food aid.
References


