DECENTRALIZATION IN ETHIOPIA

The Case of Dendi District, West Shoa Zone, Oromia

Concept

And

Process
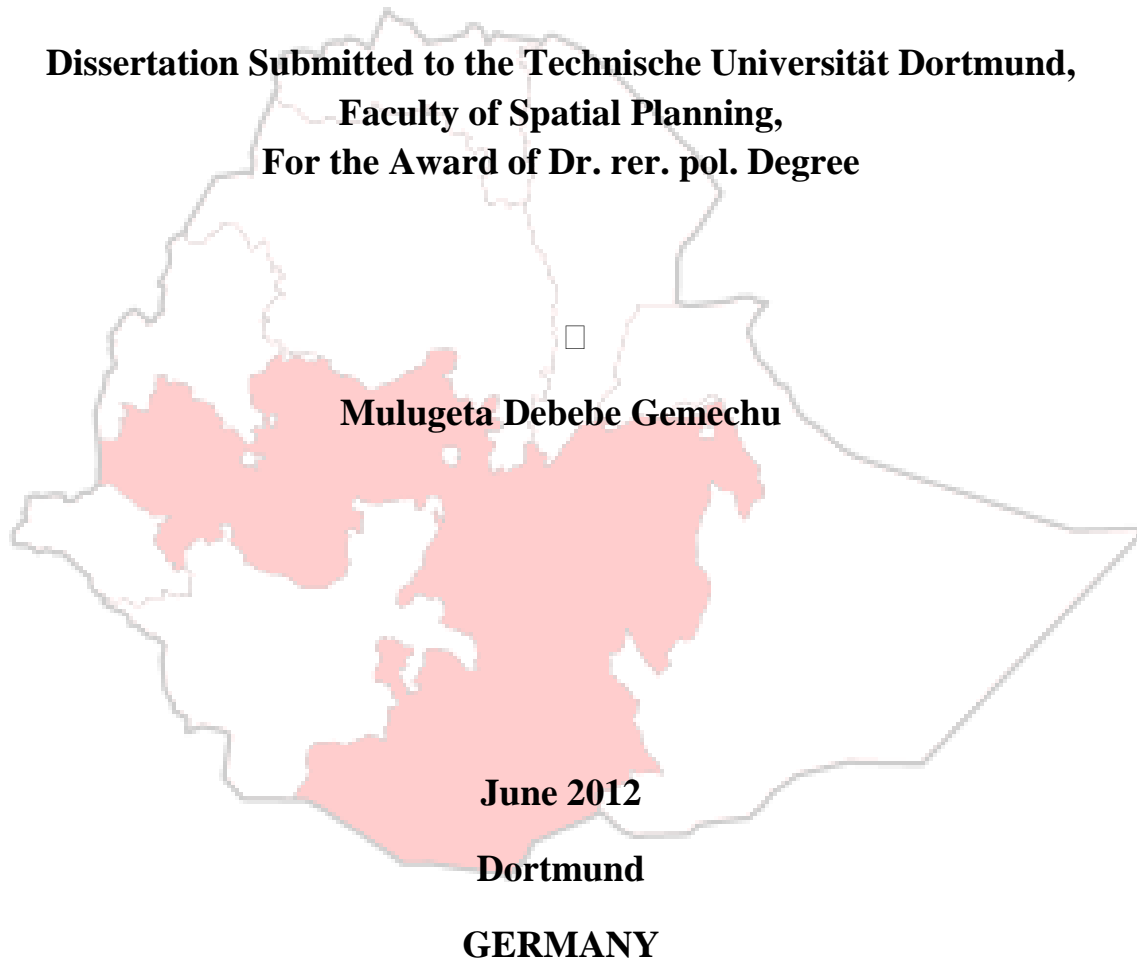
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DECENTRALIZATION IN ETHIOPIA: Concept and Process
The Case of Dendi District,
West Shoa Zone of Oromia State

Dissertation Submitted to the Technische Universität Dortmund,
Faculty of Spatial Planning,
For the Award of Dr. rer. pol. Degree

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Front cover photo: Dendi Lake by Charles A. Wood
All works taken from other authors are being duly acknowledged; those without captions or citation are my own construct (n.o.s.).

Abstract

Ethiopia officially launched the District Level Decentralization Program (DLDP) by the year 2002. The program flagged core objectives such as institutionalizing viable development centers at local levels, deepening devolution of power, enhancing the democratization process through broad-based participatory strategy, promoting good governance and improving service delivery.

Since the inception of this program two strategic planning terms (one strategic term is five years) have already elapsed and the third is in a process. However, various program implementation reports and results on the ground narrowly justified the success of this program. Perception, conscious and voluntary participation of all the various stakeholders in general and communities at grassroots level in particular were not as apparent as initially desired.

Thus, a cross-sectional, embedded single case study, which is essentially qualitative, was conducted in Dendi district of Oromia State to find out how this program proceeds, focusing on: institutional strengths, transfer of authority and resource, implementation, perception and participation of the stakeholders and actual benefits gained at grassroots level. Data were collected through interviews, observation and focus group discussions. Conceptual analyses and explanations were presented to show how the program progressed and stumbling blocks encountered.

While the theory of democratic decentralization was taken as a domain theory, theories such as neopatrimonialism, congruence, equilibrium view of institutions, sequential theory of decentralization and other theories relating to people's participation were selectively reviewed in the literature and pervasively taken on when successive analyses, explanations and reflections were made.

The findings indicate a need for more focused and planned approaches for the success of the program. Institutionalizing the district and the lowest tiers has not yet been achieved. While no inconsistency was observed in models used to transfer resources and authority, shortages and lack of dynamic capability of local implementers to properly utilize the power and resources transferred were evident at all levels. Perception and participation of stakeholders is an area that needs a paradigm shift. Achievements on the ground have not yet justified the efforts made or the program goals.

Besides generating valuable ideas for scientific discourse, critical reflections and a set of proposals and recommendations - as possible solutions for some of the problems observed - have been provided in this work. Introduction of appropriate planning, enhancing the capability of local bodies to match the ever changing local and global conditions, rethinking on certain policy and program changes and meaningful participation of stakeholders, efficient use of available resources, etc. were among issues identified for consideration.

"A good person's reputation never fadeth,
neither in life nor after death...", Plato
To
A Late Famous Architect
Günter Beermann
Bad Salzuflen
Lippe District
North Rhine-Westphalia
Germany

Preface

The commencement of this PhD project had a set of objectives. The first one was to unravel a mental line of enquiry on issues such as (a) why development programs often fail, despite everyone being positive and enthusiastic about growth and development, (b) why we couldn't be able to break out of the poverty cycle, and (c) what the stumbling blocks are that slide us backward when we attempt to go forward. As it would be difficult to deal with these and other related questions at a time, I had to pick one single program which affects the lives of all the people who live in an urban and rural setting and make a thorough study. Decentralization, 'alwaalta'iinsa' in *Afaan Oromoo,* was one of the programs that had been deemed to realize the autonomy of states and boost development. Hence, being convinced that what makes a nation's wealth is the sum-total of the wealth at local levels, I decided to delve into how the program evolves at the grassroots level and what it offers the people there. The second set of objectives was to acquire knowledge in scientific research and contribute to scientific discourse. Moreover, the intention in this case was to strike on some important issues for further studies and enquiries.

Albeit sometimes interpreted negatively, Isaac Newton's famous proverb that goes, "*If I have seen further... it is by standing on the shoulders of giants*", gives me a profound sense here. I have learned a lot from formal academic discourses (seminars, workshops, colloquiums and peer group reviews) and from the informal discussions I have had with revered scholars at the Technical University of Dortmund. Particularly, knowledge obtained from the Arusha (Tanzania) "*Cooperative PhD Summer School on Urban and Regional Planning Research in Sub-Saharan Africa* (March 8-20), which was organized by the Technical University of Dortmund, had a turning effect on the layout and content of this work. Besides what had been gained from the workshop and interaction with PhD candidates from different African counties, having eight senior professors in one place was a passé-partout to get solutions for various problems in scientific research.

In addition to formal lessons, during my stay in Germany, from indispensible visits through Europe, I have had an opportunity to observe life styles, the infrastructure and service delivery systems in the developed world. I hope this will inspire me, enhance my scope of thoughts and therefore enables me to contribute better to the development of my country. Above all, getting away from the hustle and bustle at home, and having time and opportunity to concentrate on academic work was a great privilege for me. Given the excellent and one stop library, internet facility and other services at the Technical University of Dortmund, it was a great opportunity to read, to listen and view and to get to know what is going on in the developed part of the world. It has also given me some perspectives on how people understand my own country from outside.

The main challenges I encountered in the course of the research work were: accommodation of unanticipated changes in the topic of the study and in the contents, without derailing from the central theme; the enforcement of data to detach from preconceived ideas; and maintaining flexibility in the analysis and conclusions (pre-research/post- research syndromes). I have learned that adapting to change and maintaining flexibility are very important in social science researches. The idea one considers strongly at the beginning becomes very loose when facts come and relevant literature is intensively reviewed. It is at this point in research that conflict between scientific/ academic discourse and personal preconception of ideas and facts is revealed. The predicament in putting together this work was the problem of heterogeneity of my expected audiences, which extends from the research district, Dendi, to the academia in the Technical University of Dortmund. Choosing the kind of expression and language level with which I could explain my findings were difficult tasks. However, efforts have been made to balance and address the interests of a wide range of readers.

Mulugeta Debebe Gemechu
May 2012, Dortmund, Germany

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

AKAM	Alliance of Knowledge and Action for Sustainable Livelihood Management Association
AU	African Union
CBO	Community Based organizations
CDPO	Community Development Promotion Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DLDP	District Level Decentralization Program
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HDI	Human Development Index
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
OCSSCO	Oromia Credit and Saving Share Company
ODA	Oromia Development Association
OSHO	Oromo Self-Help Organization
PTA	Parent – Teacher Association
SDPR	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program
SPRING	Spatial Planning for Regions in Growing Economies
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

Chapter I: Introduction

1.1. Background and Highlight

In Ethiopia, when new governments come into power they all come with great enthusiasm and wonderful new policies, strategies and programs to bring about rapid change and lift the country out of deep-rooted poverty and underdevelopment. When achieving these goals becomes difficult - promises fade and hopes turn to dissonance. As a result of this, morale starts to decline and complaints begin to crop up in all corners of the country that leads to destabilization of the macro level setting. The divergence then grows bitter and wider. Such situations alter the attitudes and practices of incoming governments, forcing them to focus on policies and strategies that sustain their power hold and suppress complaints and resistances.

One of the strategies set by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in the year 2000, to realize the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP), was the District Level Decentralization Program (DLDP). I-PRSPs are, tailored papers prepared by member countries of the International Monitory Fund (IMF) as interim poverty reduction strategy documents. These papers were mainly aimed at facilitating the preconditions for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP). To this effect, the goal set in the I-PRSP of Ethiopia was to begin exercising fiscal decentralization at district levels in the years 2001-2002. With the conviction that the decentralization strategy is a means of adopting and strengthening the federal system, the government of Ethiopia included this program in its SDPRP as one of the *four pillars/building blocks* to accelerate development, enhance democratic practices, and bring about peace (FDRE, 2002:x).

Eventually this intervention was also thought to serve as a means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) within the timeframe up to 2015. Accordingly, there were efforts in the DLDP formulation to integrate the goals, targets, and indicators with the MDGs. The program flagged an axiom stated "*tackling poverty at the grassroots level*" through devolution of power to the districts, by exercising "*untied block grant strategy*" (FDRE, 2002:xi).

In order to achieve the above interlinked goals, having efficient, responsive, effective, transparent, accountable, participatory and dynamic public service delivery system in a decentralized framework was not a matter of choice but a *sine qua non*. Hence, it had been moved to decision and action with core objectives to deepening devolution of power, institutionalizing the decision making body, enhancing the democratization process through broad-based participatory strategy, promoting good governance, improving service delivery and creating viable development centers at local levels.

Thus, the DLDP was officially launched in 2002 in order to realize the cascaded maxims and to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty, as quickly as possible. To implement this strategy several implementation frameworks and modalities have been set at the central and state levels. Much

energy and resources have been put into it. Employees have been mobilized to all the districts to institutionalize the development operations at the grassroots level.

However, various evaluation reports and results on the ground hardly justified the success of this program. Perception, conscious and voluntary participation of all the various stakeholders and the communities at the grassroots levels in particular were not as apparent as initially desired. Consequently, some external evaluators and researchers have tried to confirm this claim and attempted to prove that the program had turned dysfunctional at different levels, in different states (Chanie et al., 2007:435-465). They claim that results achieved in the elapsed time were greatly below expectation (Asefa & Gebre-Egziabher, 2007:56). They further comment that despite the legal frameworks and policy provisions put in place in response to the IMF requirements its realization was not as fast as desired.

On the other hand, though the government frequently stated that the positive achievements outweighed the negative, the internal reports from the local level implementers' side and local evaluation reports never supported the success of this program. District accomplishment reports mainly hold problems they faced in the process of implementation and stumbling blocks encountered to attain the set goals. As mentioned above, the central and regional governments on the other hand, in many of their reports, highly affirmed the achievements gained.

Hence, a study has been made to analyze the decentralization and related concepts, to explain how the program proceeds and to provide a critical reflection. The research based itself on the overall concept of the decentralization strategy and the decentralization program set by the Government of Ethiopia, specifically on the DLDP. Efforts were also made to ascertain the degree of perception and participation of the people at a micro level. To come up with sound evidences, relevant data were collected through various tools. Critical analysis and explanations were conducted to check if this program is genuinely meant to achieve its stated goals or simply if it was only for the purpose of window-dressing. Attempts have also been made to unpack and strike on actual motives that led to the situations created as a result.

In this cross-sectional embedded single case study, which is essentially qualitative, the main variables: institutional strength, transfer of authority and resource, implementation, perception and participation of the stakeholders, the actual benefits gained, and problems encountered and "what is at stake" were thoroughly analyzed and explained. While the theory of democratic decentralization was captured as a domain theory, other theories relating to the main variables of the study were also briefly reviewed in the literature and pervasively taken on when successive analyses were made.

Finally, attempts have been made to provide critical reflection, to draw possible solutions and recommendations for observed impeding problems, and to judge the merits of both sides, for and against arguments surrounding this paradigm.

The research results are assumed to help readers to understand better, the factual and the analytical truth about the current status of the decentralization program at the micro levels. Furthermore, gaining lessons from "how it goes" and what actually is achieved, it supports policy makers, planners and implementers to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the strategy and urges them to account for realistic rearrangements in the initiation of the ways ahead.

1.2. Restating and Defining the Research Problem

During the last few decades under the Dergue regime and current rule, many attractive development programs, proclamations and policies have been put forward. All were theoretically aimed at lessening the country's deep-rooted poverty and underdevelopment.

> The DLDP in Ethiopia had been officially launched in the year 2002. Evaluation reports, researches and the results on the ground hardly justify the successes of this program. Conscious and voluntary participation of the communities at the grassroots level is not also as much as the desired outcome.

Summary of the problem statement

Consequently, with regard to the decentralization program in Ethiopia which was officially launched in the year 2002, essentially the legal frameworks exist in the federal constitution and in the laws promulgated based on this and in local government Acts. A comprehensible division of responsibilities between local and central government is evident on various policy frameworks put in place to realize this DLDP. Much has also been stated about the importance of the stakeholders. Enhancement of services of public interest, accountability, transparency and good governance are everyday issues of government bodies at all levels. There also appears, swearing to political will and a gesture of commitment. Creating space for all who can best contribute towards development and the achievement of this program is a slogan repeatedly heard (Chanie, 2007:436).

However, various reports show non-compliance with the above and deficiencies at all levels. On top of poor planning and inefficient flow, human and financial resources have always been inadequate and at insufficient levels. This has adverse implications for the capacity of local governments to perform their assigned functions. The weaknesses of the district implementers is always said to be evident, to the extent that they are not even aware of their powers.

The anticipated increases in local political participation, on which many of the expected benefits of decentralization are based, are in most cases also very limited in practice. Complaints are always heard that local officials generally do not provide sufficient space for citizens, civil

society organizations or the private sector to be meaningfully involved in decisions that affect them directly or indirectly (Paulos, 2004).

The issue of a knowledge gap existing with officials – the experts – and the community is also another problem. While the former two know more about newly intended programs, the latter, the communities in most cases stick to the way they have been living for centuries. All government sectors: agriculture, health, education, natural resources management, and etc. come every time with new development packages, top-down intervention models without giving due concern to the well established social fabrics. To this effect, without any footprint or without any tangible change these interventions wilt and go out of market, because they are not well internalized by the communities, which could ensure their sustainability. This occurs from unrealistic planning, from incongruence of programs with society's long time practices, and a mismatch between the understanding of the service providers and service receivers. To this effect, this gap in knowledge used to be a source of resistance to new interventions and change. Officials and experts lack the capacity and skill to make use of their technical knowledge without evading the social capital, norms and values of the community.

1.3. Explaining the Relevance of the Study

Since decentralization is a widely discussed issue all over the world, the significance of this study is pretty much open to questions. Booth, Colomb and Williams (2008:45) say: *"once you have a question that holds your interest, you must pose a tougher one about it: So what? Beyond your own interest in its answer, why would others think it a question worth asking?"* To this effect, attempts have been made to measure topicality, relevance, maturity and timeliness… of the claim within the context of the study area (thematically and geographically) and in the current state of academic discourse.

In the case of Ethiopia, adequate research has not yet been carried out in this area (geographic and thematic). As the program was fully commenced ten years ago it is now the right time to make an in-depth study and contribute to its future track.

I acknowledge that the goal of democratizing a multi-culture society, implementing a development program in a community where illiteracy dominates and bringing an overall development and social transformation - starting from such a coiled socio-economic and political condition - is a subtle one. However, I also believe that there are limitations resulting from lack of competence and rational thinking. Competence being explained in efficiency in planning and implementation, commitment to democratization and good governance - to attain development program goals at an anticipated degree within a reasonable timeframe.

Since the inception of the decentralization program in Ethiopia, two strategic planning terms have already elapsed and the third is in process. These programs were optimistically termed, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP, 2002), the Plan for

Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP, 2005) and the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP, 2010). Therefore, since the DLDP is an inherent part of these five years' strategies, they can be considered as a justification to the gestation period, that the program has matured enough, to examine how it is getting on and what it has brought to its targets: the people at the grassroots.

Most studies conducted in the country, which I was able to review, are mainly sector centered in nature. They have attempted to make comparative studies between/among a few states; or they have evaluated the efficacy of this program at the district levels. At the *ganda*[1] levels and beyond that, up to a household or on the *ganda* - district interaction and synergy, not much has been done so far to reveal the reality on the ground and prove which arguments hold true (success and /or failure) about this strategy. At the same time, the scarcity of literature on this subject, and of practice, also shows a huge research gap in this subject area in Ethiopia (Asefa and Gebre Egziabher, 2007:11).

1.4. Limitation

It is almost a rule of thumb to highlight the limitation foreseen or faced in the research process when one attempts to go into a research or when one reports a research result. However, in the research area, it would be much easier to list non- limiting factors. It means there are various factors that hinder a research process. I feel that is what makes academia in this part of the world very sturdy; the ability to conduct research and survive under constraints and stressful conditions.

Because of the gaps in research it was very difficult to get sufficient secondary/tertiary data from local sources. It was very difficult to acquire complete data from record systems at district level in all the sectors, which stems from insufficiency of space for archives and poor data management systems. Most informants are also very skeptical when they provide information. When somebody approaches them for research, after evaluating the researcher's position and/or political affiliation, they tend to give out what he/she perceives the researcher would like to hear and not what actually is on the mind.

The research is focused on five main categories; institution, transfer of resource and authority, performance, participation and actual results at grassroots level. To conduct an empirical study on each of these categories in one go was found to be a very difficult task. Each of them is broad subject worthy of independent study. Hence, the broadness of the topic was a limiting factor.

Another related constraint is the issue of rule of conduct and ethics. As I am part of the system, there are several moral obligations hindering me. To this effect, to compose all the issues in my mind and use them for analysis was one of the time consuming factors - that required thorough

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[1] *Ganda* – in the Oromo Language is the lowest tier of government structure

thinking. Of course it does not mean that I play down the realities and lull the system to a false sense of the situation.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

After problems are well discussed and conceptualized and the researcher is well convinced to enter into the research, the next conventional step is setting the objective and getting into operation. In a nutshell, the objectives of the research are summarized into four intertwined tasks as follows:

1. To analyze the decentralization process and related concepts based on theories that best explain them,

2. To make an in-depth research on "how the DLDP operates and results it has produced", focusing on institutional strength, transfer of authority and resource, performance of implementers, perception and participation of the stakeholders and actual results gained at grassroots level,

3. To *analyze* data obtained through various tools and *explain* their implication in relation to theories and concepts and how the program proceeds, what it produced; and finally,

4. To provide a critical reflection that may help policy makers, researchers, experts and implementers at various levels.

1.6. The Research Questions

When a practical problem is being observed in a community, it creates in a mind certain queries like: what actually is this problem? Why and how it arrived at that state? What could be a possible solution? Who is responsible for this happening?

(Own thoughts -extracted for emphasis)

These research questions (RQ) were originated from the practical problems that initiated this study. In this case study, while the broad issue was about the decentralization program in Ethiopia, in order to make the research more focused, it was narrowed down to the DLDP. To attain data that help to empirically understand and explain the actual and conceptual problems, crafting sound research questions is not an easy task. Stake (1995:15) says:

"Perhaps the most difficult task of the researcher is to design good questions, research questions, that will direct the looking and the thinking enough and not too much".

To this effect, without leaving their original thematic orbits these research questions have been tailored several times. Their workability has been

checked and modified by conducting a pilot case study. They have been refined based on the deficiencies encountered in the field and based on perceived delusions in the course of literature review in relation to their conceptual formation.

While these questions are broad research questions, there are detailed specific questions and data collection guides which were elaborated in the data collection protocol. Yin (2009:87) says, "*The verbal line of inquiry is different from the mental line of inquiry*". Hence, the following research questions were more of mental lines of enquiries, which were not directly presented to the data givers. They are rather like a central depot in the researcher's mind where other specific questions which are divided into several levels, bring data and feed them; in a group or individually. Because research questions are such a central element, I chose to list them individually in numbered serial order, rather than embedding them in the text, hoping that it helps the reader to treat them as separate entities, each with its own demands on methodology and evidences (Stake, 1995:19).

The following were questions that guided the research:

RQ # 1: Is the institutional environment and arrangement conducive to efficiently implement the DLDP? This is the first question posed, believed to generate data on the availability, strengths and weaknesses of the institutional environment (the external factors) and institutional arrangement (the internal conditions). It has many concepts engraved in it, the prescriptive/prohibitive rules, formal/informal relations, organization and people, which were explicitly placed in the data collection protocol.

RQ # 2: How pragmatic and enabling is the transfer of decision making authority and resources to realize the DLDP? To what extent have the authorities and resources legally transferred as a result of the DLDP been utilized/ exploited by the local level implementers? This question has two main parts. The first question is believed to generate data on the causes that influence the adequacy, fairness and timeliness of the transfer of authority and resources. The second one is targeted to check how well the transferred and available authority and resources have been utilized.

RQ # 3: How planned, efficient, economic and effective is the DLDP implementation process? This question is aimed at checking the causes that dominated the process and effects that emerged in the project/program cycle management as a whole, from planning to monitoring and evaluation.

RQ # 4: How do communities perceive the DLDP and how are they involved in its realization? How do we describe the degree of understanding, the recognition and use of indigenous knowledge, social capital, the civil society organizations and the participation of the private sector in the district?

RQ # 5: How did the program intervention impact on the household livelihoods, individual and communal ways of life? Is the fact that loopholes have prevailed in relation to the above issues affecting the realization of the overall DLDP? This is a question that gears the process of the research towards searching program outcomes, a venue where the researcher meets the subjects of the study, where observation and tangible measures come into play.

These questions have been aimed at pinning down impeding factors or stumbling blocks that hindered the complete or partial realization of the DLDP. Conditions of cross-cutting issues such as gender, migration, natural resources…in relation to the objectives of the program were also addressed under this question.

RQ # 6: What can be cited as a good lesson in your area and what can be proposed as a solution to problems mentioned? This was a normative question prepared to sort lessons of good practices and hopes. It was aimed at seeking local solutions to enhance efficiency and make the decentralization effective at grassroots level.

1.7. Structure of the Study

Under this sub-topic readers will know the flow of all activities, the logical link between each chapter, the way in which parts are arranged or put together to form the whole research process (a roadmap) and their interrelation. Attempts have been made to make-out connecting phrases, formulate introduction, construct supporting statements and draw conclusion for the empirical study chapters and their main parts.

Accordingly, Chapter one holds the introductory part that gives the highlights by summarizing what the overall research is about, how the research process goes, brief description of the methods used and short explanation of the research site. The research problems and the research questions which are the basis of this work, the justification, the objectives and research route have also been explained in this chapter.

In chapter II, attempts have been made to review related literature and critically present the state of the country under study. Review of related literature has been made on the main concepts of the research, in a way to acquaint readers with historical and conceptual background of the issue. Efforts have also been made to sort and present theories expected to house this subject.

Chapter III deals with the research proposition and formulation of a conceptual framework that condenses all discussions to a goal oriented arrangement.

Chapter IV is found to be more time consuming. As a knowledge base in the way of easing the future research works, it deserves the time spent on it. This is where methods and research tools utilized have been presented. The design from preparation to research report, the ethical and procedural issues that contribute to validity, reliability and legitimacy were all covered in this chapter.

Chapters V – IX of the research – depict where empirical evidences obtained from the field work are analyzed (in relation to corresponding theories and concepts that best explain them), interpreted and presented. The five chapters include: institutional strength, transfer of authority and resources, performance, perception and participation of the stakeholders and actual results attained as an outcome of the decentralization program. Since this is a *fact-heavy* part of the research, with figures, local names and numerical data, much attention has been given to harmonize the social contract between the readers and the researcher (Booth, Colomb and Williams, 2008:22). Detail elaboration of each item by going back and forth and testing them against the historical background, the literature, the problem statement and the research proposition, have been presented based on the methods selected.

The last chapter, Chapter X, is where the whole work comes together. After thorough synthesis/analysis and thematic reiteration of the findings in relation to all the categories of the study, concluding remarks with recommendations were drawn and presented. Lessons learnt and normative reflections concurrent to each variable have also been discussed to a possible extent. This is where future areas of research are mapped out and the implication of the research to spatial planning and territorial development has been discussed.

Chapter II: Historical Overview and Conceptual Foundation

2.1. Explaining Ethiopia and the Research Area: A Selective Explanation

Map 1:Map of Ethiopia
(ODA, 2011)

During my stay in Germany, some people I met, Germans or foreigners always asked me about the drought in Ethiopia. Some of them do not even know in which part of the world this country is located.

It is true that unless one is well versed in the geography of the world or has a special interest to know about a given country, it is difficult to know every country in the world. It is obvious that every country has its own unique history. While this uniqueness could be more widely known worldwide for some countries, it may not be the case for others. In the former case, the uniqueness would stand out to capture the attention of the broader world community. In some cases, just an episode in a country that grabs the news headline would be enough for the country to become a household name across the globe. In other cases, by virtue of being in a position of either negatively or positively impacting on the world, a country could become widely known.

In the case of Ethiopia, several factors may contribute for it to stand out and widely known. Ethiopia was the first country to alone defeat the Italian expansionists during the scramble for Africa and maintained its sovereignty uncompromised. It was also the first nation that defeated the Italian fascism. Ethiopia is a country that trained the South African freedom fighters Nelson Mandela, Mugabe of Zimbabwe and liberation forces in Mozambique even though itself had to suffer under successive tyrannical regimes.

 Ethiopia is a source of Blue Nile, a country of great runners/ athletes famous in the world stage and the owner of the Ethiopian Airlines (a member of Star Alliance, the flag carrier of Ethiopia that flies to 64 international and 17 domestic destinations and a training center of aviation technology for many African countries) which make it unique in Africa (as of 2011, flyethiopia.com). The country is one of the lead founders of the African Union (AU). The Head

Quarter of AU and other international agencies including the United Nations and European Union systems are also located in its capital Addis Ababa.

As evidence to the above, I pasted what Nelson Mandela wrote in his autobiography (Mandela, 1994:292), his feeling during his stay in Ethiopia (1961) for a military and political training:

> "Ethiopia has always held a special place in my own imagination and the prospect of visiting Ethiopia attracted me more strongly than a trip to France, England, and America combined. I felt I would be visiting my own genesis, unearthing the roots of what made me an African…"

He described the feeling he had, flying in the Ethiopian Airlines as follows:

> "We then changed flight to an Ethiopian Airways to Addis. Here I experienced a rather strange sensation. As I was boarding the plane I saw that the pilot was black. I had never seen a black pilot before… Once we were in the air, I started studying the geography of Ethiopia, thinking how Ethiopian guerrilla forces hid in these very forests to fight the Italian imperialists".

Of course, several countries have renewed their histories, multiplied their roles in the world; roles that the world can count on and recognize, and created many pull factors for researchers, journalists, tourists and business persons. The country has so much to do in this direction and needs to increase its capacity to promote its cultural and historical values and natural endowments.

But still there are quite a lot of things that one has to know about Ethiopia. I will try to critically mention and introduce some of them in a few paragraphs. Then with a very short explanation of the Oromia State and the West Shoa zone, I will take my readers to the study district, Dendi.

Land   Putting together a fair and true history of this paradoxical country, Ethiopia, and that of its more than 80 nations and nationalities that have lived *de facto* without centralized government systems for centuries is no easy task. In a time line, the land, having human race on it counts back to about 3.5 million years. It is found to be the origin of hominids Australopithecus afarensis fossils named Dinqinesh/Lucy and Selam [2] the latter commonly known as Lucy's Baby. There are always comments that say it would have been better if they were named Afar/ Hadar/ Dikika- names of the places where they were discovered in North Eastern Ethiopia (ENM, 2009).

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[2] A Hominid, female skeleton, 3.18 million years old, found by Donald Johanson and Tom Gray on in year 1974, at Hadar, first named Lucy and now Dinkinesh. Selam is a 3.3 million year old *Australopithecus afarensis found by Ethiopian* paleoanthropologist Zeresenay Alemseged, in year 2000 in Dikika, the same area in Afar.

Geographically, back in time line, the territory of the country had its traces, that stretch along the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean going deep into the West in some places (Pankhurst, 1961:104) without any definite boundary. It holds in its heart *fantastically broken triangular* saddle-like mountain plateaus that rise up to 4,620 meters above sea level, the Mountain Ras Dashen - 4th highest peak in Africa, Guna, Amaba Alaghe, Asimaba… in the North, Garamulata…in the East, Chilalo, Tullu Dimtu, Batu… in the South and several others in the West with above 3,000 meters above sea level height. At a lower altitude, surrounded by cool, fertile and well watered midland, it goes further down to 120 meters below sea level, the Danakil Depression – the 6th depression in the world. Enclosed by arid, wet, moderate and hot regions Ethiopia serves all kinds of temperate weather 13, I say thirteen, months of a year and almost 13 hours day light throughout the year.

The country has a unique calendar that is for no clear reason, seven/eight years behind the Gregorian calendar. For instance, year 2011 is divided between 2003 and 2004 - because the New Year starts on September 11 – on 09/11. According to this calendar we have 12 equally divided 30 days months and one dwarf a 5 (in each leap year 6) days month which nobody in the country, particularly public sector workers, gets paid for. What may be most interesting is counting of the time, which starts at one O'clock when the sun rises and ends at 12 O' clock when the sun sets. There is always a debate over the usage of the calendar; whether to confuse ourselves with mismatch just for euphoria of being unique for more time or if we have to join the rest of the world and adapt the Gregorian calendar.

The Great Rift Valley that starts from active volcanoes, Erta'ale and Ardoukoba - known as "*The Liquid Ember*", in Afar divides the country into two and stretches to Lake Turkana, the divide between Kenya and Ethiopia. The Blue Nile starts and makes its longest journey in this country. Of course there are other more worth mentioning rivers. Rivers like Awash, Wabe Shaballe, Genale, Ghibe, Tekheze, Omo, Baro and others known for the economic benefits they render. Though, the country is called the land of mountains and rivers, if not all, most of them are underutilized. Being thirsty itself, in all directions, Ethiopia waters and butters its neighbors generously (MoCT, 2009).

People   Ethiopia is the home to more than 90 million people, attaining 2nd rank in Africa recently, next to Nigeria (155 million), overtaking Egypt (82 million). The trend shown in the side margin *(Table 1)* does not need much explanation (CIA, 2011), how fast the population growth is. But the land that carries this ever increasing weight is constant; or if productivity is a concern the land is deteriorating at a high rate.

The history of the country written by people around the palace and religious institutions, in past, has been extremely controversial for the fact that it always aimed at praising the rulers and for being not all inclusive. The recent ones are not also remote from this path-dependency because of several reasons. From whatever source, some take the sovereignty of this country to about

three thousand years while others say it got this shape only a hundred years back. If history refers to the land, there is no question that the legendary Ethiopia, covering an even bigger region than that of the present has been in existence for centuries.

Year	Population
2011	90,873,740
2010	88,013,490
2009	85,237,340
2008	82,544,840
2007	76,511,890
2006	74,777,980
2005	73,053,290
2004	67,851,280
2003	66,557,550
2002	67,673,030
2001	65,891,870
2000	64,117,450

Table 1: Ethiopia - Population

If the concern is about the people, they have lived in different forms of almost independent units, something more than the decentralization we are talking about, until the reign of Menelik the II[3]. These independent units had their own structures, some were territorial, some were based on clans and others were unions of different clans. Some had their own kings, some had their own chiefs and others had "democratically" elected leaders (Fiseha, 2007). In most places, taking a shape of tradition and informal government, this phenomenon still runs to date parallel with the so-called modern government.

To my understanding, having the domain name Ethiopia in common and sentimentally attached beyond ethnicity in one way or another, the people of Ethiopia have maintained togetherness for millenniums. If history is about centralized rule, and to describe a country in a definite boundary, the latter is indisputably true, it was only about a hundred years back that Ethiopia got this shape.

However, the fact is the criterion to be in the row of great nations or greatness had deviated long ago from the importance of age. Greece and other broken European nations as in 2011 can be a good example of this, compared to the very recent emerging economies in the Far East, known as the "*Four Asian Tigers or Asian Dragons*", even the USA, though they are not also immune from various socio-economic problems.

Ethiopia had never been colonized (of course, our liberty has never been compromised), except for the five years partial occupation by the Italians during WWII. In the first half of the 20th century it was surrounded about 5,000 kilometers around its boundaries by British colonizers in the Sudan, Kenya and Somalia, and some 300 kilometers by the French in Djibouti; a complete circle. Because of its strategic location, even though it remained sovereign, it never failed to have frequent invasions, encirclement and attention of foes and friends. It had waged many wars against far and neighboring countries. Won, but the country is always known for not having the experience of vengeance (Perham, 1969:xxx).

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[3] Emperor of Ethiopia, 1889-1909, who led the (1896) Ethio-Italian War at Adoa

Culture   Ethiopians are multicultural. Like the saying, "*diversity is beauty*" goes; the country is a conglomeration of multi-culture people; religion and language being expressed under culture. Thus, the country is explained by all these diverse colors. Though there is a bigger truth in this saying, I feel it is not always true, sometimes we cannot escape from its dividing factors, particularly in developing nations such as our country, from top level officials to local ones. By the same token homogeneity is not also a guarantee for peace, development and democracy. For instance, Somalia, our neighboring country with a homogeneous people has reeled without a government for the last 20 years. Of course it is not only ethnicity that differ people. There are many other factors like, level of development, historical integration, religion, geographic factor, urban/rural setting, etc.

Of course, the long time togetherness and the diffusion have brought certain norms, values and ways of life that all Ethiopians share. In the metropolitan areas, as a result of media influences, interactions with the outside world and with each other a number of shared new standards have emerged, in clothing, food preparation and as a whole in various ways of life without leaving aside the long lived societal values and norms. This is a natural order of cultural development, which one cannot prevent.

Every nation or nationality in Ethiopia had its own way of living with respect to the type of food and closing used and social activities practiced. This is true in the past and as well as the present. However, due to the dynamism of culture and its fast move beyond boundaries, it is making a pyramid, converging, particularly in towns, leaving old attire to the museums, as no nation can escape this phenomenon. With regard to Ethiopian food in general, there are many types of plants and animal species which have never been tried. In some parts of the country people have started eating even chicken and fish very recently. From bush animals, only a few are edible by most Ethiopians.

Religion   Religion as a part of culture has always been a very sensitive issue in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia religion covers most, if not all, chapters in its history. From history, social psychology and other social science branches we learn both the advantages and catastrophes religion brings to a particular society and the world at large. The Ethiopian people used to believe in one of the three major groups of beliefs: Traditional beliefs, Christianity and Islam. As sects and factions of these three, there are many others that exist mainly blended with local culture. Christianity in Ethiopia dates back to the 1st century AD. The first Hegira (Muslims flight) in Islam was made to Ethiopia, through direct instruction by Prophet Mohammed in 620s. In the past, with the exception of a few minor episodes, there was generally exemplary harmony among all the religions in Ethiopia.

However, recently the trend appears to be different. Due to influences and pressure from external agents there seems to be a sense of religious rivalry that potentially presents a challenge to the Ethiopian society. Construction of religious places with huge amounts of money and the increased tension among some religion sects needs attention. When we compare the situation

with the developed world, may be where these religions originated or practiced before they came to our land, we rarely see obsessions and extremism compared to some sects of religions as a group and some fanatical individuals that we now see in Ethiopia.

Things which were intense in some parts of the world many years ago starts as new in this part of our world – religious practices are being manifested from one extreme to the other. Persons, who totally ignored the practices and values of religion (of course because of the communist indoctrination) during the Dergue regime, have obsessively indulged themselves into one or the other religious sects now. As a social science person I understand the vacuum religion fills in a society, but it is also a concern of many scholars regarding the fate of future generation when it goes out of control.

We hardly ever see the construction of new cathedrals or mosques in the developed world, particularly in Europe as extensively as in Ethiopia at present. The government's reluctance, that comes out of fear or may be with the thinking that, "*time and civilization will bring their solution*", also seems unbearable. The possible flashback it produces would be unmanageable.

As today's core leaders were the revolutionaries of the 70s and though they may not have an affiliation with religion of any sort, but they must understand the consequences, once it gets out of hand. Thus, a country that still has enough of its own deep rooted indigenous problems should not jeopardize the peace and safety of the coming generation by ignoring these signs, is always a feeling of its considerate citizens.

Tourist Attractions   Ethiopia still has several remains of historic, cultural and natural tourist attractions, some of them registered by UNESCO as world heritage sites. Of these attractions, among the historic ones are, the Castle of King Fasiledes, the Rock Hewn Churches of Lalibela, the Axum Obelisks, the Stele of Tiya, the City Wall of Harar known as Jagol - with 82 mosques, which has been "considered 'the fourth holy city' of Islam" by UNESCO (2006).

Among the obelisks in Axum, during the five years' war, Italians took one away and erected in Rome. Currently, it has been repatriated and put up in its original place, Axum. It was argued that it should not have been brought back but rather kept in Rome, Italy, requesting the government of Italy that Ethiopia retains certain ownership rights of the obelisk and history associated with it.

Similarly, the *Gadaa* System[4] of the Oromo people's democratic governance structure, the unique settlement of the Khonsos[5] in the South…can be mentioned as cultural assets of the

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[4] *Geda* System: This was a unique Oromo governance system which is currently diminished because of reasons that attribute to, Menelik II's invasion of the South, religions, stages of societal development and deficiency of all the successive governments to develop social assets.

country. The natural endowments include the Birth Place of Coffee and the Organic Coffee Forest; Mountain Ras Dashen; Sof Omar Cave -the longest cave in Africa, the *"Liquid Ember"* – Active Volcano in Afar, Erta Ale (which means smoking mountain in Afar language) the longest-existing lava lake present in the world since the early years of the twentieth century (1906); the Blue Nile Fall – known as *Tis Isat* (smoke of fire); Qundudo or "W" Mountain in East Hararghe which hosts an ancient population of feral horses; some 23 types of birds and 31varieties of mammals endemic wild lives   found in different parts of the country (Melka, 2011). Much needs to be done to put all in order without any prejudice and to promote them as wonders of the world and to make a significant amount of income for this needy country.

Language   As I have tried to explain above, Ethiopia's diverse nations and nationalities use more than 80 (90 individual languages according to Ethnologue, about 77 according to the 1994 census) languages to communicate (CSA, 2000). Having a single popular language as a medium of instruction and as a uniting national language was a problem for a long time. Amharic, with its Ge'ez[6] script has crawled to survive. But still it does not seem that it has garnered unconditional recognition of the whole people due to various political and practical factors. While the decision to teach children at primary and junior secondary levels with their mother tongue is an achievement obtained after many years of struggle, children still experience lack of teaching aids and adequate and pedagogically appropriate textbooks in most of the languages. Besides the limited effort of the government in this line, those who struggled to use the mother tongue are not making as much efforts as they are expected, in developing it. There are no books, journals, and educational materials to develop their knowledge, which in turn affects the quality of teachers and creation of competitive human capital in the dynamic world system.

Owing to very bad communication systems including internet connections as a result of poor service delivery (coverage and quality), inadequate references and lack of exposure to the systems in the developed world - having a common language, to be on the same wavelength with the developed world and even within can definitely not be an easy task. At a time when the Library of Congress is at the finger tip and accesses to all services are managed with a simple pin code in other parts of the world, still struggling with this old problem is appalling.

Economy   The economic development/ underdevelopment issue in Ethiopia is a long debated item. The modern economic thoughts flashed by the country's pioneer development thinkers in the beginning of the twentieth century: Negaderas Gebre-Hiwot Baykedagne, Mikael Tessema and Blatta Déréssa Amante are still afresh issues under discussion

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[5] Konso - Tribe in Southern Ethiopia, known for their traditional land use

6 Ge'ez - an ancient South Semitic language that originated in southern Arabia (modern Yemen) and was further developed in the northern region of Ethiopia and southern Eritrea (Wikipedia)

a hundred years later. According to Geda (2004:3), core ideas raised by those elites under a broad question; "*why Ethiopia is underdeveloped?* Were:

> (a) "the role of education and educated work force, (b) war/conflict and development, (c) the role of the state in development, (d) the role of institutions (organization), (e) the importance of infrastructure and (e) the nature of Ethiopia's economic interaction with industrialized countries".

In the midterm, 1940s to 1960s Perham (1969: lviii) wrote the following:

> "Ethiopia is actually a very poor, and potentially, at least by African standards, a very rich country. It has in full measure over the major part of its surface the two favorable elements which are needed in the tropics, elevation and rainfall. There are two main reasons why this potential has not been realized. One is physical. High ranges and deep valleys make communications very difficult. The other handicap is *political*: the country has been largely isolated throughout its long history from economic as from other contacts with the outside world. The result is that, for all its historical pride, Ethiopia is among the most, perhaps *the* most, economically backward states in Africa" [emphasis added].

What better agenda can we have today? What better description do we have for the current condition after hundred or fifty years? Politics was a problem and still it is. Yes, Ethiopia had the potentials mentioned above, if at all they are not eaten up or their importance is not altered by now. Whatever remains, still it is not "case closed" for development. Because, we learn from some successful nations, that a country can develop even without having the mentioned resources, given other determining factors like politics, realistic development policies, capacity, commitment, sound and strategic communication with the rest of the world… fulfilled.

Literature indicates initiation of national planning was started in the early 1950s. Perham (1969:lix) states, "*the modern device of planning was adopted in 1957, and a twenty year plan was initiated, at first largely on paper*". Since then there have been several national planning exercises. There were several goals set. Where did all these goals led to? Altering Admassie's (2000), "*Twenty Years to Nowhere*", I say, hundred years to somewhere: to high population increase, environmental degradation (soil, water, wildlife, forest…), to lose of social capital and to hideous poverty.

Of course as a rule of nature nothing can be at absolute stasis. To this effect there were some positive achievements as well, but very insignificant compared to the time elapsed and compared to other countries which were at the same or even lower stage some years back. On the other hand, I also acknowledge that social transformation and attainment of rights is not a simple walk, when we see people in some parts of the world who waged struggle for freedom for decades and

even for centuries (e.g. the Kurdish, the Palestinians...). More complicated and frustrating is when we look into the challenges to develop a country and bring holistic transformation even after freedom, where in the cases of some countries it takes even a negative direction (e.g. Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ruanda, some West African nations…)

The total population in Ethiopia 1900 was estimated at 11.8 million [*but who made the counting*? *As the first Population and Housing Census being conducted in 1984 covering about only 81 % of the country*], it took 60 years for this to double to 23.6 million in 1960. It took only 28 years for the population in 1960 to double again to 47.3 million in 1988 (CSA, 2007).

Through all these years, neither the government (incoming/outgoing) nor the people nor the international donor governments and institutions have failed to set new strategies one after the other. Neither did they have stopped promising each other that they would triumph over poverty. Using Perham's (1969:xxvi) words again, in contrast to its peers, its long standing history, *its prides* and the time it took to reach where we are now, "*it almost seemed that Ethiopia was maintaining continuity not far removed from immobility*". Moving several ups and downs in the time line, with the monarchies, with the Dergue and with the present government, a number of national and state plans have been formulated. Money has been poured into the implementation of these plans and campaigns to bring in money. Many have lost their lives as sacrificial lambs, particularly the irreplaceable revolutionaries of the sixties directly or indirectly, but Ethiopia is still at the bottom row in most, if not in all, indexes of development.

Currently, Ethiopia, the second-most populous country in Africa, marks USD$380 per capita income which is much lower than the Sub-Saharan African average of USD$1,165 in FY 2010. Even though it was very exciting to hear that Ethiopia has become one of the fast growing economies in recent years, it couldn't still escape from the bottlenecks that anchor it to the ground. The drought from 2008 to 2010 and on a different scale to date, and the so called twin macroeconomic challenges: the difficult balance of payment and the high inflation rate (about 40 percent in August 2011), if I add one - low performance of some states, could be threats that may tumble our country down into the long lived vicious cycle of poverty.

With all its challenges, the country has set various interconnected routes to attain the double figure annual economic growth anticipated. It has planned to increase GDP per capita (at current price) annually in such a way that it leads to the expected USD$698 by 2015. The Millennium Development Goal as a universal obligation is another critical homework to be achieved in 2015. Other programs like the Grand Renaissance Dam to breakout from *vicious cycle of poverty and attain virtues cycle of prosperity* and reach the middle income countries by 2020 is also another goal. All these goals being unified as a single package in the Five Years Growth and Transformation Plan are the current economic slogans of the country to redirect all the worst poverty indicator indexes and renew the country's image (New Business Ethiopia, 2011).

Government Structure

Fiseha (2007: 20) quoted Henze, Paul. B. (1994: 125) who said,

"Ethiopia, the oldest continually existing polity in Africa, has almost always been relatively decentralized at many stages in its long history, so decentralized, in fact, that only a vague tradition of statehood, combined with a sense of religious and cultural community held it together at all",

He further quoted Clapham (1993) who said, "Historic Ethiopia approximated a federal system", finally he concluded by saying,

"The notion of autonomy and unity fully explain such a period" [the pre Menelik II period].

The attempts of these three scholars reflect that the elements of federalism and decentralization were long practiced in Ethiopia. It is true, though it would be difficult to fully explain the fragmented situation of regions and nations in old Ethiopia under the modern concept of federation and decentralization. They were in fact more of independent than autonomous. However, if what matters is the nature of local – central relation, undeniably there were elements of federalism and decentralization.

Old Ethiopia was a union (voluntary or involuntary) of several territorial and national units which were under different traditional rules, where in the case of some nations, democratic principles had been practiced. Here I quote Huntington's (1999:13) explanation of democracy which implies to local governments:

"Political systems with democratic characteristics are not limited to modern times. In many areas of the world tribal chiefs were elected for centuries and in some places democratic political institutions long existed at the village levels".

In Oromia and some nations that share culture with the Oromos, nations like Sidama[7], they had a democratic system, called *Gadaa* System, some elements of which could be compared to modern day democracy, may be much better than the pseudo ones. In the *Gadaa* system leaders were elected every eight years, where there is a process of impeachment in-between. The selection of office holders was also conducted based on merits and with the endorsement of the people, the constituencies. This system was reversed by several internal and external causes: involuntary annexation by the feudal system, emergence of internal structural changes which went against

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[7] Sidama - is a nation in Southern Ethiopia

the system - the violation of eight years term exchange of leaders, like the case of Ghibe States[8] - the development in the direction of kingship, internal conflicts and most importantly religion, both Christianity and Islam.

Legesse (2000:195) has mentioned the following about the *Gadaa* system:

> "Oromo democracy is one of those remarkable creations of the human mind that evolved into a full-fledged system of government, as a result of five centuries of evolution and deliberate, rational, legislative transformation."

On the other hand, some writers try to comment on the drawbacks of this system raising issues like exclusion of women, inheritance of power that is limited to kinship structures and some other issues that should be considered in modern times. However, enduring all attempts to abolish it, this system still significantly exists in different parts of the state without giving any attention or giving only a little attention to the superimposed formal local government structures. Of course, other democracies including that of the USA were not without deficiencies, they excluded women (even to date there are 'only men' associations), slaves, as well as resident aliens … from voting and holding government offices. But over time this has been changed. The problem in our country is the less concern given to these social capitals and always opting to superimpose yet another "no better" system without the will of the people.

The country experienced the rule of written constitution for the first time in 1931 during the reign of Haileselassie. Based on the far and near influences of change and the internal pressure the same had been revised with some amendments in 1955. After the end of the monarchy in 1974, the Dergue regime proclaimed a constitution in 1987, which was essentially unitary in its form, but with radical differences from that of the monarchy.

The current local government structure essentially has its deep roots in the outcomes of the past socialist oriented military regime. The Public Ownership of Rural Lands Proclamation of March 1975, which nationalized all rural land and ended all forms of tenancy, rule of aristocracy and formed peasant associations, was a landmark step. The Urban Land Holding and formation of Urban Dwellers Association Proclamation of July 1975 was also a great input to this leap. These were turning points where feudalism was closed; they were the foundation to today's several political, economic and social issues. During this time, "self administration associations" were formed at all stages, and somehow started exercising their powers, that broke the divine mentality of the feudal autocracy.

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[8] Ghibe States: Several *Oromo* Kingdoms and Confederations existed before 1850s; among which, Limmu, Guuma, Gomma, Geera and Jimma, known as Ghibe States are explained in several literature. These were the last Oromo states, which emerged as a breach of the *Geda* systems.

After the collapse of communism all over the world and the Dergue regime, a transitional government had been formed in 1991, based on ethnic composition. Basically, foundation had been laid for the formation of the current federal system in Ethiopia by the Transitional Period Charter of Ethiopia, Proclamation Number 1 of July 22nd 1991, Article 3/7. In this proclamation, it has been explicitly stated that "the Council of the Transitional Government shall be composed of representatives of national liberation movements, other political organizations, and prominent individuals to make up a total of no more than 87 members". Proclamation No.7/1992 which was endorsed later on provided the right of nations, nationalities and peoples to self-determination, and to ensure the preservation and promotion of their languages, cultures and histories. The Proclamation ensured fourteen national/regional self-governments and one city administration which later on reduced to nine states, because five states merged into one. So this is, *de facto* a point where the current local governments in Ethiopia came to being in a different form and content from the previous ones (*see Map 1*).

Of course, the realization of this federal system was not without obstacles. There were minor misunderstandings and conflicts at the initial stage. There were also some inconveniences on handling the minority groups that live in certain regions. Even though the federal system is based on ethno-linguistics (not on blood line), groups who didn't assimilate and fix themselves into the community they lived with for decades or centuries faced serious problems. As to big groups that live in a given state, the constitution provided a solution, whereby they were able to create their own special zones and/or special districts. Eight special districts: five in Southern region, two in Benishangul Gumuz and one in Afar, as well as three special zones in Amhara have been established. This was a turning point, where some who supported it being influenced by the moments of inertia created at that point in time, later on tended to regret and tempted to revert. Since then, even after this structure had been deep-rooted, some opponents, including senior politicians and social scientists, still kept on complaining to bring back the government structure which was based only on administrative division. Nonetheless, I believe that there is always a room to mix the administrative and the ethnic based structure and to split/merge some states, based on the will of people, to increase efficiency and service delivery, harmonize and narrow down ethnic based differences and to dilute narrow nationalism/ chauvinism.

In 1995, Proclamation No.1/1995, "A Proclamation to Pronounce the Coming into Effect of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia" (FDRE Constitution 1995) provided the first relatively structured and all inclusive document. Article 50/2 of this constitution states the incorporation of the three conventional powers: legislative, executive and judiciary. The federal legislature is bi-cameral and is composed of the House of People's Representatives (HPR) with 547 members and the House of the Federation (HF), which has 110 members representing 58 "nations and nationalities". The tenure of the two houses is 5 years. Article 47 of this document stipulates the foundation of nine states. Under Article 49 Addis Ababa, being recognized as the capital city of the country is given the status of a state. Later on Dire Dawa city is also given an autonomous status by separate proclamation. Therefore, 11 states

are directly responsible to the Federal Government; each state having its own constitution and structure.

Article 50(4) of the 1995 Constitution redefined the rights of each state to decide on its own local government structure so that the local governance system of each state could be rooted in its own peculiar socio-economic setting. So based on this, states were formed and have endorsed their own constitutions. The Oromia State *Megeleta* (Constitution), revised version Number 46 of 27th October 2001, Articles 45 and 46 provided the formation and existence of three tiers of government: state, district and ganda, while zones play a role of coordination. All these tiers have legislative, executive and judiciary bodies. Without mentioning the names of these tiers the *Megeleta* provides powers and duties applicable to each parallel tier.

The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is consistent in using the term "state" for "states". But states always switch between different names. For example, on the *Megeleta*, on the cover page, the Afaan Oromo version, the Amharic[9] version and the English version are all different. They are written as follows: "Regional State", "State", "National Regional State", and "Region". It is not clear whether it is a deliberate swing or out of negligence. Anyway, the decentralization program also finds its foundation here in this basic document. However, there are still several practices to be rectified; issues related to division of power, accountability, covert or open interference into lower tiers autonomy, under/over utilization of power, formalism, etc…

Governance   It has been explained in the discussion above that the essence and practices of federalism and decentralization, even though in a fragmented form, had long been part of Ethiopia's government structure. I have also commended the current constitution for its relative comprehensiveness.

However, since attempts had been started to '*modernize*' the country, the problems were not a question of clarity in documents and form of government. The difficulties were always in the implementation and the content of government. Making the documents serve own agenda, translation and alteration in favor of narrow cause and greed, and freezing certain provisions were always a problem; which could be deliberate or due to lack of capacity. Of course this will definitely cost us more in the future. With this regard Fiseha (2007) pasted on the back cover of his book the following quotation from Clapham (1993):

> "If a constitution is intended to be a document enjoying a wide degree of popular acceptance which in turn helps to convey legitimacy on the public authority and guides the exercises of power along the lines which the constitution lays down, then none of the Ethiopian constitutions to date come remotely close to meeting this specification".

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[9] Amharic is a Semitic language spoken in Ethiopia. It is the second most-spoken Semitic language in the world, after Arabic, and the official working language of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Wikipedia)

The gap between the policy and its implementation was a deadly threat to so many stunning documents produced in the past, and still remains the problem to date. To escape from the costs caused by lack of commitment to comply with officially agreed principles, policies and programs the country needs to take on and create wise, open and competitive minds.

The existence of political parties in Ethiopia is a new phenomenon. Before 1974, the understanding about party among most Ethiopians was, may be a "graduation party" or any get-together and entertainment events that had been occasionally prepared. Only after 1974 did some political parties emerged with radical thinking and practices. While most of them were *de facto* ethnic driven and ethnic influenced, only a few had a "multi-national" composition. Even though some of their tenets are still embedded in the minds and institutional settings of some present day political organizations, most of the "multi-national" parties of that time, if not all, no longer exist today. That was when the country lost its most vibrant human element stock for death. Besides political immaturity, being tired of an archaic rule and being inspired by rapid change, extremism was the order of the day on almost all fronts. But it was not easy to attain the desired goals. What we have achieved in governance at present will never equal the sacrifices.

Currently, as a result of a paradigm shift in the essence and practices of political parties, it would be very difficult to compare with the standard and nature of political parties of those days. Like the Oromo saying goes, '*one who saw a snake in day light fears a piece of rope during the night'*, the elite are very apathetic to join the current parties. Hence, it requires a wise leadership [by the words of Albert Einstein…*a touch of genius*] to lay ground for the emergence of true and competitive political parties that can truly compete, generate new ideas, bring about good governance and transform the country through constructive dialogue on policy and strategic issues.

2.2. Oromia State

One of the states legally constituted based on the 1995 Constitution, is the State of Oromia. The capital city is known officially under two names, but commonly under three names. When it is mentioned as a capital of Ethiopia it is called Addis Ababa, when it is cited as the capital city of Oromia (which is only *de jury*), it is called Finfinne, but the Oromo people commonly call it Shaggar or Finfinne (in this document, I use alternatively Finfinne or Addis Ababa as deemed appropriate). It is a mystification that arises from tension to balance group interest, history and politics. The relocation of the state's capital city to Adama in the year 2000, created controversy and the capital city moved back to Finfinne in 2005. Some political analysts say it was a *blessing in disguise* to the Oromos, to strengthen their psychological integration and a sentiment of statehood. During the period that the capital city moved to Adama, a lot of resources had been allocated to establish offices. Several bureaus have also moved and started their operation from there. Anyway, relocation to Finfinne to the rented offices was done before the roots go deep into

ground. This time it was a blessing in disguise for those who were threatened by the feeling that had developed during the stay in Adama.

Map 2: Map of Oromia
(ODA, 2011)
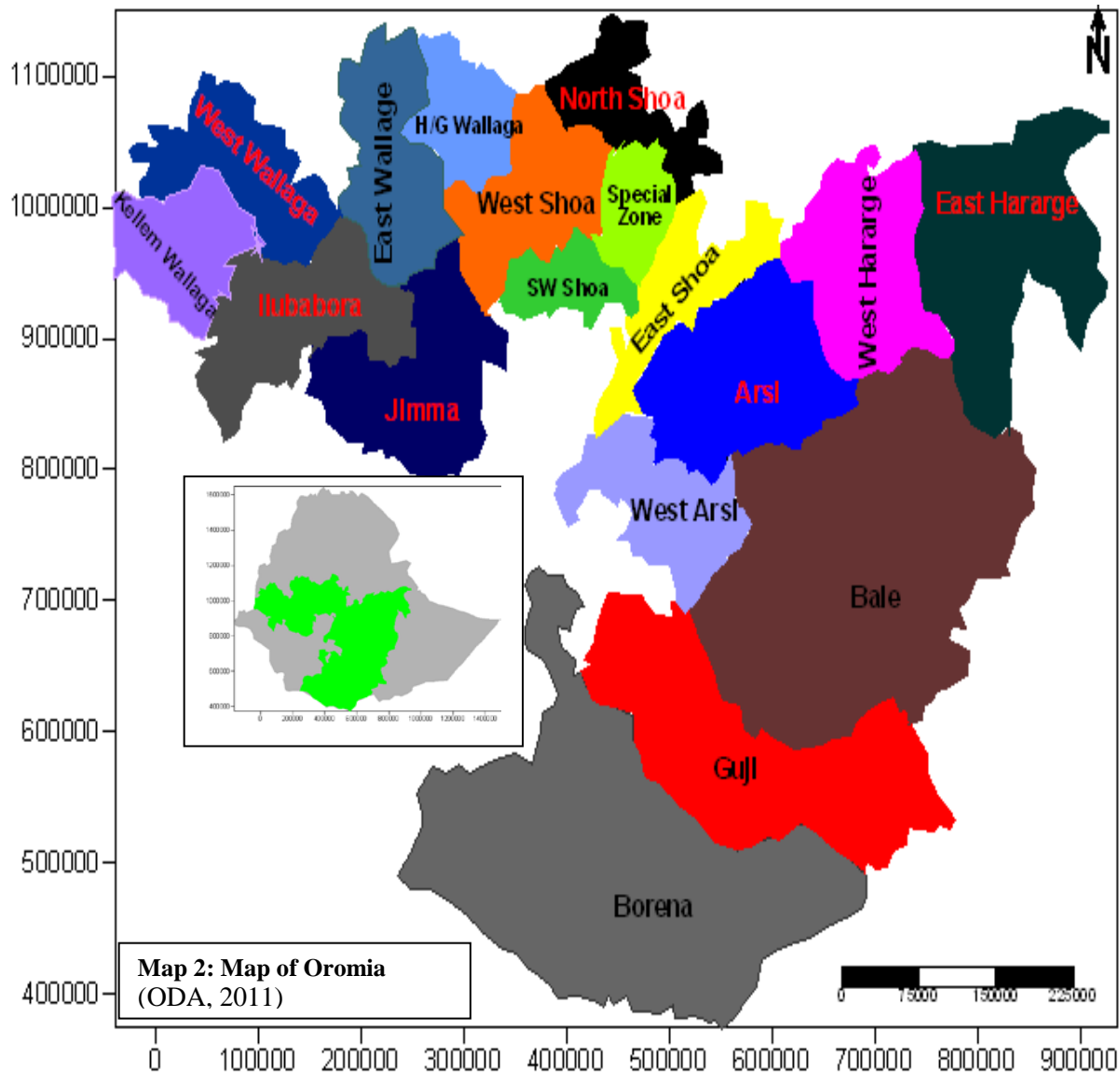
The settlement of the Oromo people covers a large area of the country. In the West and South, it stretches into Kenya and the Sudan, in the East into Somalia and Djibouti, internally it goes North up to Raya. Though it was always a cause of dispute, local resources being the main grounds, attempts were made to fix the boundaries by the House of Federation and in Article 2/1 of the Oromia State Revised Constitution of 2001. While this state is the most populous state with 27,158,471 (37% of the total population) the land area is also the largest in the country covering 353, 632 square kilometer (32% of the total area of the country). *Afaan* Oromo[10],

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[10] Afaan Oromo, Oromiffa(a) (and sometimes in other languages by variant spellings of these names; Oromic, Afan Oromo, etc.), is an Afro-Asiatic language. It is the most widely spoken tongue in the family's Cushitic branch, as a

presently written with Latin characters, is an official state language. *Afaan* Oromo is spoken by some 83.5% of the people who live in the state (CSA, 2007).

Currently the state has a revised constitution enforced by Proclamation No. 46/2001. The previous constitution which was proclaimed on 22 June 1995 was revised to make the separation of power and accountability of the state organs clear and enable them to render effective services. This is the document that delivered the essence and practices of decentralization. There are 304 districts and towns that have the status of district (268 and 36 respectively) and 6,500 *gandas* as of mid 2011. But these figures always fluctuate as the demand for the creation of new districts and the enforcement for a merger and split of *gandas* is always there (Oromia, 2007).

Despite the high population and its large area there are several characters that explain this state. It is a state with high potential, from where electric power, export products, livestock and mines come. On the other hand, it is one among the most disadvantaged states with poor infrastructure and other socio - economic services. About 40% of regions in the state, particularly the low land area where pastoralists live, more than seven zones are drought-prone zones (ReliefWeb, 2009).

2.3. West Shoa Zone

From one of the five Italian built artery tarmac roads, if one takes the west outlet, this goes directly to the boundary of the Sudan, about 700 kilometers. There is no other tarmac road that branches left or right. Travelling through breathtaking chains of mountains on the left and right, Ambo, the capital of West Shoa is found at 109 kilometers. It is one of the biggest zones in the state, with 21,552 square kilometers width. The population, according to CSA (2007) is 2,329,250. This was 2,072,485 in the 1994 census, a significant increase. The zone has 18 districts - most of them with very poor road access - and one town with district status.

It is not a secret to everybody that this zone and most parts of the west wing of the country are disadvantaged and marginalized in respect of roads and other communication networks. It took five years to rebuild the Italian built road that goes to Ambo, making connections very difficult. It was taking us three to four hours drive only for the 100 kilometers distance. Such disadvantages are not only limited to this area. Sometime ago, I heard of a farmer, in a place 300 kilometers west of Finfinne who had brought 100 kg of maize to sell, but because no one wanted to buy his product, he scattered it in the market and went home with his empty sacks. We can see from this how infrastructure matters to motivate producers and increase products. On the other hand we can also compare this situation with the other parts of the country that suffers extreme food shortage. The zone Administration is housed in 'a history teller' Italian built office. Both

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first language by more than [30] million Oromos in Ethiopia, parts of northern Kenya and Somalia. It is a language with [most expansive] reach in East Africa, being used by various ethnic groups as a second language (Wikipedia).

the land line and mobile telephone connection are very poor as is the internet. Only a few years back this was a resort area for its hot spring and pleasant weather.

Map 3: Map of West Shoa Zone
(ODA, 2011)
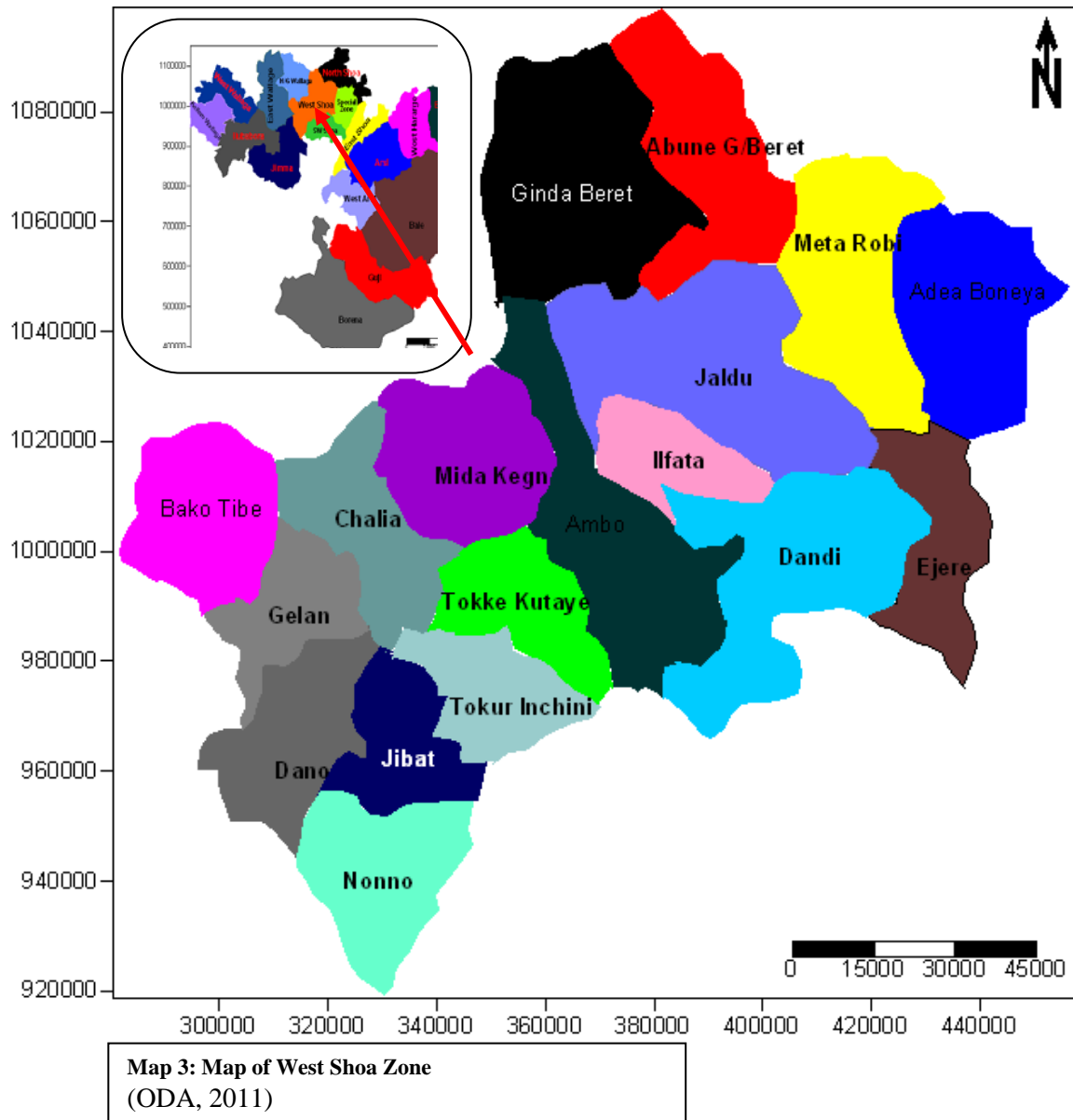
Topographically, the West Shoa zone is endowed with mountains like Dendi, Wanchi, and rivers like Muger, Awash, Dabus and Ghibe. The zone has three major drainage basins, Abay (the Blue Nile), Ghibe and Awash rivers. They drain not only water, but the rich top soil and the lives of the upper-stream people. The West Shoa is a zone where remnants of indigenous tree forests like Chilimo, Gedo and Jibat State forests are found. Dendi Lake, known as one of the source to one of the tributaries of Abay (the Blue Nile) is also located in this zone. This zone is characterized by its potential resource of mines including gold and other minerals, gypsum, agricultural land with high potential for irrigation, indigenous wild game and large livestock populations.

2.4. Dendi District

Dendi district is one of the eighteen districts of the West Shoa zone of Oromia State. The district capital city Ghinchi is located 77 kilometers west of Finfinne on the Addis Ababa-Naqamte road, 30 kilometers before Ambo. Dendi has a land area of 1,078.75 square kilometers with a population of 192,784, of which 99,475 are male. There are 20,215 households, of which 16,092 are male-headed households while the remaining 4,123 are female-headed[11]. The average family size per household varies between 5 and 7 persons. The economically active work force over 15 and below 65 years of age is estimated to be 49%. The district has 48 rural *gandas* and 5 urban/semi-urban *gandas,* out of which two towns Ghinchi and Welenkomi (locally known as Olankomi) have municipal status[12]. Density: for both urban and rural, it is 111/square kilometer for human and 80 /square kilometer for animals (Dendi District Report, 2009).

Dendi district has some natural endowments to attract scientists and researchers: 1) The importance of the Chilimo Natural Forest at country level; 2) The terrain and the soil type and; 3) the existence of Lake Dendi.

The Chilimo Natural Forest is located at coordinates 09°05'N 38°10'E A3 (A07), on Altitude 2,300 – 3, 000, near Ghinchi, the capital city of Dendi. It covers a land area of 2,400 hectares, with dominantly montane broad leaf and coniferous trees. Local communities use this forest as a grazing land for their cattle. This forest is also home to some 150 bird species, of which five are Ethiopian endemics, and many more are Afro Tropical Highlands' biome species (EWNHS, 1996).

What makes the terrain and the soil type special is that the district stretches from 2,000 meters to 3,267meters above sea level. In these, highland, semi highland and lowland areas different types of flora and faunas exist, and there are different soil types in a small cluster of land. The character of the topography attracts different scientists for research. Researchers can find rivers that descend from high to low altitudes at high speeds and rivers that flow *as gently as the River Rhine*. An example of this is, River Awash in most of its courses, which starts its long journey of about 1,200 kilometers from this district and ends in Afar State. This is the most productive river providing water to two sugar factories, originally started by HVA, a Dutch company in 1950[13], hydroelectric power, and other huge cotton, fruits and vegetables, flower… state and private mechanized farms, in Oromia and the Afar states.

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[11] Male-headed & female-headed: I am not sure how much this explanation is compatible with gender issue

[12] A towns get municipal status, based on population size, economic activity and other political reasons.

[13] HVA (Handelsvereniging Amsterdam), A Dutch-run sugar industry in Ethiopia which started its operation in the early 1950s. HVA established the sugar estates/ factories of Wonji-Shoa and Metahara in 1954, 1960 and 1968, respectively. They were almost an island of Europe; exclusive living quarters for foreigners with luxury swimming places and other recreation facilities, exclusive office setting. These companies were confiscated by the Dergue. Only one additional company, Fincha has been built since then.
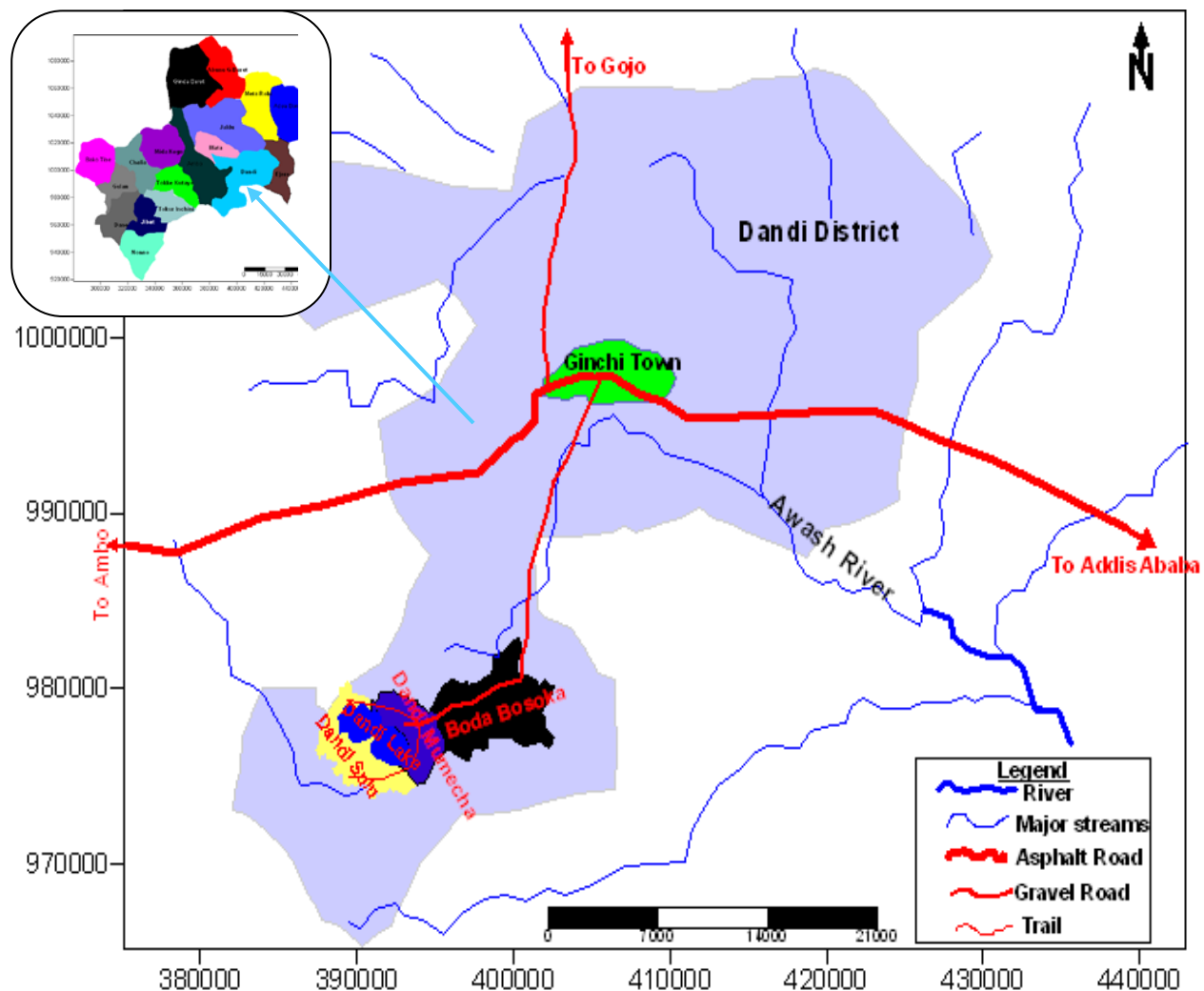
Map 4: Map of Dendi District
(ODA, 2011)

Lake Dendi, from where the district got its name, is a unique lake in the shape of an "8", encircled by a chain of mountains (*see cover page*). Recently, the attempts by ALMOEZ Holding Group, a Qatari-Egyptian Investment Company (dendilake.com)[14] that intruded into the area with "investment card", and the US, NASA that posted the Dendi Caldera[15] report have made the area popular these days. Only a few years ago, the lake area was an inaccessible area where nobody was interested to go, because of the ragged landscape.

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[14] http://www.dendilake.com. Recently an Egypt based Real Estate Company; called Al MOEZ Group has started road construction to establish resort complex. It is negotiating to take about 4000 (four thousand) hectares of land. The company has pasted on its web page, dendilake.com, some images copied from different Emirate resort sites.

[15] Dendi Caldera: http://www.archive.org/details/ISS016-E-019239, on this link NASA Image of the Day (December 29, 2007) has posted details about Dendi Caldera.

Back in time line, this place, Dendi had some historical importance as well. Dendi was a seat and a Command Post of the first War Minister (1907), and Foreign Minister (1912) of Ethiopia, Fitawurari Habtegiorgis (Quse) Dinagde, who was a very popular figure but less spoken about. At that time there was radio-telephone, an established office and army in the area. When the central government operated from here, four kings who were threatening the central government's power, the crown, directly or indirectly, were imprisoned in this place. King Michael of Wallo - captured at Segele , Ras Hailu of Gojam - prisoned guilty of mendacity (for releasing Lij Iyasu), corruption, tax evasion and treason, Ras Siyoum Mengesha of Tigray, and Ras Gebrehiwot Michael. After the Italian invasion the place lost its importance. The artery road built by the Italians was rerouted because the Italians were not comfortable with the terrain and the revolts in this area.

This district is still known, for its traditional informal administration, significantly dominating the formal structure. The *qallus*[16] and *abbaa gadaa*[17] are still very popular. They maintained their own catchments parallel to the government structure. With regard to religion, in most parts, the Ethiopian Orthodox church is dominant with 88.42% followers, 7.34% practice traditional beliefs, 3.06% are Protestants and the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady that started in the early 1950s in a place called Baroddo (sometimes written Berodo), near Ghinchi. The rest minor in number, are Muslims, people with different ethnic background who settled with Arabs who had refuge in Ghinchi town (known for their lofty bread by the time they were there). Though the Arabs have gone home, people who came with them have assimilated in the society and maintained their religion (CSA, 2007).

With regard to the socio-economic infrastructure, the district has some 40 kilometers of tarmac road built during the Italian invasion as part of the artery roads, and is the only "narrow black strip" the district has in 1078.75 square kilometers land area. Because the district town Ghinchi is a crossroad that connects several districts, there are some gravel roads diverging from the town in three different directions, to Ilfata, Gindeberet and Dawo. While these are direct connections, there are other districts that come along the tarmac road and pass through Ghinchi to report to the zone, Ambo. Since the tarmac road is the only way to the western part of the country, Ghinchi has the advantage of hearing the noises of tracks that carry marble, coffee (I am not certain if the gold from Wallaga is transported with truck), oil seeds, cereals, commodities, ammunition, soldiers, prisoners…etc, to/and from Finfinne. The virtue of its location makes Ghinchi a political and social rendezvous.

Sources of livelihood in the district are extensive, most of them are connected to land and agriculture: farming, cattle breeding, selling firewood including dung cakes, seasonal migratory or local labor, permanent migration, small trade, dependence on family, borrowing…but they are

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[16] *Qallu* – Traditional spiritual leaders and judges in Oromo society
[17] *Abba Geda* – Current *geda* leader (*geda* is - Oromo governance system)

not limited to these. But the question is: Does a household manage to produce enough means of livelihood? This will be addressed during the presentation of the findings.

In the district there are 56 schools out of which 23 are 1st cycle, 31 are 2nd cycle[18], and two are secondary, only Ghinchi has facilities for preparatory. There are three health centers, 30 health posts[19], three private clinics human health and four private veterinary clinics. In 2009 only 11% of the population gets water from protected source. *'Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted'* is the issue here. Even though, the source of this quotation is disputed, it gives sense in various circumstances, particularly in the condition of our country. There are several figures that do not really count when concerns are about quality, per-capita distribution and actual effects on the lives of people, transformation, concern for future generation and sustainability (Dendi District Report, 2009).

2.5. **Literature on the Grids of Decentralization**
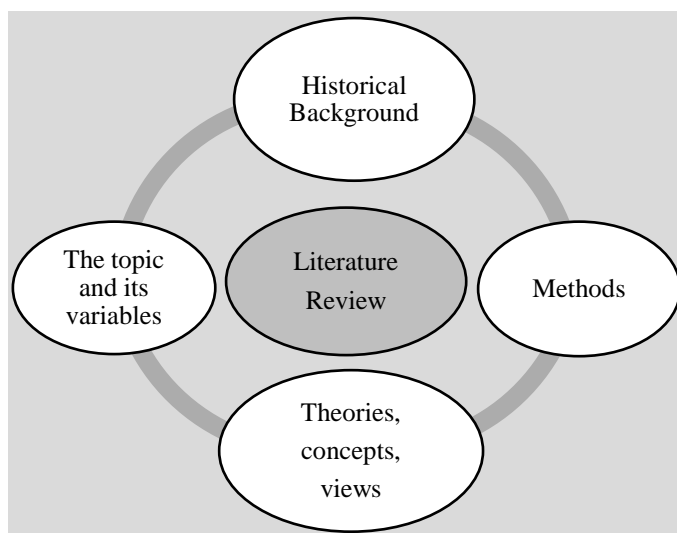
Figure 1: Literature Review (Own construct)

In this part of the document attempts have been made to sort out relevant literatures, on the subject area, historical background, related concepts and theories and methods applied (*see Figure 1*). The branching out of social sciences into various sub-components and the broadness of my topic make choosing the most relevant theory that best hosts the subject understudy a very difficult task. Most related theories reviewed have something to clarify on the problem side and to some extent a few on the solution part. But it was very difficult to include all. To this effect, the literature review is crafted in such a way that it moves down from the broad concept of development, taking a thematic path, towards the topic.

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[18] According to the current Ethiopian education systems -1st cycle is grades 1 - 4; 2nd cycle is grades 5 – 8, secondary is grades 9 &10; grades 11& 12 are called preparatory for those who succeed in Grade 10 National Examination. Those who did not succeed go to Technical and Vocational Training Schools.

[19] Health stations – are centers with medical professional, a doctor, health officer or professional clinical nurse – based on availability – planned for 25,000 people, controls five health posts. Health posts mainly do only the preventive work: primary health care, epidemic control, hygiene and sanitation…

Concepts of Development

As the target of the subject under study, decentralization, is to enhance economic, social and political development, development needs to be defined and reviewed. Since the concept of development/ underdevelopment is very argumentative, of course attempting to explain what development means and to conceptualize it needs careful analysis and synthesis. Various writers have tried to explain "development" only from the economic perspective, while a few added the social aspect. But the political facade is also equally important. In a broad sense of the term, there is no agreed single definition. Some try to contextualize it, as if having a universal measurement across all the countries is difficult for a development. It may be true when we see different qualities of life in countries with relatively similar economies or similar developmental categories. This argument even extends to the extent that if development is desirable (because of the natural phenomenon that follows development: cultural influences, reign of individualism, alienation…) or not, if it secures happiness and ensures entire societal satisfaction or not and, etc...

Even though several authors have criticized it, the modernization ideals listed by Myrdal (1968:57-69) still seem relevant for countries like Ethiopia. They encompass most of the explanations given by various authors; the "*structural*" approach by Kuznets (1966), the "*development as freedom*" approaches by Sen (1999), the "*technological change"* approach by Abramovitz, (1989), etc.

The following box shows Gunnar Myrdal's Modernization ideals:

Modernization ideals

1) *Rationality* (in policy, in the application of technological knowledge, in structuring social relations, in thinking about objectives and means).
2) *Planning for development*; searching for a coherent system of policy measures in order to change situations that are considered undesirable.
3) *Increases in production per capita and production per worker*, primarily through industrialization and increased capital intensity of production.
4) *Improvements in the standard of living*.
5) *Declines in social and economic inequality*. Development ought to be for the benefit of the people, the masses.
6) *More efficient institutions and attitudes* that are conducive to an increase in productivity and to development in general (for example, institutions that allow for mobility, initiative, entrepreneurship, effective competition and equal opportunities; attitudes like efficiency, diligence, orderliness, punctuality, economy, honesty, rationality, openness to change, solidarity and future-orientation).
7) *Consolidation of the national state and national integration. National independence*.
8) *Political democratization*. The concept of democratization can be interpreted in various

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> ways of which parliamentary democracy is but one. Democratization always implies some notion of involving the masses of the population in political decision-making.
> 9) *Increased social discipline*. Developmental goals cannot be attained if governments cannot impose obligations on their citizens.

In my view, what is not explicitly included in this list is the issue of environment, sustainability and concern for the future generation, which may also be explained under numbers 2 and 6. These ideals include explanations by function and outputs. Each of them can be discussed in relation to the recent explanations about development. I really wonder why scientists in the social science do not try to build on ideas of their predecessors. I think it is this nature of the social science discourse that complicate definitions and understanding of some concepts.

What I believe that should be added on Myrdal's explanation is the famous definition by Brundtland Commission, World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which reads, "*sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (UN, 1987). This includes consideration of social equity among nations and people and the development of the "do - no – harm" concept, not to jeopardize the wellbeing of others when one group grabs resources and opportunities for self interest within or outside a given country. Even though still not exhaustive, *Annex I.1*, a "Typology of Sustainable Development" shows the components to be incorporated and interlinked if the objective is to bring a sustainable development. Basic rights and politics have been added to the original list (in the typology) in the belief that "it matters".

Referring to the Ethiopia's condition various writers explain the state of the country under many epithets, *"Failed State", "Underdeveloped State", "Backward Nation", "Third World Country", "Poor Nation", "Highly Indebted State"*…These expressions have for decades been associated with the name Ethiopia. It is sad and depressing to always live with such appalling terms. As mentioned in the introduction, several attempts have been made to get out of this poverty system. The problem is that – most if not all governments that come to power attempt to start the task of developing the country from a zero coordinate anew. During the transitions of governments, none of the successors showed an interest to building on what had been achieved by their predecessors. All of them promise and swear to bring rapid and brand-new changes, but most of the outcomes come to naught. Regarding sustainability, if we gauge it against the indicators in the Sustainable Development Typology (*see annex I-1*), given the environmental degradation, population growth and other factors there is hardly any.

The other problem is the divergence of theories and practices between what we see in the policies and strategies and what we get on the ground, like the famous quotation from Chuck Reid goes, *"In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice; in practice, there is"*. Apparently, there have been some advancement in some sectors and areas, but I am not sure if the issue of equity is addressed, if the issue of future generations and sustainability is considered,

if the issue of environment and sustainability of all the achievements and systems are dealt with, if what has been achieved so far can leverage development, democracy and the peace we wish to have.

Recently there have been heated debates on the development approaches that Ethiopia should follow. Development from inside versus from outside, neoliberalism versus developmental states, hybrid or tailored democracy versus democracy…The current government's choice seems the '*developmental state'* approach. Others say it is only a means to deviate from the essentials of democracy and to suppress a free market system which comes under the model of neo-liberalism. The developmental states approach, for which states like; Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, South Africa, Botswana… are usually mentioned as examples are states that believe in the accumulation of active capital by the central government for takeoff, stabilization and sustenance. They also believe in the necessity of establishing a strong structure to lead the system. In line with this the government of Ethiopia has formulated an ideological tool known as "Revolutionary Democracy" to actualize the "developmental state" approaches.

As a matter of fact, when we see the current dictatorship of money, market and media, particularly in Europe, where the political leaders are nearly unable to control the economy and have lost their reputation, when democracy is on a reverse threshold, there is a need to find solution proactively. At present our country is not in a position to carry the neo-liberalism approach, it would be very difficult to directly copy and superimpose the neo-liberalism model on a country with a 90% backward agrarian economy. To this effect, finding an appropriate approach is not debatable.

It may be reckless to mention in writing, though I understand that the emergence of a democracy is a process, but I am not yet certain if there is a right perception of the term and a level playing field for democracy itself from what we have already tried in the past four decades. Revolution: the past sufferings of mind and body have not yet been eradicated and I think many people are intensely fearful and nobody in Ethiopia wants to sweat for that again. Thus, the preference is if the term revolutionary is replaced with more motivating, compatible and applicable terms.

There are many nations that have performed better without much noise and euphoria about revolution and democracy as much as we have done and still do. No one in the country is unfamiliar with these terms. But the world community still doubts the existence of democracy in our country, revolution yes. I understand it is the practice, what counts. Even though any country may start and develop the practices through time, we see democracy is a practice that best goes with a high level of societal development, not only economic growth (Huntington, 1993). To this effect we need to reexamine our understanding, its application and the reverse effect misunderstanding about democracy creates in undermining work ethic, productivity and ultimately in deterring development. This will be further discussed in the next sub-topic.

In a country like Ethiopia, a system also cannot survive by adopting the "*soft states*" explained by Myrdal (1968) cited in Lankester (2004:229) where the internal mal-grown private sector and the ever existing external threats that hang around for favorable conditions to interfere into our affairs are always there.

Thus, to customize an approach and the strategy for its implementation based on the objective condition in the country and the global relation is not unacceptable. Nobody would go against if we are successful in finding a shortcut to development. But it should be well thought out, inclusive and far from emotional decisions. Furthermore, the bad thing would be if the approach is designed and used to fulfill a narrow interest and focused only on macro political stabilization.

In an article he recently published: *States and Markets: Neoliberal Limitations and the Case for a Developmental Stat*e, Zenawi (2012:140-175), has explained about the nature of developmental states. There are several convincing factors in all his arguments. But the comments that flooded following the publication of this article need thorough attention. Some comments pointed out that, there must be courage to equally look inwards as well and rectify erroneous policies and mistakes that distract trust among people and get on to the right track.

As explained above, most development policies and strategies when crafted on paper, if we ignore whatever label they have, nearly all of them are not remote from addressing the interests of the majority; even the Dergue Regime had a program named 'National Democratic Revolution'. Again the key issue is the implementation and the way we adopt them (Fiseha, 2007).

Of course one has to acknowledge that nations which made enough wealth or endowed with fortune of wealth and even the developed nations are not problem free paradises, which makes the development work none ending. Every country has its own major or/and minor problems for which it needs peculiar reengineering and wise leadership. The following has been quoted from Sen (1999: xi):

> "And yet we also live in a world with remarkable deprivation, destitution and oppression. There are many new problems as well as old ones, including persistence of poverty and unfulfilled elementary needs, occurrence of famines and widespread hunger, violation of elementary political freedoms as well as of basic liberties, extensive neglect of the interests and agency of women, and worsening threats to our environment and to the sustainability of our economic and social lives. Many of these deprivations can be observed, in one form or another, in rich countries as well as poor ones".

The recent *Euro Zone Crisis* and the '*Arab Spring/ Arab Awakening'* phenomenon in the Middle East and North Africa are good examples. It is also a good lesson for those who think that the helm of transformation is in their palms and boldly say '*my way or no way*'. A once seemingly

impossible scenario is becoming increasingly possible and evident in different parts of the world. It is disturbing to see when countries once known as the heart of history, democracy and civilization, shrink psychologically and physically. I am sure the pain will be greater for those who fall from the top of the ladder compared to Ethiopia which is already on the ground.

Development-born problems observed in developed countries, most of which are different to our case, problems such as: frequent changes in market preference, aging, immigration and low birth rates are the most critical problems that can affect the macroeconomic stability and political structure. Other problems like obesity, drug abuse, alienation, suicide, divorce and dysfunctional families, excessive electronic gaming, pollution, shortage of space, nuclear threats, etc… are a few among many shocking problems and significant challenges in every developed country.

On the other hand, we also see what some totalitarians do against their own people and when groups in a mob unleash unbelievable devastation on their own country's wealth and people. We also see some inhuman and harmful cultural and religious practices elsewhere in the world: religious fanatics of all kinds, killing of albinos, child abuse and trafficking, black-markets, etc. The shocking "*modern day slavery and organ trafficking*" reported by CNN[20] Freedom Project can be cited as one example, that shows the harshness of human beings against their own fellow human beings. It was a harvest of "main body organs – corneas, kidney, liver…" to be sold elsewhere, practiced in Egypt by Bedouin tribes in Sinai Peninsula. It was done against refugees who have come to this land from Eritrea, the Sudan and Ethiopia. On the other hand this also shows how people are unable to live in their own country and chose to die moving; buying death with the last money they have. It is also a good example of bad governments' reluctance to tolerate any kind of evil in their country until it touches their power zone.

I am not stating all these challenges in development as an excuse to the problems in my country, nor as unintentional detour from my topic, but to show that a country needs wise leadership and '*a touch of genius*' at all levels to bring about peace, democracy and development; and that economic strength alone also does not ensure all-round development. All these need separately and exclusively designed solutions. Essentially, decentralization also entails local solutions and closer management of development and other societal issues.

Democracy – Its Relevance to the Decentralization Program

The euphoria about democracy and a democratic system has lived long unattained in Ethiopia. The excitement started in the 1970s with the third wave democratization. So many policies, so much mutilation; human life, time and energy wasted for such a long time but much less

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[20] Frederik Pleitgen, CNN, November 8, 2011

achievement than what had been expected. Essentially what is it? How is it connected to the topic under study? From what I read, no better match I was able to find, than what Huntington summarized about democracy: *when* it matures to take place, *where* it fits and *where* it does not fit, *what* driving forces push it to appear or/and disappear.

According to Huntington (1993: 6), Democracy, as a source of government has been defined in terms of *sources of authority* for government, *purposes* served by government, and *procedures* for constituting government. Saying this, Huntington elaborates definition of his choice which is based on the latter, *procedural definition*:

> "…this study defines a twentieth century political system as democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote. So defined, democracy involves the two dimensions – contestation and participation…It also implies the existence of those civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble, and organize that are necessary to political debate and the conduct of electoral campaign" (Huntington, 1993: 7).

Huntington further explains that systems which deny voting to a portion of its society, if no opposition is permitted in elections or that opposition and newspapers are censored or closed down, or that votes are manipulated or miscounted … are undemocratic. He also mentions that, in any society, the sustained failure of the major opposition political parties to win office necessarily raises questions concerning the degree of competition permitted by the system. The issue of separation of power is also a core factor for democratic practices: Separation of Powers between the institutions of the state: *Government* [Executive Power], *Parliament* [Legislative Power] and *Courts of Law* [Judicative Power].

To arrive at agreeable definition let us further see a definition offered by Robert Dahl (1989: 120) who states that:

> "polyarchy (*Dahl suggested the term "polyarchy," to distinguish political democracy from other kinds democracies*) consists of the following traits: elected officials, free and fair elections, and peaceful election and removal of officials, right to run for office [for] practically all adults, freedom of expression, alternative information, [including that] alternative sources of information exist and are protected by law and associational autonomy".

Diamond, Linz, and Lipset (1990:6-7) also offer a more extended but similar definition:

> "democracy is a system of government that meets three essential conditions: meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of governmental power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; a 'highly inclusive' level of political participation in the

selections of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties -- freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations-- sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation."

Giddens (1994:112) similarly refers to liberal democracy – which theoretically is considered as the highest form of democracy - as "*essentially a system of representation. It is a form of government characterized by regular elections, universal suffrage, freedom of conscience and the universal right to stand for office or to form political associations.*"

While the above definitions focus mainly on the political part and center on *fair elections* for top governmental positions, recent definitions go further and qualify what democracy and democratization means. They include basic human rights such as economic, social, individual and group rights and the governance systems, which go even further and include concerns of future generations- environment, global relations and the like.

No matter what the definitions are, only a few of these are applicable to Ethiopia's condition. Even though, one has to acknowledge that the prevalence of democracy is a process, it exhibited stunted growth in Ethiopia. That is why scholars in our country, every so often, tend to accept theories that point out, "*inappropriateness of democracy in poor countries*", and also scholarly literature that state, "*much public policy is shaped more by a country's level of economic development than by the nature of its regime*", compared to the cost paid to attain democracy. However, it does not need much study to understand that economy alone also cannot bring democracy. Huntington (1993:29) explains:

> "Corruptions, inefficiency, incompetence, domination by a few special interests are found in all societies no matter what their form of government. One widely read book on comparative politics even begins with the claim that, the most important political distinction among countries concerns *not their form of government but their degree of government*" [emphasis added].

From the above arguments we learn that decentralization is a strategy that can be applied without talking about democracy or with democracy either in unitary or in federal states. However, in Ethiopia's condition, where the country is a federal state that exists under the ideals of autonomy and unity, decentralization is not a matter of choice, but of necessity, if the country has to move. Actually, decentralization, as a strategy that allows distribution of authority to local and sectoral bodies of government by itself, by its nature implies democratization. Since decentralization empowers local governments and entails fair participation and share of resources in such a way that it narrows inequality and brings unity, practically it is at the center of the democratic ethos.

Experts of democracy list certain stages for democratic development (Shin, 2008:100) where forward and reverse is always possible: 1) fall of authoritarian rule, 2) transition, 3) consolidation

and deepening, and 4) expansion. I am not quite sure where my country stands or best fits, probably between the first and the second stage on asymmetrically divided position. However, I feel that there is a roadmap and elements of democracy to some extent; to a greater degree sentimentally and to a lesser extent practically. Public participation in the implementation of the DLDP and in the election, the devolution of power to local government bodies and the degree of democratization will be scanned in detail in the next chapters.

Federalism – Is It a requirement for Decentralization?

Federalism is a way of linking together the decentralized system. Both '*holding together'* and '*coming together'* are inherent features of federalism. If holding together implies the unity part it is not a problem. The problem is, to a lesser extent, how "holding together" has been occurred and more of how this unity is preserved. Federalism is a system of self-government whereby, states or regions, nations and nationalities join together into a larger political entity. Essentially, federalism involves a downward devolution of power to local regional or national states and upward delegation of power to the central government for common good, which conceptually implicates combining '*self-rule'* and '*shared-rule'* (Elazar,1987:33).

As a matter of fact federation is something that has to be bargained by two or more entities at an initial stage seeking unity in certain areas of authority; or it is a phenomenon that occurs afterwards, seeking more autonomy. Decentralization on the other hand is a policy/ a strategy that could happen in a federal form of state or in a unitary state to ease functions of governance and to respond to identity and resource distribution factors.

Conceptually, autonomy always implies the continuous struggle to widen its scope (center fleeing) while the essence of unity (center seeking) always implies securing the centripetal force. Hence, one must also understand the inevitable struggle between the two. What mattered and what matters in the future however, is the inherent bondage between these multi culture people and the art to balancing and keeping them together. This art mainly depends on the wisdom and capability of those at the center. In the case of Ethiopia the inherent bondage has persistently existed under several dividing factors for years. Whereas the art and the wisdom to lead the country towards harmony, development and healthy relation among its various ethnic groups was a gap that has never been satisfactorily addressed; being constantly influenced by various internal and external factors and creating nuisance over the unity part.

There are feelings that federalism by itself means democratization. Of course federalism is associated with more devolution of decision making power and autonomy to local governments. But it does not necessarily mean autonomy of local governments is always guaranteed in federal systems, as this depends on other factors such as political party systems and other state power control mechanisms. But democracy can also take place in unitary governments. For example,

while only four states (Comoros, Nigeria, *Eritrea*, and Ethiopia[21]) have federal constitutions out of 55 African states, the rest are unitary. Hence, one can see that those who are relatively praised for their democratic practices, better implementation of the decentralization program, wealth making and improving the lives of their people are unitary states. Therefore, what matters is, like explained above "*the essence of the state not the form of the state*"; whether the system is under single party dominance; whether the governance is *de facto* in a traditional way, whether the rule of law and democratic values are only for propaganda consumption… these are questions that determine the true name of a state (USAID, 2009).

Actually, the concept and practices of federalism are long discussed issues. With regard to Germany's experience, Lehmbruch (2000:2) wrote the following:

> "In a narrow constitutional sense the institutional history of modern German federalism dates back to the establishment by Bismarck in 1867 of the *Norddeutscher Bund* (North German Confederation) which in 1871 became enlarged by the accession of the South German states and since then called the *Deutsche Reich*".

Ethiopia has also shared much of this long experience from Germany significantly. Still there are German advisors closely working with the House of Federation. A "Framework for Analysis" to compare the role and character of states in contemporary federalism and which can be used as a mirror that reflects the extent of decentralization in the study area is attached as annex to this document (*Annex I.2*). This will also be dealt with in the empirical chapters in detail.

The introduction of the federal system has definitely brought new conditions in the essence of Ethiopia's political structure. The growing trend of self rule which entails decentralization has reached an irreversible stage. The struggle to halt the natural move of the development of the federal system and the decentralization process - after the elements of autonomy are already anchored in the minds and practices of people - is a futile attempt that contributes to furthering the "center fleeing" feeling.

2.6. Decentralization: Concepts and Experiences

Decentralization, following two forms: functional and territorial, is the transfer of power, authority, responsibility, resources and functions from the central government to regional and sub - regional structures, sectors or to the private sector (Solomon, 2008). This is believed to increase motivation and innovation to enable localities to develop their area, to exhaustively utilize endogenous knowledge and available resource, to deliver better services and to bring rapid transformation.

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[21] Some authors include South Africa in the list; even though it is called 'the Republic of South Africa', it is a constitutional democracy with a federally-structured, three-tier system of government (Wikipedia). And I couldn't refer in any other document that Eritrea is a federal state.

Cheema and Rondinelli (1983: 24–5) define decentralization as; "*a process of state reform composed by a set of public policies that transfer responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government in the context of a specific type of state*". This definition does not include reforms such as privatization and deregulation which includes the private sector. It considers decentralization as a process of state reform. We will see the essence of this definition in detail when we discuss theories of decentralization. However, the core idea of decentralization is about transfer of responsibilities, resource and authority to a lower government structures. It is a distribution of load in order to ease burdens on the center. Once the transfer is made the activities and capability of the lower chambers will be very decisive for its realization. The decentralization program needs active engagement of the community at large in a sense of enhancing self-reliance to achieve its goals. It has to realize the appointment of local elites, bring officials to power through fair and free election and support the private sectors to release their potential. However, if the embedded goal is decentralizing challenges and problems to where they come, and if this overweighs the explicit goal which is development and good governance, it gets nowhere.

While the above shows what decentralization is and what is expected from it, there are also some critics to this strategy. Some writers (Crook and Manor 1998:302) say that decentralization raises a narrow national feeling which ultimately leads to secession and fragmentation of a state. They mention that narrow minded nationalists may manipulate the system and impose their narrow thinking on the people and exploit/ misappropriate the scarce resource. Though there are some elements of truth in it, this thinking comes mainly from considering oneself a sole guard to unity, good governance and anti-corruption. There are also thoughts that it brings uneven distribution of resources among nations, creates limitation to interstates free mobility and then leads to uneven growth. What this means by itself (uneven or even growth) needs a thorough understanding.

Another opposing argument is that autonomous governments may abuse their power exceeding the distribution of authority and responsibility, in such a way that it negatively affects macro-stability and threatens the unity of the nation. In fact there were circumstances when a government adopted policies mainly for planned reasons, surprisingly deviated from their targets and took unwanted direction. Such things can happen, not least, because the 'empowerment' of lower levels and unpredicted and undesired byproducts of the process, brings new groups and interests (in a short or long term) with their own priorities into the political arena. On the other hand there is also a criticism that it only increases euphoria that decentralization brings a miracle. Crook and Manor (1998:302) explain that decentralization is "*a policy forced to carry an unrealistic burden of expectations regarding its ability to transform whole societies dominated by authoritarian or patronage politics*".

Nevertheless, we learn from literature this concept and practice of decentralization has a long lived one. The following has been quoted from Waldo (1948:130):

"Centralization versus decentralization"…The problems relate to the nation-state; to large-scale representative government and the ideological force of "democracy"; and to the rise of science and technology, which has transformed the space-time aspects of our life, and has engendered in acute form the problem of "functionalism" or expertise. The literature of federalism versus the unitary state, of local self-government versus centralized administration, of monism versus pluralism in the law, of cultural autonomy versus uniform national culture, of party dictatorship versus corporatism - these are the modern problems in political theory to which the centripetal and centrifugal forces in public administration are analogous, and in relation to which they are seen in their proper perspective".

This was an issue more than half a century ago; it is still a hot agenda in our part of the world.

Dimensions of Decentralization

Contemporary, writers explain decentralization in its four dimensions; political, administrative, fiscal and economic. Even though, these are the concepts repeatedly talked about, for the sake of clarity I need to briefly explain what they mean and what their purposes are.

Political decentralization aims to give citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making. It can be realized only in a truly pluralistic politics and representative government. Elections, for lower tiers of government are at the heart of this dimension. Assignment of officials top-down, directly or by influencing their stooges, stops with the realization of this dimension. To this effect, elected officials will have dual accountability, to the center and to their constituencies.

Fiscal decentralization, which is known as a core component of decentralization is the transfer of or control over resources from federal to regional states or sectors (Jamo, 2005). Generally it comprises of public revenue (taxes, grants, borrowings…), expenditure (recurrent and capital), intergovernmental transfers (matching grants for merit goods, grant to ensure minimum service level and grant to correct externalities or benefit spillovers), and domestic borrowings (for stabilization, for long term capital projects…) (Chanie, 2007).

Administrative decentralization is the redistribution of authority and responsibility of administering the human resource, material and financial resources for providing public services at different government levels. While the central task of this dimension is service delivery, the role of administering the whole sectors falls under this dimension. If officials are elected and authority and power to administer are not transferred in whatever form, then the political decentralization will be meaningless.

Last but not least, *economic/ market decentralization* deals with the most complete forms of decentralization- privatization and deregulation from a government's control. This form of decentralization shifts responsibility of functions from the public to the private sector, which

usually is accompanied by economic liberalization and market development latter at a higher stage (USAID, 2009).

The sequence of implementation, balances and demarcations among these forms of decentralization vary from country to country and from sector to sector based on the core interest of the central government, commitment to democratization, nature the ruling party and the existing objective conditions. These sequences, balances and demarcations among these dimensions reflect the extent of autonomy released by the central government on one hand and the maturity of the decentralization practice and the implementation capacity of local bodies on the other hand. The balances outweigh each other and their sequence and pace is determined based on what also derived the decentralization initiative: politics, economy or service delivery? It also goes with overall development stage of a given country (Oxfam GB, 2005). The transfer of power essentially takes four forms: delegation, deconcentration, devolution and privatization/ deregulation, the latter being relevant to the economic dimension. So these are bridle and bits to regulate the release and control of power.

Decentralization and Planning

The "Big government" and the "Developmental State" notions which focus on creating the giant center to control the sub-nationals seem to hold contradictory strategies: decentralizing the planning process but centralizing the resources.

On the other hand we also see decentralization serving the interests of two opposing polarities: the liberals and the social democrats. For the social democrats decentralization—embraces a number of reforms that transfer responsibility to local governments, recognizing forms of "bottom-up" planning and allows local governments to make use of local knowledge. It enables constituents to elect officials who represent their interests and can be held accountable for their actions. It empowers these officials to deliver better public services because they can better gauge and respond to demand.

The liberals also think that decentralization supposedly discourages waste and corruption on the part of the public sector and also signals a departure from state-centric models of guided economic growth and social reformism— opening space for alternative configurations of actors, such as civil society groups, NGOs, and the private Sector.

Hence, the degrees of influence the above polarities exert determine the degree of decentralizing the planning process and transfer of responsibility.

Friedmann (1993:482) defines planning as "*a professional practice that specifically seeks to connect forms of knowledge with forms of action in the public domain*". As for the space (ibid: 483) he says the following:

"We need to privilege regional and local over national and transnational space. This leads to a de-centered view of planning. I am not saying that national and transnational planning *strategies* are obsolete; far from it. Planning is instituted at all levels of public decision making, but in thinking about a new model, where should the emphasis lie? There are several reasons for my choice of the regional and local scale. First, we must be more attentive than ever to regional and local variety and difference. The problems and conditions of planning are not everywhere the same, and it is the specificities of place that should be our guide. In other words, there is truth in the old adage that the solution should be as complex as the problem it proposes to solve. There are no simple solutions for problems in the public domain".

The above discussion entails that effective developmental planning practices need to be decentralized. Hence, decentralization is also a means to realize the "bottom-up" realistic planning process.

Theories Relevant to Decentralization

Many theories about decentralization, the ones that had been looked at from different sources gravitate towards authors' specific area of study, political and/or the socio-economic environment they lived in, and their professional background. Development is a multifaceted concept. The explanation of decentralization as a system, as a process or as a development strategy, also touches on several theories. As a matter of fact it would be very difficult to find a single and complete theory that exhaustively embraces all the elements of the subject under study. To this effect, we need to select theories that contextually best fit into this topic and its variables. I will briefly touch on theories that I feel are very relevant to this work and are involved.

To explain the main focuses of a study and as a launching pad for arguments theories play great role. As the concept of development in general and that of decentralization in particular is vast and defuse, deeper I delve into different kinds of theories I am tempted to adopt ideas from each of them, because most of them have something to say about this work.

I have tried to concentrate on most relevant theories. They are: 1) theory of democratic decentralization, 2) the equilibrium view of institutions, 3) congruence theory, 4) sequential theory of decentralization, 5) theory of neo-patrimonialism, and 6) theories of participation

The theory of democratic decentralization has been used to explain the decentralization program in its totality. The decentralization program in Ethiopia as a whole and the DLDP as read in the policy and strategy framework documents are all about "democracy" and "democratization". Therefore, it will be relevant to see what this theory is and to what extent it has been observed in the DLDP processes and actual outcomes.

Democratic decentralization is the development of reciprocal relationships between central and local governments and between local governments and citizens. It addresses the power to develop and implement policy, the extension of "democratic" processes to lower levels of government, and measures to ensure that "democracy is sustainable". Democratic decentralization incorporates both decentralization and democratic local governance concepts and processes (USAID, 2009). Supposedly, the decentralization program in Ethiopia, theoretically, also seems to generate from this theory.

What are the indicators of democratic decentralization? Usually the explanation of democratic decentralization embraces four interlinked dimensions in various literatures: authority, autonomy, accountability and capacity. *Authority* implies the extent of power "transferred" to states in giving major decisions on revenues, administrative, economic and political issues. I use the word transfer, because the transfer may take place in the form of delegation, deconcentration, devolution or privatization based on the stage of the process and particular dimension. *Autonomy* is the states' rights and discretion to independently decide on major political, social and economic issues under their jurisdiction. This includes protecting their constitutional rights and restraining the federal state from interfering beyond its mandate. *Accountability* denotes the dual responsibility of elected officials to their constituencies and their higher bodies of government. With regard to hired employees they always have accountability to the body of government that hired them and to their conscience; where the latter should be compulsory to all citizens. The final dimension, *capacity* is to me the most decisive one. If the selection of officials and employees that hold key positions depend only on loyalty, patronage and clientele criteria, if the entire power and authority are stated in declarations and disabled practically…all the other three cannot go beyond a blue print on paper. A committed human power that carries and moves the system further should be created through training and appropriate assignment. What is on the ground within this frame will be discussed and viewed in the next chapters (USAID, 2009).

As institutional strength is one of the focuses of this research, theories of institutions had been reviewed. Even though, most of them have elements to describe the institutions I deal with, I found the ***equilibrium view*** of institutions most relevant. The issues of institutions are more discussed by and of interest to economists, particularly the institutional economists. However, because of their pervasive and multifaceted nature, yet we need to understand what they are and explain how they function. Hence, as I mentioned above, I chose to see issues related to institutions in this study primarily in light of the equilibrium view, a view that recently emerged as a solution to conflict of ideas among the former theories of institutions (Greif, 2006).

To cite some points as a justification to this choice: firstly, the equilibrium approach sees institutions in their totality, how they emerged (induced or evolutionary) and how they can be sustained. It also addresses the equilibrium between the formal and informal elements of institutions. The collective choice theory of institution sees institutions as the outcome of state actions and the political process. The evolutionary theories of institutions on the other hand are

very much obsessed with evolution, and they totally neglect the revolutionary emergence or disappearance of institutions, the phenomenon of paradigm shift. For example, North (1990:88), one of the proponents of evolutionary theory says:

> "Institutional change is generally incremental rather than sudden, an accumulation of many small changes rather than occasional large changes. The process of institutional change is also path-dependent because individuals learn, organizations develop, and ideologies form in the context of a particular set of formal and informal rules".

But, ***the equilibrium view***, without ruling out other theories, takes ideas that best fit into contemporary thinking about institutions. It also sees institutions with their interdependent character with other far and near institutions. Aoki (2001:231) wrote the following to explain that institutions are more of the behavior itself, than the rules that influence behavior: "*In the Equilibrium View, institutional change becomes fundamentally not about changing rules, but about changing expectations. A new rule which fails to shift people's expectations in the desired way may have no effect at all*".

As various theories about institutions arise to study different circumstances, their assumptions and conclusions reflect these differences. It would be very difficult to bring and fit theory developed under certain situation to an issue that existed in another situation, in time scale, history and stage of development. But still there are always elements relevant to similar subjects (Kingston and Caballero, 2009:17).

The third theory I wanted to consider as a basis for scientific explanation and analysis is the ***congruence theory*** of Eckstein (1997). This is a theory much talked about long ago in the developed world, but still it helps to understand the theoretical base of capacities and standards in development, political and social activities at all levels of government and within the public at large. This theory was explained by Eckstein (1997:1) himself, in an article published by Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD), University of California, Irvine, under a title:"*Congruence Theory Explained*". This theory consists of two interrelated hypothesizes as explained below:

The first pertains to the viability and performance of political systems regardless of type. It says that:

> "*Governments perform well to the extent that their authority patterns are congruent with the authority patterns of other units of society*. More specifically, high performance (above a threshold) requires high congruence, and, for all cases, performance increases monotonically as a function of congruence".

The second hypothesis pertains to the viability and performance of democratic governments. This says that: "*Democratic governments perform well only if their authority patterns exhibit 'balanced disparities'--that is, combinations of democratic and non-democratic traits*". This

hypothesis is not separate from the first, but is an extension of it. Congruence remains the fundamental condition of high performance by democratic governments, but the second hypothesis adds that the congruence condition will not be satisfied by democratic governments unless they exhibit such disparities.

This condition tempts us to critically notice the age old common notions that say; *"People get leaders they deserve, people deserve the leaders they chose…"* and; by the same token *"leaders are the product and reflection of people who chose them..."* I think this can explain the first theory which is about congruence between government and social units. It means their growth; stagnation and death all go correspondingly.

Structure

⇩⇩

Input DLDP Tasks ⇨ Institutions ⇧ Culture Output

⇧⇧

People

Figure 2: Institutions - Congruence Model

(Adapted from Wyman, 2003:12)
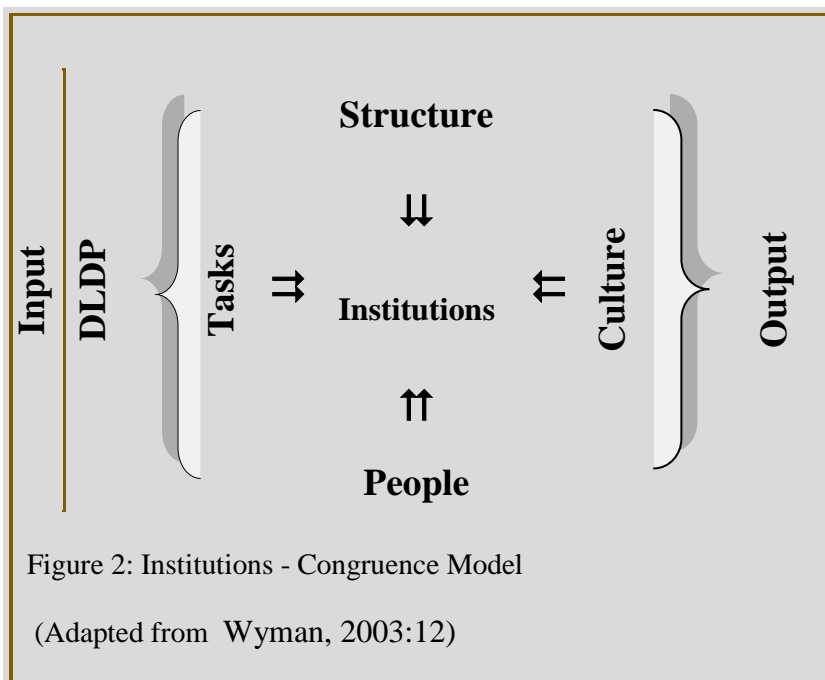
In the same way, elements of institutions we built to carry this program, the DLDP, inherently must exhibit congruence to attain their goals. *Figure (2)* shows a congruence model adapted from Wyman (2003:12).

The program, the task, as we see in all the documents is extremely decked with democracy, self reliance and various disciplines. On the other hand, if the institutional setting is not enabling and its degree of congruency is very low we cannot move towards our goal. Again if the implementers are unskilled, inexperienced, uncommitted to carry out this task, if the structure is awfully bureaucratic and does not allow progress and deter even those who want to move, and if the individual and the corporate culture are appalling, and if all these are not congruent, it is like a kaput circuit in the electricity supply. On the other hand if there is no thrust to challenge these weaknesses from the public side, here comes stagnation.

The diagram in *Figure (2)* illustrates the interconnection of all the major elements of an institution as parts to form the whole system and to achieve a targeted goal. Each of them has influence on one another and only a harmonious and tight bond can bring about the desired result. If a disconnection or halting the flow is deliberately or unknowingly brought about, or because of capacity limitation made at one or more key connecting points or loose bond is created they affect the whole system like a sickness in one part of human body affects the whole

body system. This is the essence of congruence and this theory best explains the institutional process and degree of performance while the equilibrium view explains the emergence and what institutions are.

The second hypothesis of the congruence theory, the balanced disparity between democratic and nondemocratic characters, which explains centralization ↔ decentralization, autonomy ↔ interference, rule of law ↔ a breach of law…these and other similar never-ending lists seem to be very relevant in this case study. From the skeptical explanations about "democracy" and "democratization" above, it will not be surprising if the results of a contest between these practices are a landslide for nondemocratic traits.

The fourth theory that deals with the transfer of authority/power and resource is the *sequential theory of decentralization*. The author of this theory was Falleti (2005). This theory first appeared in her PhD dissertation "Governing Governors: Coalitions and Sequences of Decentralization in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico (2003). In this profound work, Falleti adopted Cheema's and Rondinelli's (1983) definition as follows and justified it:

> "Decentralization is a process of state reform composed by a set of public policies that transfer responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government in the context of a specific type of state" (Falleti, 2005:328).

From this definition she drove four major points: the definition of decentralization as a process, the implication of the definition that local governments are recipients of the transferred power and resource, and that this transfer necessarily needs sequence and finally the importance of taxonomy, since the definition emphasizes on context and specificity. She further justifies why she chose this theory, saying:

> "I propose a sequential theory of decentralization that has three main characteristics: (1) it defines decentralization as a process, (2) it takes into account the territorial interests of bargaining actors, and (3) it incorporates policy feedback effects. I argue that the sequencing of different types of decentralization (fiscal, administrative, and political) is a key determinant of the evolution of intergovernmental balance of power" (Ibid: 330)

Falleti explains that the degree of change in the intergovernmental balance of power will be very high if the sequence of transfer follows either Political ⇨ fiscal ⇨ administrative or fiscal ⇨political ⇨ administrative. This sequence, particularly the latter one is not favored by central governments. They want to first decentralize the administrative challenges and the resource at the end. In the case of Ethiopia the process is not clear. Because there are always strong party rule behind all states, including the districts, which clouds the issue, it is very difficult to put it in black and white. Presumably it followed political ⇨ administrative ⇨ fiscal sequence. The political decentralization which came first was almost unavoidable *sine qua none*, because it was a revolutionary transformation mainly derived by a national question (identity interest), states

seeking autonomy. The delayed action of the fiscal decentralization may explain the nature of the central government.

As explained above with the first wave of decentralization from 1991-2000 (some authors consider 1995 as initial period/ the first wave of decentralization), following the formation of states and devolution of political and administrative power to a state level, and later on with the second wave of decentralization 2001/2002, as a means to realize the third pillar of the SDPRP (decentralization and empowerment) certain powers to decide on resources have been transferred to district levels. But still it was not without restrictions particularly in the area of revenue generation and control over resources. Districts decide only on earmarked amounts of money. But this alone cannot suffice the essence of decentralization. Freedom to generate local resources, indiscriminate control over local resources and right to claim transfers on the riches of the locality should be issues of concern. This will be discussed later with the empirical presentation of the research.

The fifth theory is known as theory of ***neo-patrimonialism***. This theory is often explained under three main features: 'systematic concentration of political power', 'organization of patrimonies and appointment/award of personal favors' and 'use of state resources for political legitimization'. Chanie, (2007:387) hypothesized that a decentralization program under such political, economic and social environment is aimed at: upward accountability rather than downward accountability; proclamations, *policies and strategies* but not implementation; sustenance of horizontal and vertical imbalance; maintenance of traditional clientelism and putting states and *districts* in a condition of floater to freeze their performance.

In this extensive work about the decentralization process in Ethiopia, Chanie (2007) tried to single out, the motives behind the emergence of the decentralization program, why it failed and its main characters which he explained under the theory of neopatrimonialism. For the emergence of the program post 1991, he states factors like: need to end the centralized state structure, need for administration efficiency in the context of variation among regional states, accommodating donors' interest and the ruling party's political calculus. For the failure of the program, he lists several reasons; among which are: concentration of political power, single party hegemony, exclusionary politics and personal dictatorship, weak legislative bodies and incompatibility with the ruling party's central planning and ideology. Each of these is a very broad issue that needs a separate volume of work. They will be looked into briefly when we discuss efficiencies at the implementation stage of the program.

Lastly, theories and concepts relevant to this study are **theories and concepts about participation**. As participation is a concept that applies to different practices positive and/or negative, there are several theories attached to it. Issues related to theory of political participation, governance/administration and theory of participation in local development will be discussed in this study. However, as participation is one of the core variables, it is important to

discuss some participation related concepts, though some concepts and models are taken forward to explain the components of participation in the empirical part.

Insights on Participation

People's participation may be conceptualized in many ways, but it is generally thought to refer to people's *involvement* in elections, governance and public decision-making processes in local development agendas, from planning to implementation and monitoring of all interventions that affect their lives. This involvement can take many forms, directly or through organizations that represent them.

The term *involvement* is also subject to interpretation. For the purposes of this study, it is defined as meaningful influence/ effective control, authority/ power in planning and the development processes. I preferred to use people to community or citizen, because the explanation of participation includes all who are affected by interventions in a given geographic area directly or indirectly. This concept of *people's participation* is premised on the essential democratic principle that asserts "*individuals have the right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives, in elections, governance and all through planning, implementation and monitoring stages of local development*". Moreover, its legitimacy is rooted in the belief that public policy is more effective when the people most impacted by it are involved in its development and implementation (Pretty, 1994).
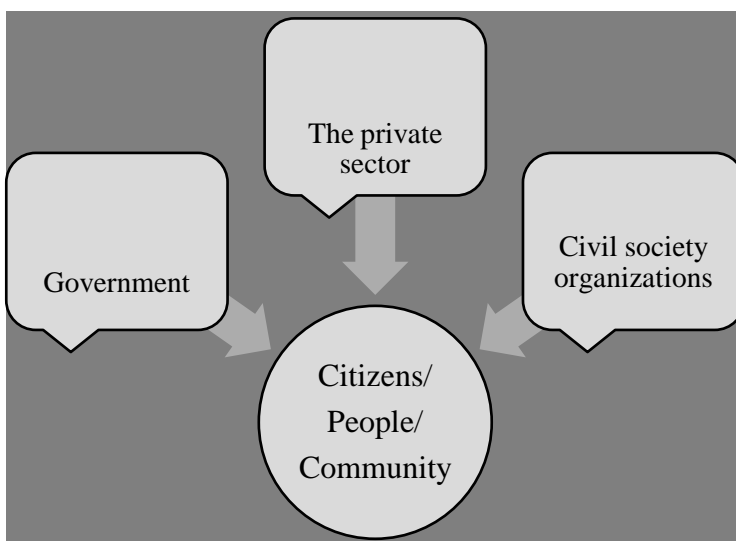
Figure 3: Stakeholders in DLDP
(Own Construct)

The DLDP calls for the concerted effort of all tiers of government, from federal to *gandas*. But in practice what it looks like will be discussed in the empirical part of this study. As government has the means and the will in its hands through its '*developmental state*' approach and '*the revolutionary democracy*' ideology, we discuss issues related to the other three boxes *(figure 3)*. Whereas partly some areas and some of the existing objective conditions in the development stage of Ethiopia reflect a 21st century character, in the most geographic parts of the country and at certain levels of the people's ways of living and thinking, the objective conditions count back along all the historical modes of production. It is so to say that we find in

some parts of our country where people are in a communal way of life, where they live naked, sharing everything nature provides them. On the other hand some portions of the society enjoy the highest standard of intellectual and economic life which is not less than people in the developed world. It is within this frame that we talk about people's involvement in the superimposed political, administrative and development structures.

That is why arguments always used to crop up among elites who obsessively believe that participation of the whole society matters; and elites also that say the political system operates best when the masses are only moderately involved and leave decision making to those who are better informed. Administrative theorists have also long shown concern about the way in which uneducated citizens' involvement can politicize public administration and make it both unfair and ineffective; and highly dominated with emotions rather than planned activities. They even further argue that it leads to violence and civil unrest. The worst type, they say is, when representatives take politics as a means of livelihood. Based on this, at a certain development stage some developed countries have been pushed to calm down their obsession with mass participation in local governments and tempted to turn it over to businesspersons and professionals who could supposedly govern in a rational and politically unbiased manner (Roberts, et al., 2003:264).

In the contemporary schools of thought as well, there is a constant debate on the objectives, methods and sequence of enabling people to participate in the development process. No better than the 19th century concepts, recent development strategies also treated people as "objects" or "target groups" to whom development was to be delivered by outsiders. Those concepts perceived the rural poor as passive recipients who wait for outsider professionals to come to their assistance, not as stakeholders (Schleifer and Robert, 1998).

However, through various studies and based on practical problems, people's participation is still a top concern to many nations at present. Its current meaning has also developed to, "*process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them*" (World Bank, 2007). Its main objectives included: negotiating power with the broad masses, influencing their attitudes, mobilizing resources, building trust and credibility for interventions, avoiding conflicts among stakeholders and determining and protecting people's preferences. Under the theory of democratic decentralization, people's participation has a very significant importance. Theoretically, democratic decentralization opens spaces for a wider and deeper participation of people at local level. As discussed above, to make the participation of people efficient and effective there are certain conditions that require attention: the relation of power, the level of community based organizations and institutional arrangements to realize their participation, participatory knowledge and skills of communities, political will of the rulers and consciousness of the people, community motivation and capacity to participate, sufficiency of resources at local levels to enable the communities to actively participate in the program (McGee, 2000).

Some writers still argue that, in the realization of communities' participation, the over estimation of the roles of communities: mislead in the allocation of tasks, it does not go in line with economies /diseconomies of scale of the practice for both the task givers and the performers and creates imposition beyond the interests and preferences of the communities.

As mentioned above, this issue of participation is a long discussed issue among intellectuals. It seems unwise to get obsessed with it and take it merely at face value. The age old debates among the lefts, the rights and the centrists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries about *people's participation* in politico-socio-economic activities still seem to be concepts for consideration in Ethiopia's current objective condition. There was a concept of the rights that says, it was the '*heroes*' and '*critically thinking personalities*' that played the decisive role in the historical development of nations while '*the crowd*' was only an inert mass of people unable to rise to conscious and organized activity. This group further explains that history was made by more or less prominent and more or less noble and enlightened individuals, who, at their own discretion, imbued the unenlightened but obedient masses with certain sentiments and ideas. With regard to the rural poor they still pose a very frustrating analysis; saying that, in agriculture the impulse of nature is overwhelming, human industry and subjective activities are less to be found in this work. That is why [peasants] are slower and had greater difficulties in arriving at the basic feeling of the subjective ego, to consciousness of what is universal... and they are unable to take part in the rising freedom and the strive for civilization. They further qualify, saying that "*the peasantries are conservative masses which supported the old regime and were not ready to participate in the political struggle being waged to bring change*" (Plekhanov 1857–1918).

On the other hand, the left explains that, the development of a human society is determined by the objective economic laws; which are, a combination of productive forces (human labor power and the means of production), social and technical relations (the property, power and control of relations governing society's productive assets) and geographical and natural environment, whether people know that or not, whether they like it or not (Karl Heinrich Marx 1818 – 1883).

Barring all kinds of critics, until the 1960s, popular participation, particularly in the democratization process, mainly explained in connection to elections, was still a popular political terminology. But recently, again critical approaches to this concept and practices have notably decreased the focus on its overstated role. With regard to this, among the recent ones, Pateman (1970:2) wrote:

> "Thus, although democracy as the rule of the people by means of the maximum participation of all the people might still be an ideal, grave doubts, doubts put forward in the name of social science, appeared to have been cast up on the possibility of realizing this ideal…the collapse of Weimar Republic, with its high rate of mass participation, into fascism, and the post war establishment of totalitarian regimes based on mass participation, albeit participation backed by intimidation and coercion, underlay the

tendency for "participation" to become linked to the concept of totalitarianism rather than that of democracy".

Election Turnout		
Ethiopia		USA
Year	Percentage	Year
2010	93.44 37.80	2010
2005	82.60 56.90	2008
2000	90.00 37.20	2006
1995	94.05 55.40	2004

Table 2: Election Turnout
(Tabulated from different sources)

May be what Stephen Bantu (Steve) Biko said (a noted nonviolent anti-apartheid activist in South Africa who was arrested under the Terrorism Act No 83 of 1967 and died being brutally clubbed by his captors in 1977) is relevant here; he said, *"The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed"* (Republic of South Africa, 2007:57).

Table (2) also speaks of some facts about this concept: Do we say *hurrah* to the Ethiopians' high rate of participation in the elections? Does it show more prevalence of democracy in Ethiopia than in the USA? Does it show the entire satisfaction of the people with the government or are there things we have to critically see? Many other similar factors can also be cited to explain this.

However, to make it realistic, how we respond to questions like: in which activities, which groups of the society and individuals, in what form, when, to what extent… should they take part…will certainly balance our perception of this topic of participation. Therefore, the system must honestly identify critical stakeholders who can actively participate and impact the transformation and development efforts. On the participants' side also, as citizens we cannot blame only on the regimes because it is we who voted or played a passive role when they come into power.

The civil society refers to all not-for-profit groups outside government such as community groups, non-governmental organizations, labor unions, indigenous people's organizations, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations and foundations... Civil society expresses the interests of social groups and raises awareness of key issues in order to influence policy and decision-making. In recent decades, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been successful in shaping global policy through advocacy campaigns and mobilization of people and resources (Paulos, 2004).

According to Diamond (1994:5), civil society is conceptualized as:

> "The realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self generating, self supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules. It is distinct from society in general in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state and hold state officials accountable".

Such a conceptualization reveals several tenets. First, that civil society concerns are public, not private. Second, civil society relates to the state, without being a part of it, through pressure to redress policy and expose government corruption. Third, civil society is marked by pluralism and diversity reflected by independent mass media and cultural institutions. Fourth, civil society is market-oriented and rejects central economic planning. Fifth, civil society holds that different groups represent different constituencies, and that no one can claim to represent the whole of society. Sixth, civil society plays several democratic roles, such as curbing authoritative state power, developing pro-democratic attitudes, creating alternatives to political parties, and strengthening independent media. And finally, civil society fosters the dissemination and exchange of information leading to social change and economic reform as well as the development of socio-economic interests that mitigate traditional political polarities (Diamond, 1994:5-7).

Partnering or engaging other stakeholders is negotiating absolute power holding. It requires commitment, tolerance and accommodation of diversified thinking and actions. This puts the issue in a dilemma. Though we doubt their loyalty, without partnering and creating necessary space for different approaches and interests it would be difficult to attain a development goal. As can be observed from the above summarization, partnership happens for several reasons, to scaling up development activities and impacts, to learn from the experience of one another, to increase voices and advocate for change, to be cost effective and to gain from all opportunities that arise as a result of created relations.

In Ethiopia, involving the civil society has been a hot issue for the last two decades. In particular, the decentralization program has often been commented on, for not opening much space for the role of civil society and that government permeates all aspects of organizational movements. To this effect, the existing civil society organizations lack independence and the trust of their constituents. Nevertheless, the decentralization program is expected to encourage the formation of civil society organizations at local and regional levels and bring new dynamics to state-civil society relations. The program is also expected to benefit from the existence of vibrant civil society organizations for its enrichment and realization. The recent efforts of the government of Ethiopia and debates on the civil society legislation generate from this unavoidable requirement to realize the decentralization program.

What Abebe (2001) outlined about the influence of decentralization on civil societies in Ethiopia has been paraphrased as follows. First, mandate has been given to the states to register and license CSOs in their respective states and regulate the activities of those who operate in them. This is considered as an indication of initiating a new process of relations between the state and local governments and CSOs. Most states have also formulated a government – CSO link and cooperation guidelines to rationalize procedures and coordination of activities. Second, the Ethiopian decentralization program has provided a renewed impetus for the proliferation of ethnic based regional and local associations. Third, decentralization has not led to a significant

growth of formal and independent CSOs at grassroots level except the hierarchically organized age, gender, service or profession based organizations. Fourth, decentralization has not resulted in the expansion of civic CSOs below state level. Fifth, rights and advocacy oriented CSOs hardly emerge at state or local levels. The above summary indicates the little legal opportunity provided by the decentralization process in strengthening or/and encouraging CSOs in Ethiopia. The sector thus remains weak and underdeveloped and a potential of decentralization in increasing a vibrant CSOs seems unrealized. The area under study is no different in that it also suffers from a great portion of these shortcomings. This will be further discussed in the presentation of the empirical findings of this study.

The private sector is that part of the economy that is owned and controlled by private individuals and business organizations. Expanding the activities in this sector is vital for economic growth, in creating jobs and reducing poverty and by increasing the tax base for the delivery of social services. Much emphasis had been placed on the development of this sector in Africa during the G8 (2008) summit in Osaka, Japan. Being encouraged by the growth among emerging and developing economies during that time, the summit proposed to focus support on improving the investment climate as one important feature. The summit emphasized the promotion of public private partnerships (PPP) in building reliable infrastructures. High importance was placed on the need to support capacity building of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and industrial clusters through the Enhanced Private Sector Assistance (EPSA), since they are doorsteps to the development of big industries and job creation mechanisms. This is mentioned to indicate how the issue of developing and partnering with the private sector to bring about political and socio-economic transformation is crucial in any given country (DFID, 2008).

Coming to the condition in Ethiopia, there is still so much to do. The government of Ethiopia has adopted a series of development plans designed to 'enhance agricultural productivity, improve rural infrastructure, *encourage private investment*, promote participation of the private sector in the economy, mobilize external resources, and pursue appropriate macroeconomic and sectoral policies'. However, the fact that the government retains complete ownership of all land is always an issue for critics. The state retains its dominant position in the ownership of key assets, particularly the 'land title industry' as many authors explain it. As many critics go, nested in the "developmental states" approach, this puts the control string in its hands to suppress businesses which are not in line with its ideology or those who compete with party affiliated endowment organizations. It also allows the government to give preferential treatment to those they favored. Hence, the large scale selection of key sectors and strategic integration of these activities, which eventually lead to new monopolistic and unfair trading practices by the preferred, will frustrate the growth of the sector to a large extent and create extreme discord within the business communities, which may eventually lead to civil unrest (SIDA, 2002).

In the study area, though the practices did not go far beyond what had been there decades ago, there are some initiatives to look at investment opportunities. Discussions related to the

perception of the local leaders about the role of the private sector in development and what the current practices evolve on the people will be discussed in the next chapters.

The Global Stance in Decentralization Practices

It requires a critical balance when we try to adapt the western experiences in development which took place a century or half a century back in time line. We face time – context conflict if we try to take them untailored. This is because the conditions and the period they practiced then rarely match our current situation. The economy of underdeveloped countries can hardly be equated with the 18th century economy of the developed ones. But the 'thinking', the 'wishes', awareness/exposure of some part of our elites and the technology we currently use may not be far apart. For example, if Ethiopia wants to run a mechanized farm project, it is not going to do so with obsolete Fordson tractor machinery, manufactured by Ford Motor Company, in the early 19th century that replaced horses, mules and self-propelled or steam powered tractions. We plan for '*all in one*' modern tractors/ machineries. But in actual fact about 85 percent of our people are using oxen pulled plows in the 21st century to make their livelihoods and produce surplus. So this makes the choices complicated.

Nevertheless, like I mentioned above decentralization in the world is an old strategy to promote allocative efficiency, to enhance the capacity and innovative power of regions and local governments, to increase productive efficiency and accountability and facilitating cost recovery by making services more demand responsive by bringing them to the village gate. It is a successful strategy in many countries, developed or underdeveloped. Nevertheless, a study made by the WB (2001:6) shows that, for decentralization to be effective and successful it must always undergo changes characterized by:

- The creation of new sub-national jurisdictions at regional or local level;
- The generalization of elections by universal suffrage to cover all sub-national jurisdictions;
- The transfer of authority with sufficient financial resources for sub-national jurisdictions to carry out functions assigned;
- The removal of the priori supervisory role of state representatives, and the institution of legal administrative control (administrative tribunals), and a posteriori control of budgets.

Above all, it should always undergo periodic evaluation that involves reengineering, flexible decisions and actions.

The experience of Germany in decentralization can be one example for academic interest. The decentralization and recentralization (necessary strengthening of central functions) process had a long history in Germany. The country can be considered as a model where both centralization and decentralization in legislative, executive and judiciary areas have been practiced and tested at different levels and in different conditions. However, the action taken in 1976 to further

deepen the decentralization program following the recommendation of the Advisory Commission on the Reform of the Constitution was a landmark. Before and after this recommendation intensive discussions were conducted among the academia and politicians, which continued with the slogan, "*renovation of politics and policies from below"*. Eventually decisions were made to restructure the federal-Länder relations and tasks anew, which led to joint decision making by strengthening the rights of the Bundesrat in the process of legislation. In addition to the introduction of joint planning, the decision extended the possibilities of the federal government to subsidize the Länder and the local governments in different forms (Lehmbruch, 2000).

Hence, to date decentralization is the strategy of governance in Germany (Benz, 1987:467), where by various countries refer to as a model including my country. The following has been quoted from Lehmbruch (2000:1):

> "Here too, contemporary German federalism is thus characterised by a strange combination of decentralisation of autonomous bureaucracies with substantive harmonisation of policies and highly developed procedural uniformity".

However, it was not without challenges that the country arrived at this successes. Disparities were created among states. There were problems of excessive unemployment in some regions compared to others. But the interaction and frequent discussions among territorial units and the involvement of the academia (individually and institutionally) was not unable to resolve problems that were born following each stage of development and influences of globalization, through *dynamic pragmatic changes* without changing the government structures.

The African Experience in Decentralization

Immediately after countries were liberated from colonialism in the 1970s, the issue of how to overcome the colonial legacies and developing their nations was a forefront one to tackle. To this effect, initiations to decentralize their structures and development programs emerged across many counties. This conviction led to a pragmatic pursuit in 1980s, of course, pressurized by the World Bank Structural Adjustment Program (SAP)[22].

The 1990s was the second stage, where many African countries opted for transformation to more democratic and competitive political systems, being influenced by internal and external conditions. To resolve conflicts, to overcome the poverty problem and speed up development, decentralization has become a *sine qua non* program in almost all African counties, among which only four have a federal form of constitution.

An assessment made in 30 African countries by the World Bank, (Ndegwa 2002:5) shows different results for their comprehensive achievements in three dimensions of decentralization,

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[22] Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) - is the name given to a set of "free market" economic policy reforms imposed on developing countries by the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)) as a condition for receipt of loans (Wikipedia)

namely: political, fiscal and administrative. Downward and upward accountability and stability systems were also part of the study. In this study Ethiopia stood 9th, slightly above average, while 17 countries were below average in their two five year term (1991-2000) evaluations. When the dimensions were evaluated separately none of the countries were bold enough to adequately transfer decision making powers on resources and revenue generation. Sticking to past extreme centralization practices, as a result of path dependency, there was reluctance to decentralize key authorities and important resource bases. Since it is considered that promises have been unfulfilled, this reluctance in turn put countries into an extreme crisis that they cannot easily overcome.

A comparative study made by the USAID, Wunsch and Olowu (2010) in ten African countries pointed out that Ethiopia has successfully accomplished the decentralization process, particularly in the area of devolution of power to sub national governments. However, the finding did not elaborate what has been achieved at the grassroots level (in governance, participation, economic activities, etc.). The report remarked on what has been primarily gained as follows (Wunsch and Olowu, 2010:58):

> "For example, in Ethiopia, the EPRDF has established a significant degree of political, fiscal, and administrative decentralization in a short period of time, while successfully using it as an approach to resolve problems of nationality and ethnicity. Furthermore, ―decentralization has consolidated and flourished in tandem with the governing party developing strong links down to local level. In the majority of dominant party systems, what was good for stability and decentralization was also good for the party, with decentralized units performing as transmission belts for central prerogatives".

Review of Decentralization Related Key Documents

Attempts were made to look into pre 1991 experiences on decentralization in Ethiopia. The first attempt to exercise decentralization has been made by the Haileselassie I regime, in 1966. It was a policy draft submitted to the then parliament for approval. The concept was to subdivide the provinces into 50 sub-provinces (*awurajas*) that exercise administrative autonomy/ deconcentration. The plan was not to create these autonomous sub-provinces but selection was made with focus only on macro political stability. While on the one hand the purpose was to deconcentrate the powers of the nobility around the king and create broad based support from the local people, but on the other hand it was a response to a pressure for self rule that gradually grew within different nations and regions. This was a time when the *old system was pregnant with the new*. However, it was not successful because the parliament voted against it (which led to the total collapse), with the feeling that it would create a loophole for fragmentation and secession.

The second attempt was, the forced action taken by the Dergue regime, which offered 'autonomy' for those who waged armed struggle. Twenty-five administrative regions (including

Addis Ababa – presumably with a strategy to neutralize it from the Oromos) and five so called autonomous regions were asymmetrically and selectively created in 1987, based on a proposal submitted by the Institute of Nations and Nationalities which was organized within the Workers Party of Ethiopia. The autonomous regions consisted of Eritrea, Aseb, Tigray, Dire Dawa (with the same criteria applied to Addis Ababa), and Ogaden. This was somehow able to break the traditional pattern of structure, but created a lot of gaps and grievances again.

The Transitional Period Charter of Ethiopia, Proclamation Number 1/1991 and the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995) were landmark achievements as mentioned above with regard to laying the foundation for autonomy and introducing decentralized government systems.

As implementation strategy, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) was a basic document that paved way to DLDP. In this document it has been stated as follows:

> "Economic strategy has to be viewed in conjunction with the political process for it to be an effective development promoting and poverty reducing instrument. Given poverty reduction will continue to be the core of the agenda of the country's development, the strategy is built on four pillars (building blocks). These are Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI), justice system and civil service reform, decentralization and empowerment, and capacity building in public and private sectors. Such a four – pronged approach is believed to be effective in a fight against poverty and ensure sustainable development" (MOFED, 2002: x).

Based on this the Ministry of Capacity Building (MoCB) went ahead and prepared various working documents for the realization of the DLDP. According to the DLDP action plan (2005-2008) nine major intervention areas or components were identified to address the capacity building needs at district level (MoCB, 2004$_a$).

(I) Institutional/organizational rearrangement - which includes activities to refine the functional assignment of districts, to improve local governance, build efficient organizational structure, and define the roles of *ganda*s.

(II) Staffing and training – to ensure the availability of sufficient human resources, enhance professional and leadership competency and roll out a human resources development plan for districts.

(III) District planning and fiscal control systems – which include activities aimed at speeding up the overall development and resource administration of districts by introducing multi-year local planning and fiscal framework mechanisms, improving donor integration in local development, facilitating financial rules, review and reporting of processes for gap assessment.

(IV) Grassroots participation - to enhance democratic participation and empowerment of the rural population at grassroots level in affairs affecting their lives in the development and democratic process.

(V) State-district revenue transfer and own revenue generation to allocate a budget required for local development on efficacy and equity basis by introducing a credible, transparent, and fair state-district transfer formula and enhancing the capacity and incentives of districts to mobilize own revenues and use of funds.

(VI)   Minimum standard service indicators and performance mechanisms – to improve planning and implementation capacities of public sectors in districts by setting minimum standard systems of service norms, benchmarks, performance tracking and reporting mechanisms and related guidelines.

(VII)   Program development – to strengthen the development of district level decentralization and facilitate its efficient and effective implementation by streamlining regional decentralization strategies, building capacity for coordination and execution of the program, creating capacity for monitoring and evaluation, sensitization of DLDP and identification of linkages and gaps for capacity building intervention in the districts.

(VIII)   Office equipment - creating an enabling working environment by strengthening disadvantaged districts with basic office equipment, ICT and related office facilities.

(IX)   Strengthening capacities of lead institutions – to maximize the supply side intervention of affiliated lead public sector organizations at state level which are directly involved in the empowerment of districts by building capacities; through training, human resources, database and systems development

Preceding Research Works on Decentralization in Ethiopia

The first wave of decentralization in Ethiopia was limited to regional/state levels. It is in the second wave of decentralization that the DLDP came into being in 2002. Checking several library catalogs in Ethiopia and as well as browsing several web pages has not elicited much scientific literature except the World Bank working papers on this topic. In proof of this Asefa and Gebre-Egziabher (2007:11), in their review of decentralization related articles, said:

> "Some topics in the literature review have no [limited] literature and therefore it was not possible to provide adequate information. This could be an indication of a gap in research on decentralization in Ethiopia".

This book provided a good review and presentation of four very informative articles on the drive, design, process and limitations of the program. It critically discussed experiences in various states and tried to recommend for the ways ahead. The editors have also recommended further study in their conclusion, saying (ibid: 54):

> "…the value added of DLDP in view of increased autonomy, adequacy of resource flows, poverty reduction and employment creation, [as well as] augmented capacity and revenue sources, [has not been] sufficiently studied [nor] articulated in a rigorous manner".

Another very practical work is Tegenu's (2006) evaluation of operation and performance of [the] ethnic decentralization system in the Guraghe zone of SNNP state. In this extensive evaluation, mainly basing itself on the systems approach, Tegenu tried to evaluate the organization and the implementation of the system in place. His findings show fragmentation and breaking of

connections in all the systems and their sub-systems: administrative, fiscal, political, legal and economic.

In the area of fiscal relations Chanie (2007), in his "*What One Hand Giveth, the Other Hand Taketh Away*" extensively explained Ethiopia's post 1991 decentralization reform under the theory of neo-patrimonialism, particularly with emphasis on intergovernmental transfers. He characterized the system under; upward accountability rather than downward, sustenance of vertical and horizontal imbalance, a maintenance of traditional clienteles and keeping states purposely dependent on the center.

While the above works by individual researchers highlight where the decentralization program stands since its inception, some assessments have also been made by external multilateral organizations. The World Bank assessment report of thirty countries mentioned above stated the following:

> "The surprising outcomes include, for example, the overall assessment of Ethiopia and Namibia, which appear in the same category of countries having moderate decentralization. Since its revolution in 1993, Ethiopia elaborated a constitutional framework that was most progressive in giving authority to the regions, including the power to secede. However, the actual devolution of power has been to the regions, not local governments; and the effectiveness of the local entities is still constrained as suggested by more detailed assessments of discrete indicators" (Ndegwa 2002: 18).

On the other hand, some studies made to assess the impacts of the program on poverty showed negative results for Ethiopia. A policy insight paper published by OECD (2004:2), in a comparative study made in 20 African, Asia and Latin America developing nations, categorizes Ethiopia, in "no impact/negative impact on poverty" column.

Customizing and Linking the Concepts to the Topic of the Study

In the above literature, history, concepts and practices of decentralization in general, relevant theories and related issues have been briefly discussed. Elements of decentralization and their definitions have been summarized and presented. Both democratic and non-democratic driven motives to undertake the program and their outcomes have also been touched on. Stakeholders for the realization of the program and common understanding of the role they could play in politics, governance and the planning, implementation and monitoring of the program have also been discussed. It is believed that, taking into consideration the brief historical background, theories and concepts what has thus far been discussed and explained can lead to certain proposition and the framing of a conceptual basis.

While the above explanations have dealt with the essence of decentralization in a broad sense; institutional strength, transfer of power and resources, implementation and participation were practical variables singled out for this study. To avoid redundancy some explanations on theories

and concepts related to these variables have been spared to utilize them as a background in the chapters that discuss the empirical findings. However, why focus has been made on these variables needs general explanation.

When we plan for a program and its implementation there are certain compulsory arrangements we have to think of. What, where, with what, how and with whom/who are very important questions, "What" → implies the subject matter, details about the program, the perception, the conviction… generally, it is about the need to internalizing the essence of the program, "Where" → entails the organization, the institution, the area/command post to realize the program, where the operation takes place. "With what" → is the need for the transfer of resource, decision making power, financial and material, while "how" → denotes the whole process from planning, implementation to monitoring and evaluation. The most important component (break or make) still is the "who/with whom"- the front line implementers and the stakeholders. If any of this chain is missed, here comes immobility, like a vehicle that ran out of fuel. I said organization and institutionalization, because in scope and essence these two have different explanations. It will be discussed more in the next chapters. A typology that shows almost "all in one" of the decentralization framework is also attached to this document as an annex (*Annex I.3*).

Even though some writers contend that the decentralization program in Ethiopia did not emerge mainly to disperse the power concentrated in the center to the states, others maintain that it was the security and revenue collection issue that pushed the government to decentralize. It means by decentralizing the administration, forces that suppress popular movements will be created at local level. Hence, it will be the locals who shoulder all the blame. At times the center even comes as arbitrator to build a good image. However, the explicit attempt of decentralization in Ethiopia focuses on development, on empowering local bodies, creating wealth and bringing overall development.

To this effect, according to decentralization program documents, the program has focused on empowering local tiers to practice self rule and enhance their capacity to change their localities. As explained in the introduction, the metamorphosis of the DLDP starts from SDPRP. The Oromia state, based on its constitutional rights, a Proclamation for the Organization of Local Governments in Oromia State and the guidelines given from SDPRP, prepared a customized decentralization policy and strategies framework which was endorsed by *Caffee*[23] *Oromiyaa* (to be read *Chaffe* Oromia). At the initial stage, the decentralization practices were limited only to the state level. In between, zones were strengthened, where they had to play various roles.

In 2002, the DLDP, which was known as the second wave of the decentralization process, was launched with a set of objectives to be discussed below. Under these objectives, several specific objectives and implementation modalities have been elaborated in detail. By the time this action

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[23] *Caffee* - is an Oromo Assembly, Parliament (The highest legislative body)

was taken in 2002/2003, when the program came into the limelight, it was a real shock. Employees were moved from state and zone levels to districts. Attempts were also made to distribute used materials from state to zones and districts. While the objectives were very timely and necessary, when it came to implementation the resistances were not easy, not from the recipient side but from the implementers themselves. Of course using the gap created because of haste, many narrow minded personalities have also played roles to deter the program. The trial still continues since then. It is thus the purpose of this study to see how it progresses and what has been achieved as a result of this program, focusing on variables mentioned above

Chapter III: The Research Proposition and the Conceptual Framework

3.1. The Research Proposition

For the DLDP to attain its goals at an anticipated degree (qualitatively and quantitatively), within a planned timeframe and bring about rapid and substantive change: enabling institutional setting, proper transfer and efficient utilization of resources and key decision making power, dynamic capability of implementers, meaningful participation of key stakeholders and focus on result oriented development activities play a determining role.

3.2. The Conceptual Framework

For the specific problem mentioned above, after reviewing the literature and history of decentralization in Ethiopia one may be able to sort out a conceptual framework for the main research works. As observed from the historical background and conceptual analyses, essentially, the various attempts at decentralization have a long history in Ethiopia. But it has only recently been put into writing - through declarations, policy provisions, and explicit programs - highlighting the term distinctively.

As briefly noted above although decentralization practices have been experienced based on various drives, basically, in the past most of them had been responses of regimes to pressure from local nobility, regions and marginalized ethnic groups for control over their resources and political power. To this effect, past decentralization attempts represent a desperate attempt to keep the country together in the face of these pressures by granting '*autonomy*'. The degrees of autonomy were based on '*the intensity of resistance from the nobilities, regions, nations, nationalities and people*'. There were also some attempts made in the past to break out from socio-economic and political bottlenecks by forging 'asymmetrical/disproportional devolutions and deconcentration (Jamo, 2005).

Currently, following the structural adjustment and the other poverty reduction initiatives, decentralization, as officially stated in the government documents, was declared as a need to improve service delivery to the larger population and to enhance democratization and regional and local economic development through the involvement of the states and local governments at different levels *per se*. Consequently, the decentralization measure was meant: to bring efficient and accountable local administration, to embark on better local development through full and voluntary engagement of the grassroots communities, to bring good governance through democratization and to protect rights of minorities (World Bank, 2008).

As a matter of fact, many political programs and development policies and strategies have been frequently induced, following change of governments and/or prevalence of natural or human-made crisis in the country and through the imposition of multinational agencies and patron

governments. But the results achieved at different levels and the current position of the country, in comparison to its peer nations, hardly justifies the effectiveness of these provisions.

Besides the fast shifts from one strategy to another and from one approach to another, change of structures, institutional rearrangements and frequent turnovers of human power at all levels (including political appointees and professionals), the condition of poverty reflected at the micro level is not decreasing and the living standards of larger society is not improving at a significant pace and degree (FDRE, 2008). As a main cause for such problems, Aalen (2009:10) states the following:

> "…a dual structure of government, where the formal structures provide for a democratic façade, while the actual performance severely restricts the fundamental rights and freedoms of the citizens of Ethiopia".

On the other hand the economic growth rate is reported to be in two figures during the past two planning periods, 2000 - 2010 (FDRE, 2008). The government claims that the "rapid and significant political and socio-economic changes" have significantly been achieved, macroeconomic stability has been attained, and almost all poverty reduction initiative targets have been achieved in various sectors.

In fact, there are many cases that make the situation in this country a paradox: the history, endowment of potential resources, the position it holds in the geopolitical arena and the hospitality of its people on the one hand, and continuous bad governance, pseudo-propaganda and chronic socio-political and economic distress on the other.

A study made by Oxfam (2005:1) states:

> "In spite of many years of development efforts involving several stakeholders including the government, donors, international financial institutions, local and international non state actors, poverty has [still] grown deeper and wider in Ethiopia. Although recurrent natural shocks undoubtedly make notable contributions to growing problems, poverty in Ethiopia is more of structural issue, with root causes that include bad policies and practices".

As a corollary to this, various reasons can be cited from different perspectives for these failures. Much has been said about political pluralism, federalism and democratization. Participation of the people in politics, governance and development (from planning, through implementation to monitoring and evaluation) in decisions that directly or indirectly affect them, has been theoretically promoted to a higher degree. Everybody in the government structure has sworn to practice affirmative action to support the disadvantaged, the deprived majorities and marginalized groups, reaching the rural communities before all. However, putting this into practice requires courageous measures to change the mindsets of the practitioners and policy

makers, a paradigm shift and a quest for realistic rearrangement in the organization, implementation and realization of these policies and strategies.

Indeed, it used to be the usual practice of incoming governments in Ethiopia to give unrealistic promises to outwit the outgoing and stabilize their own rule. The people have repeatedly experienced dozens of short lived hopes that soon faded after the seizure of power by an incoming government. With this character, neither have governments ever enjoyed genuine reverence and sympathy from their people instead they live in apprehension and suspicion of their own people. In most cases, they survived with subsistence subsidies supplied by their patrons for *assumed* reasons of geopolitical importance, that gives them chance for persistent suppression and assaults over their own people (Gudina, 2003).

Consequently, like the comments go, even though they did not go deep into the *gandas*, as stated above, some comparative studies carried out among states and at *district* levels have revealed the dysfunctionality of the decentralization program (Ayenew, Chanie et al., 2007). The government of Ethiopia also partly admits to this problem. But it still attempts to argue that the positive achievements overweigh the failures.

Decentralization essentially holds a concept of structures, process and its systemic operations and a unique interaction with its sub systems. These structures, to efficiently interact, need to choose short paths/plans, in order to deliver good services and have sound communications. Aryeetey (1985:110) mentioned that:

> "Decentralization needs to be regarded solely as a means to an end and not just an end in itself. In decentralizing a system, what one hopes to achieve are improved responsiveness, reliability, adequacy, and quality of the needed services. Thus a system after decentralization would be regarded as efficient if more of the mentioned goals or values are attained at less cost".

Furthermore Kochen and Karl (1980:17, 18) explained the concept of decentralization within the systems approach as follows:

> "Decentralization needs not be seen as fragmentation. Fragmentation no longer forms a system…the general principle of decentralization remains the performance of a service, not the scattering of handouts".

From the above professional conclusions we understand that decentralization is a vertical and horizontal interaction of the systems and sub-systems (functional and territorial) in a very organized manner (Schleifer and Robert, 1998).

The stakeholders' role has been analyzed from the systems view point in the literature review of this paper. Government, civil society organizations, the private sector and people at the heart of the system were discussed as the parts that formed the whole system having independence and

interdependence. If the system is required to attain the goals set in the program all the parts must necessarily exist and interact as one. Otherwise as shown in *figure (3:49)* the absence of one component makes the system break down.

As highlighted above, decentralization measures in various countries had been motivated by diverse factors such as politics, civil war, lack of sound central government, the need to improve service delivery to the larger population and rationalization of the economy. In recent years, the last mentioned is receiving plausible recognition and being explained on the grounds of allocative equity and efficiency in spatial planning, implementation and the utilization of resources (Fiseha, 2007).

Hypothetically, decentralization policies and strategies which had been introduced in Ethiopia were initiatives to support spatial planning and development, to enhance local capacities, to bring unity and secure sovereignty of the country and equity among its nations, nationalities and people voluntarily and through the recognition of their diversity; and to improving service delivery and governance at all levels (Turton, 2006).

The following structure *(Figure 4)* illustrates the conceptual framework and the prototype of the empirical study, based on the main variables chosen for this research. The diagram shows how the process goes from the DLDP to the end users and its outcomes. Measurements are placed for each variable. They are constructed in concurrence with the research questions, the conceptual problem and the proposition. The main categories being "dependent", the practices and outcomes that emerge as a result of what has been sown in the indicators' row, lead to output and the outcome rows. The indicators determine which direction to go. It is this column that shows wrong or right way to go. As the purpose is not to search for numerical results, but cause and effects, the why and how questions take a lead in data collection and analysis. The output and the outcome column are divided by broken lines to depict that there is no solid boundary between them. The converted parentheses show that the contents in the lower boxes are all common to the elements in the upper rows.

Availability, adequacy, efficiency, economy and effectiveness and to what extent of the variables which will be revealed by the indicators determine the outputs and; the outputs in turn determine the outcomes. This is a conceptual frame as to how to arrive at what is evident at the grassroots level. The framework has been derived from conceptual analysis of the historical background, relevant theories and concepts. This analysis helped to choose units and sub-units of data collection and analysis to focus on, in order to arrive at the desired research goal. In the framework, it has also been illustrated what outputs (process and tangible results) are required for the successes of the program.

District Level Decentralization Program

Background

Historical Background, Theoretical and Conceptual Foundation

Process/Variables

Institutional strength	Transfer & utilization of authority & resources	Implementation	Perception & Participation	Actual Gains

Indicators

- Structures
- Human power strength
- Working condition

- Transfer of authority & resources
- Adequacy
- Efficiency in utilization

- Organization
- Capacity
- Responsiveness
- Accountability
- M&E

- Community
- Civil society
- Private sector

- Community ways of life
- Household livelihoods
- Environment

Outputs

☞Conducive institutional setting
  ☞Adequate decision making power & resource
☞Proper utilization of available power & resources

☞Efficiency, responsiveness & Accountability
☞Effective programs
☞Genuine Participation
☞Improved household livelihoods & communal ways of life
☞Environmental recovery

☞Dysfunctional structure
☞Inadequate/ underutilized resource & decision making power
☞Irresponsive and unaccountable system
☞Inefficient & ineffective service

☞Exclusionary practices
☞No or negative change in the livelihoods & Communal Ways of life
☞Environmental degradation

Outcomes

☞Stability
☞ Development
☞Democracy

☞Stagnation / immobility
☞ Vicious cycle of poverty
☞Blueprint on the walls
☞Society disposed to conflict

☞Mistrust
☞Fragmentation
☞Instability

Figure 4: A Conceptual Framework (Own Construct)

Chapter IV: Method

4.1. Selection of Appropriate Method

Choosing a research method and design requires acceptance of trade-offs between time, cost, favorable environment (politics, security…) and confidence that one can place in the expected findings. In local development, the optimal balance is one in which the research allows the best valuable analysis to provide the most useful results for administrative, planning, implementation and policy purposes (NORAD, 1987). This is what Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008:143) often call a *goldilocks* between - cost, time and situation conducive to research, coverage and validity of the research.

For this research, with in the domain of *"social science research methodology"* an embedded single case study strategy that has mainly used a qualitative approach has been chosen as a most fitting method. To guide readers, questions such as: why a case study is selected, why a single case study and not multiple, why embedded and not holistic, why qualitative and not quantitative – need explanation.

As there are several arguments on the choice of case study as a research method there are also various explanations on the appropriateness of case studies in certain areas of research. Gerring (2006:17) states that:

> "A case study research is a research approach that can be defined as "an intensive study of a single unit or a small number of units (the cases), for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units (a population of cases)".

Schramm (1971) cited in Yin (2009:17) explains:

> "The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result".

These are statements that could justify the choice of a case study approach for this study. The research is all about the DLDP: how it goes, how it involves important stakeholders and what it delivered to people at grassroots level. It involved intensive study of a single program intervention through different variables in a given geographic area and at a single point in time which makes the study cross-sectional. It engaged a limited number of informants who were expected to provide key information that could apply to a larger population. Since a case study emphasizes the detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships, it was considered that this method best fits the intended type of study.

Typicality or representativeness of the Dendi district was the main reason to select a single case study method for this research. Yin (2009:48) explains that, "*the objective of a single case study*

is to capture the circumstance and conditions of an everyday or common place situation". As the core objective of this research is to find out "how the DLDP operates and results it has produced", a single case study approach was found to be the most convenient tool to make an in-depth study and generate sufficient data and arrive at analytic generalization. Gerring (2007:89) says, "*If the case is typical it is representative by definition"*. As we discussed above, if the similarity of rules, regulations, volume of resources transferred (which is based on uniform formula), the structure…are all similar across the state, the typicality of the district will not be argumentative. Based on Gerring's explanation above again, if the case of Dendi district is typical it is representative by definition.

A case study is labeled "embedded", when a single case study involves multiple subunits of data collection and analysis. In this case study while institutional strength, transfer of authority and resource, performance of implementers, perception and participation of the stakeholders and actual results gained at grassroots level can be observed as embedded thematic subunits; on the other hand the gandas can be considered as embedded geographic subunits. These were the units treated under the DLDP as a whole and separately in the course of data collection and analysis.

Qualitative research is especially suitable for the study of phenomenon where least is known and a few secondary/tertiary data are available. The reason why the qualitative method has been chosen is that it uses "*unreconstructed logic to get at what is really real -- the quality, meaning, context or images of reality in what communities actually do, not what they say they do as on questionnaires"* (Berg, 1989: 239).

4.2. Units of Data Collection and Unit of Data Analysis

The Dendi district of the Oromia State has purposely been selected for this study based on *typicality* and *similarity* criteria. This district is believed to encompass many common features that other agro-climatically similar districts possess, which makes it *typical*. The *similarity* of rules, regulations, procedures, norms and the covert/overt intents used for the decentralization process at country and state levels are thought to produce relatively analogous processes and results in all the lower tiers. Consequently, the similarities of areas and the program intervention can serve as a justification for the validity and reliability of the findings (Gerring, 2007:88).
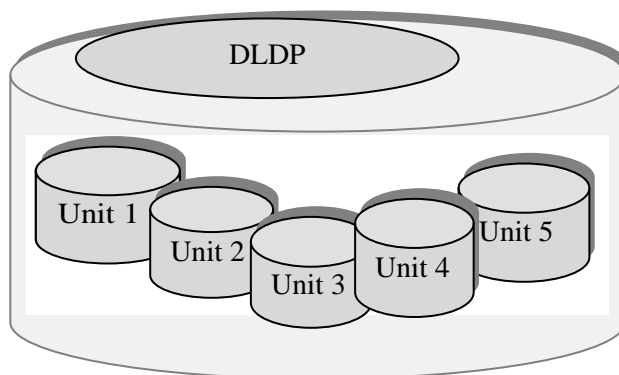
Figure 5: **Embedded Units**

Adapted from Yin (2009:46)

In-depth phenomenological interviews, focus groups discussions and direct observation in two rural, one urban and one semi-urban *ganda,* and at the district level, were conducted with selected insiders. Case histories of eight anonymous and named informants were also completed to directly present the realities of the subjects of the study with their own tone. Data generated through these different tools from multistage and multi-sectors of the structure has helped to triangulate the reliability of information gathered (Gerring, 2007:17).

Though data have been obtained from different parts of the main unit of the study, they all converge to one single point, the DLDP. Analysis had been cast primarily at district level for each subunit to explain the DLDP within the context of Dendi district (*see figure 6*).

Figure 6: Dendi District Structure
(Constructed from narratives)
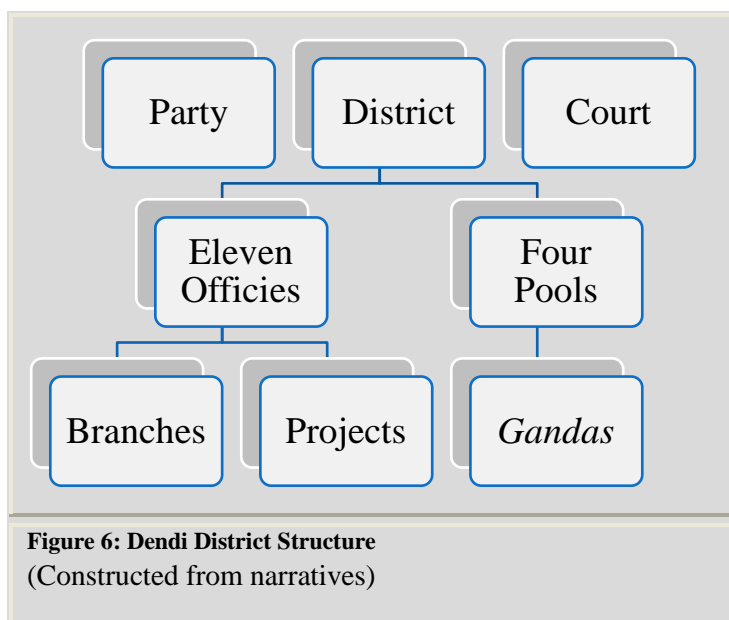
Districts in Oromia constitute the lowest tier of administration called *gandas* with legislative, judiciary and executive powers. The *gandas* comprise the *ganda* assemblies, administrative councils and social courts (*see Figure 6)*. These two chapters of government, the *districts* and the *gandas* closely interact with people and are expected to prepare and implement their respective development plans and programs and deliver essential public services at grassroots levels. For this reason these administrative tiers of the government have been concentrated on.

4.3. Design

Much attention had been given to the design part of this work as this is a part of the research where validity and reliability should be thoroughly considered at each stage. Efforts have been made to iteratively link the work from research question to the analysis stage, in identifying sources of data and the tools to be used, in maintaining the case study quality, acknowledging the objective conditions and identifying possible rival explanations.

Yin (2009:26) says;

> "A research design is *a logical plan for getting from here- to- there*, where *here* may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and *there* is some set of conclusions (answers) about the questions. Between "here" and "there" may be found a number of major steps, including the collection and analysis of relevant data".

Data Collection Process and Construct Validity

The data collection protocol included interview (expert, key informants, case history), focus group discussion (sometimes called group discussion or group interviews) and observation guidelines. This protocol had been reviewed and approved by the Technical University of Dortmund that it can be used as a tool to generate the required information. With this pre-arrangement it was entered into the operation of collecting data. Training was given to research assistants and a pilot case study was conducted choosing a nearby site, Ghinchi, for which a pilot case study report was produced. Based on this trial report, the interview and focus group discussion guides have been reset to fit into the objective condition. Attempts have been made to produce a case study report with annotated bibliography for each interview and focus group discussion. Principles of data collection (Yin 2008:98), using multiple sources, maintaining data base and crafting chain of evidence to ensure quality, in this case reliability and validity, were properly managed. The following illustration shows the selection of informants:

District level/ expert/key informant interview (2)………………………………...							**1**	**2**
Total Participants in all the *gandas*…….(8 X 4 = 32)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
FGD (6 X 4 = 24)……............	Six from the above							Observation
Interview (4 X 4 = 16)……….	Four from the above							
Case History (2 X 4 = 8)…….	Two from the above							

Figure 7: Selection of Informants (Own construct)

For all the interviews and focus group discussions 32 insiders/ key informants from the four *gandas* and two from district level (one key informant official and one key expert) were selected *(See Figure 7)*. To select the interviewees, I conducted entry conferences with resource persons (role and acceptance) in the *ganda*. The focus group had six participants in all the *gandas* (total participants 24). Four persons from each *ganda* were interviewed (total of 16). From among the FGD members or key informants, 2 from each *ganda* (a total of 8) were focused on for intensive observation and to narrate a *"case history"* (sometimes called biographical interview). This means a single person can have a chance to participate in focus group discussion and/or interview and/or case history construction. This minimized the number of persons involved. It helped some informants to disclose privately some important information they reserved in the focus group discussion. It also helped to identify who produced the best target data and which enabled me to select appropriate persons for the in-depth interview and case history.

There was a problem of choosing the combination of the focus group discussion (FGD) members and the form between homogeneity and heterogeneity and also from which procedure to start the work (FGD/interview). Finally, even though in most cases homogeneity of members is preferred,

I opted for heterogeneity with regard to the role they play in the community. But, homogeneity/ relative similarity with regard to maturity and awareness was also given attention. I also started from FGD for known practical reason. The number of FGD members chosen was six. If group were bigger, collecting opinions from each of them would be difficult. Big numbers also minimize the participation of individual member and make the discussion tedious. The discussions were also guarded from the domination of opinion leaders to the possible extent. The case histories which encompass all the research questions were generated using the narrative/phenomenological interview approach, to support and triangulate the data gathered and to directly present the 'real situation' of the subjects of the study (*see annexes III. 1- 3, for extracts from selected case histories*).

The following table shows data collection matrix. Number of interviews in site, kind of data gathered, instruments used and tools applied.

Variables	Data needed	Tools applied	Instrument	Location	No. of Interviews
Institution	Physical setting, Structure, Capacity (human resource, material, finance) Organizational norms, values, standards	Documents Archive ✳FGD Interview Case history Observation	Interview guides FGD guides "Table shells" Checklist for secondary data	District level	2
Transfer *(power & resources)*	Extent & timeliness Form & sequence Utilization			Ghinchi town	6
Performance	Planning & implementation Interagency collaboration Responsiveness Accountability Monitoring & evaluation			Bodda Bosoqa	6
Participation	Perception & concepts of political participation Elections Party politics Participation in development Participation in administration			Dendi Sulu	6
Actual gains	Capital assets Changes in HH livelihood & community ways of life			Dendi Mummicha	6
Total number of interviews (case history and in-depth interview)					**26**
✳Focus Group Discussion (six participants in each) had been conducted in all four *gandas.*					

Table 3: Data collection Matrix

Observation which took a form of participant was done through formal and informal procedures. I tried to sense, not like a visitor but like a participant, what is really there, by participating in their day to day activities, at home, in work places, in markets and in ritual places. At the end of all interviews and focus group discussion sessions, efforts have been made to condense whatever

has been observed through informal conversation. Recording complete information in a notebook, in order to avoid confusion during the write up was a pervasive practice throughout the field work.

Only two very important key persons were interviewed at district level. Discussions with these two interviewees, a teacher in Dendi Mummicha *ganda* and a *ganda* manager in Bodda Bosoqa took the form of expert interview, which was not completed at one time. Several meetings took place involving references to material they had available. The composition of the four key informants from Ghinchi town was made diversified; one from the private sector, one from NGO, one from Ghinchi *ganda* administration and one resourceful person who was born, grew and retired in Ghinchi.

Most secondary data for the district activities were obtained from archives at district level. The two persons at district level were selected from well informed persons, who have access to data, and who work in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation tasks.

If informants are diversified only for the sake of stratification it would be difficult to get satisfactory information from some interviewees. Therefore it was decided to make the center of the selection criteria "*who best generates information on the subject under study*" (Stake, 1995:65).

The data collection involved a combination of different types of interviews. Particularly, the informal and formal conversational interview and the interview guide approaches come into play at different stages of the data collection process. This eased the tension on the interviewees' and helped to generate data with spontaneous reactions to questions. *Figure (8)* illustrates the convergence of data as a proof to quality maintenance. These are different tools that facilitate the triangulation of data collected, to ensure their reliability and the internal validity to a greater extent.

Figure 8: Convergence of Data
(Adapted from Yin 2009:117)
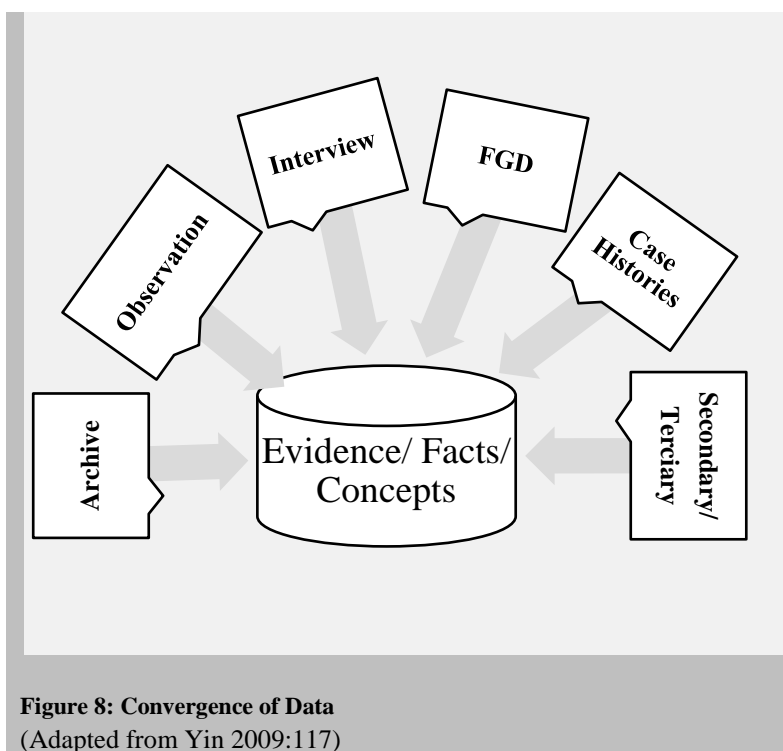
There were attempts to use necessary electronic materials. But informants were not comfortable with them and were suspicious and apathetic particularly to electronic recording. It was also felt

that the use of these materials may destruct the spontaneous and free responses of informants. Therefore only photography was chosen which all interviewees took it as a fun. But careful attempts were also made to use electronic recording where it deemed necessary. Thus, field notes have been used as a major recording tool.

Ultimately as the concern was to ensure construct validity, a confidence on how measurements are operationalized and "*the extent to which what was to be measured was actually measured*" using instruments shown in *figure (8),* relevant data have been obtained to arrive at a valid conclusion (Yin, 2009:41).

Validity and Reliability

Validity is usually defined as, "*the best available approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inference, proposition or conclusion*". It can be subdivided into internal and external. While internal validity is about causal relationship and truthfulness of inferences, external validity is a concern about generalizability of results. Reliability refers to" *the extent to which results are consistent over time if reproduced under [using] a similar method* "(Cook and Campbell, 1979:37).

All raw ideas and concepts that came out as emotional and spontaneous reflection and biases at the early stage of this work have been cut back and deleted from this document. Efforts have also been made to maintain neutrality and not to compromise the validity of data and the outcomes of the research. Many writers have different lists (in quality and quantity) for data quality dimensions based on the task of the research. For this research, dimensions such as: *relevance* (applicability and helpfulness of data), *accuracy* (correctness, reliability and acceptable margin of error), *credibility* (distance from bias and truthfulness and trust worthiness in terms of their source and content), *timeliness* (the age of the data are appropriate for the task at hand – data delayed is data denied), *accessibility* (data are available, or easily and quickly retrievable), *interpretability* (data are clear and unambiguous so that users can understand and properly use them), and *integrit*y (data are mutually consistent and reconcilable)… were given close attention all the way through to ensure validity and reliability (McGilvray 2008:49). Above all the design and convergence of data collected by means of different tools were guards to validity and reliability.

Some explanations given by interviewees have been directly quoted in the document. Even though it would be difficult to generalize based on these explanations, I believe they can tell the existing phenomenon with local tone, which can also facilitate the triangulation of data obtained from different sources.

4.4. Data Analysis

The technique used for this analysis is the *explanation building model*. The whole attempt was to explain the causal links of the strengths and the weaknesses of the DLDP in the study area and arrive at analytic generalization of the phenomenon. The quantitative data obtained from primary, secondary/tertiary sources were organized through the method of descriptive cross-tabulation and analyzed by way of corresponding them with/against the qualitative data obtained from primary sources. Hermeneutical interpretation, analysis, verification and report writing of qualitative data are not one-stop practices. It is that nature of the qualitative research that makes it an extremely strenuous task and requires researchers who chose this method to continuously think and get engaged (Yin 2009:38,141).

Hence, checking completeness and coherence, converting figures to narration, testing relevance, transcription/writing down from focus group and interview records and field notes, obtaining consent where possible, classifying, reiterating, connecting and generating the metadata and analyzing/synthesizing was a comprehensive process throughout this study. Notes were carefully taken with necessary information all through the research process, in a notebook prepared with enough wild margins (Miles, Matthew and Huberman, 1994:246).

Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008:95) said, *"As you hunt down data, it can feel tedious to record them accurately, but you lose what you gain from careful reading [interview, observation] if you depend on careless notes"* [parenthesis added]. Organization included manual tabulation into logical categories and descriptive methods in which simultaneous in-depth analysis of recurrent themes and issues and triangulation of the data through different techniques were carried out in such a way that they enabled me to conduct a cross check between different sources.

As the purpose is to identify "*what is actually there/ what has reached there*" compared to "*what had been told*"; and more importantly if there are deviations ''why and how the discrepancies happened'' or extent of conformity, it involved description of facts and phenomenon and explanation of the processes and the outcomes. It also involved both the assessment of factual trueness and analytical trueness of the phenomenon against the reported/anticipated outcomes and the general principle.

 Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008:92) said, *"The more at stake, the higher the threshold of reliability, and that means more data"*. Hence, whereas the quantitative data from primary, secondary and *tertiary* sources served as launching points, the work primarily involved in-depth manifold qualitative data collection and analysis research methods. As the very nature of qualitative method, conclusions were drawn from each step, every interaction and every observation (Berg, 1989). Consequently, the analysis was a pervasive task all through the data collection, compilation processes, reduction and during the writing up of evidences that answer the research questions and support the research proposition.

Finally, one more important point worth noting is what Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008:178) strongly emphasize on the originality of research work. It goes as follows:

> "readers want … the analysis, not a summary of sources…quotations patched together…downloads from the webs [of] which the worst form is called 'quilting', stitched–together passages from a dozen sources in a design that reflects little of the researcher's thinking".

Hence, maximum care was taken not to fall into that trap.

4.5. Ethical Concern and Consent Statement

Participants were assured that the source of data collected would remain confidential and that anonymity will be maintained. Because of illiteracy and participants' apathetic behavior towards a letter from government, and towards putting their signature in any kind of document, an *"informed consent agreement"* in writing was not done; since it was construed as a coercive factor. But, oral consensus with all the participants and an official letter from the Faculty of Spatial Planning, Technical University of Dortmund and other concerned government bodies was filed and taken along. Even this had some negative implications, because, communities think that somebody who carries a letter from the government offices in most cases is a person sent to scrutinize their activities. Because some informants were uncomfortable in directly quoting their names in the write up, I partly stuck to anonymity.

Traditional values and the elderly were given due respect in the course of the data collection. Since elders were interviewed with the narrative method, they were allowed to tell whatever they felt. They were not interrupted and framed towards only what I wanted. In the course of building the case histories, due care was also taken not to mention humiliating or risky matters, things that may affect the emotions of others (sensitive issues such as religion, nationality, clan, even age, political stand…), to keep away from all kinds of negative consequences.

As I was born and grew up in this area, fear of biases was a limiting factor for the free flow of ideas. Though it is an advantage on the one hand, it has also some limitations in the course of data collection, analysis and report writing on the other hand. Thus, due attention has been given to balance the advantages and the disadvantages in all the research processes.

Chapter V: Institutional Strength

5.1. Contextualizing Institution

RQ # 1: Is the institutional environment and arrangement conducive to efficiently implement the DLDP? This is the first question posed, believed to generate data on the strengths and weaknesses of the institutional environment (the external factors) and institutional arrangement (the internal conditions). It has many concepts engraved in it which were explicitly placed in the data collection protocol.

As far as societies go, the existence of institutions is a natural phenomenon. They can be weak or strong; they exist in different forms to maintain the equilibrium, distance and interaction between/among individuals, groups, territorial and sectoral structures. Some institutions can be very strong, that could put their constituencies on a world scale. On the other hand some are weak that they expose their constituencies to failure, societal demoralization, civil unrest, poverty, starvation and a hopeless future.

Without this order of institutions in whichever degree they exist, let alone the current 6.2 billion world population, even the first hundreds of communes couldn't have survived. In Ethiopia's circumstances, whereas the Federal state, states, zones, districts and the *ganda* tiers are the formal structures, the informal structures also follow along all these tiers as a shadow. Essentially, all these layers have to maintain one and different characters for their survival simultaneously; which is best explained in the systems theory.

The debate as to how to define institutions has long existed particularly among institutional economists. Superficially, it seems that all the definitions revolve around a single direction, but essentially there are various differences in defining institutions. For example, Kingston (2008:14) sorted out definitions by three authors:

"Calvert (1995:57-93): states that there is, strictly speaking, no separate animal that we can identify as an institution. There is only rational behavior, conditioned on expectations about the behavior and reactions of others… 'Institution' is just a name we give to certain parts of certain kinds of equilibrium".

Aoki (2001) defines institutions as "stable, shared systems of beliefs about the expected behavior of the members of a society in various contingencies".

Greif (2006:30) adopts a more expansive definition: "An institution is a system of rules, beliefs, norms and organizations that together generate a regularity of (social) behavior".

North (1990:3) who sees institutions as *rules of the game* defines as follows:

> "Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction…Institutions reduce uncertainty by providing a structure to everyday life, and include both formal rules such as laws and constitutions, and informal constraints such as conventions and norms".

Thus, the divergences between theories appear at this point. Is it the rule what we call institution or the behavior created as an outcome of interaction between the endogenous and exogenous elements? We understand that, institutions are equilibrium created as a result of many years constructs of formal and informal social norms, rules and procedures glued together over a period of time.

When we analyze it, these rules of the game are roles constrained by the "state" while the games are played by government structures. It means the government structures are organizations formed to realize and protect the formal rules, norms and procedures internalized by the state organs. North, (2005:51) says:

> "Institutions that have been created lead to the emergence of organizations whose survival depends on the perseverance of these institutions, and these organizations therefore invest resources in order to block any change which could endanger their survival".

Hence, unlike organizations, this shows that institutions are not something that one can build or dismantle instantaneously, because they involve behavioral factors that do not change automatically with the physical change of organizations. Even when changes are enforced onto organizations many elements that reflect the old institutions remain for several years within the new. This idea does not rule out, a revolutionary change or a paradigm shift (physical or behavioral), but it is just to show the necessary process it requires and conditions to be fulfilled for institutional change to take place.

Changes to bring about new institutions can be skillfully designed, but problems arise with the implementation of their blueprints. There must be a favorable political, economic and social environment as well as enabling organizational arrangement for the change to come about. That is why the struggle between the old and the new always takes a long time, for the new to overtake completely and create a new equilibrium; and for the old to survive for a while until natural death comes. This is often explained as *the struggle between change and stability*.

The following quotation has been extracted from the gradual change theory (Mahoney and Thelen, 2007:1):

> "Once created, institutions often change in subtle and gradual ways over time. Although less dramatic than abrupt and wholesale transformations, these slow and piecemeal

changes can be equally consequential for patterning human behavior and for shaping substantive political outcomes".

It is true that human and institutional behaviors cannot be formatted and reconfigured in a moment like computer software. But when an organization born to attain certain explicit goals cannot get rid of the old institutional backlogs for decades, it needs a thorough look into its arrangement, process and vertical and horizontal relations.

As explained by North (2005), organizations on the other hand are tools created to achieve certain institutional goals. Organizations always hold formal and informal features, the informal features being an implicit network within an organization. These informal organizations can be based on ethnic background, religion, region of origin, economic interest, school and other different kinds of current or former affiliations. As mentioned above, organizations are often explained under the systems theory, which has: inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. They also follow different structures enabling them to attain their objectives.

Hence, the input side is concerned with the human element, material and finance to realize the organizational tasks. In the course of organizations, in the inputs and processes, institutional elements (rules, norms and procedures) always exist implicitly or explicitly and influence the course positively or negatively. The processes are explained by, how efficiently organizations discharge their responsibilities. They must also produce some kind of out puts, negative or positive within a certain time frame. This is inevitable in social systems, either mobile or relatively immobile; they sooner or later come up with their own outputs/outcomes, positive or negative consequences.

In this discussion of institutions, it is still very difficult to skip what Adam Smith said some two and a half centuries ago in his, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* cited in Boettke (1990:64)

> "The man of system ... is apt to be very wise in his own conceit, and is often so enamored with the supposed beauty of his own ideal plan of government, that he cannot suffer the smallest deviation from any part of it. He goes on to establish it completely and in all its parts, without any regard either to the great interests or to the strong prejudices which may oppose it: he seems to imagine that he can arrange the different members of a great society with as much ease as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a chess-board; he does not consider that the pieces upon the chess-board have no other principle of motion besides that which the hand impresses upon them; but that, in the great chess-board of human society, every single piece has a principle of motion of its own, altogether different from that which the legislature might choose to impress upon it. If those two principles coincide and act in the same direction, the game of human society will go on easily and harmoniously, and is very likely to be happy and successful. If they are opposite or different, the game will go on miserably, and the society must be at all times in the highest degree of disorder" (Smith, 1759).

This long quotation says a lot. The DLDP is an intervention to create autonomous political, social and economic bodies that move within the roadmaps designed at federal and state levels. This chapter will discuss if institutionalizing these functions is successful or not. If the structures created to play the games are as efficient as desired, if the equilibrium between the informal and formal, the local interest and the central interest, the individual practitioners and the organizations is maintained or not, if path dependency is cleared from the mind and from the practices, if the desired equilibrium has emerged and stabilized. It also looks into relations within and external, and the physical aspects (facilities and human element) of the organizations at various levels.

5.2.   Emergence of the District Structure

In Chapter I, I explained that this district had been a command post for the expansion of Menelik II forces to the West and to the South West. It also housed a prison where senior war captives from the nobilities were jailed. Because of this and their massive involvement in the military services, people in the district are somehow among some of the relatively informed part of the state's population.

Figure 9: District Structure – Haileselassie

(Constructed from narratives)
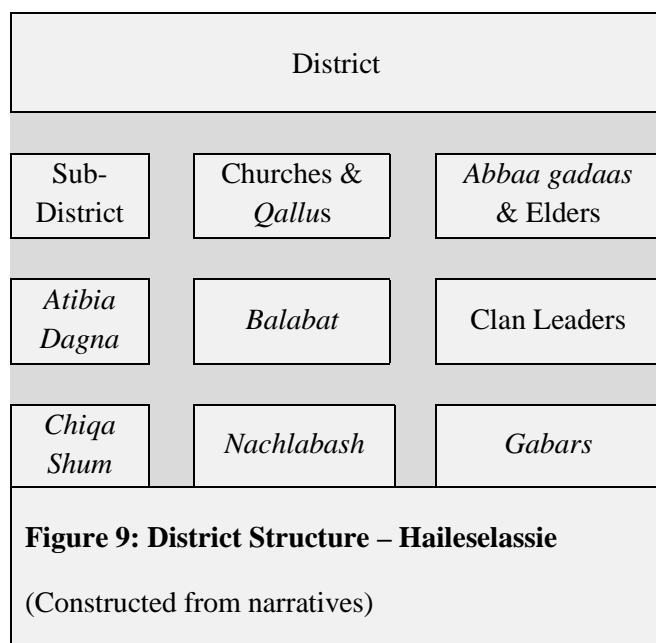
During the reign of Haileselassie, there were six sub-districts in the Dendi district with no more than three or four employees in each sub-district.   The sub–district had an *atibia dagna* (governor of the sub-district) who was appointed directly from the center *(See Figure 9).*

The *atibia dagna* were paid a small salary and had some hectares of land given to them by the government. They also depended on what they could collect from the people 'voluntarily' or 'involuntarily'.

C*hiqashums* (chiefs of the lowest tier) were also activists appointed from the center – most of the time none natives; the *balabats* were local land owners who worked as conduits to the *gabars* (land owners with special title and have no official authority) and the people, where significant numbers of the population were their tenants. Sometimes a single person could have dual authority, as *chika shum* and *balabat*, like in Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha. During the invasion and expansion to the South, Menelik II confiscated all the land and economically marginalized the local people. All governments quite know that land is a source of power (*natural industry that generates liquid asset*).

The church and the *qallus* (quasi-religious leaders in the Oromo culture) were religious bodies that had significant roles, in arbitration, indoctrination and suppression of all kinds of resistances against government. They represent the role political parties' play today. *Qallus* also called *Abba Mudas* were responsible to conduct the oath ceremonies of elected *Gadaa* leaders before they hold offices.

The elders were always considered as informal 'social courts' where cases were seen by persons selected by the two parties, plaintiffs and the defendant before going to the conventional courts. As I understood from the interviewees and the focus group discussions, the *chika shum* in the study *gandas* had his own cabinet, where he informally discussed serious issues and obtain consent from the *balabats*, *the gabars* and elders. As mentioned above *gabars* are land owners who have no political authority over the people, beyond their tenants. The cabinet of that time was organized under the cover of *Selassie Mahaber* (spiritual group often based on social status), held monthly at the members' houses. For members this was a ritual cause, but for the *chiqa shum* it was political, a forum for indoctrination and assessment of grapevines. They had no minutes to write or agendas to prepare, but the *chiqa shum* knew what to bring to the plenary. Influential members were even lobbied to provoke issues. There were also other network formation and assimilation mechanisms like *abelij*, *tut abbat*[24]*, etc…*
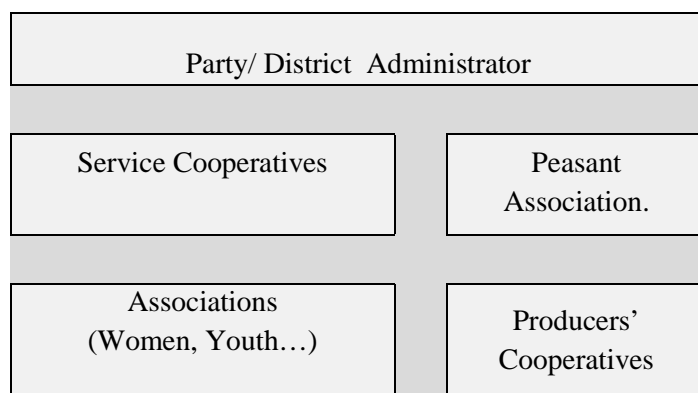
Figure 10: District Structure - Dergue
(Constructed from narratives)

Every system has its own way of assimilation by revolutionizing or contemporizing the terms, where there is no substantial change in the actual way of life. These *chika shums* were called to the sub-district to report once in a month and quarterly at district level. There were no written reports, unless there were specific things that needed decision and filing. Both at district and sub-district level, verbal reports were presented in a plenary called *shango*. At the end of the *shango* the governors were accustomed to giving directives and the *shango* was usually adjourned by swearing loyalty to the king.

During the Dergue regime, there were very different coercive structures *(See Figure 10)*. District level structures included: the party, the administration and the mass organizations (peasants, workers, women, youth, patriots, teachers, etc…). They were "one in all", because it was a one party rule. There were service cooperatives which were unions of three to five peasant associations mainly for economic purposes, provision of consumer goods, agricultural inputs and

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[24] Ritual and traditional mechanisms of adoption and assimilation

purchase of agricultural products. This was where the command economy was reflected and enforced at grassroots levels. Farmers had to sell their products to these cooperatives. They also had to buy whatever the cooperatives brought.

According to the informants, if they wanted to buy a sickle, they had to combine it with other non-moving items that they did not want. They also said that it had positive sides although they were forced to take the quality and quantity they did not want as a quota, only to get rid of poor quality materials produced by confiscated government owned factories. The chair persons of the peasant associations were influential figures, having the power of the party and the government in one box; they also had militia, prison and social court…full authority over the people and over the land. The *ganda* committee, which includes all the associations, the social court, the militia, the development agents, chairpersons of the cooperatives and the school directors were the upper body of the *ganda, de jury*, but the *de facto* power stick was in the hands of the peasant association chairpersons.

There were zones for each village in all the *gandas* which were led by the militia. The main tasks of the entire structure was to safeguard the system, collect taxes and fertilizer debts, control the market and administer the *ganda,* based on the order of the time. We can see from this structure *(Figure 10)* that elders, *qallus and* the church had no place during the rule of this communist oriented government.

How the *qallus* survived and reemerged following the fall of the Dergue is a good lesson about the endurance of institutions, how it takes time to do away with them once they are well established. The *qallu*s were totally abandoned during the Dergue. Their properties had been looted and in some places the *qallu* fathers were killed. But after the fall of the Dergue, the *qallu* institution re-emerged gradually in areas where they maintained a low profile for seventeen years. People who looted their properties returned without any investigation, in kind and /or in cash. At present they are resurfacing with much more vigor for reason that needs further research. Currently they are extremely influential institutions. The most popular ones in the district are: *Maram Jijo*, *Danfa Abba Boricha, Ofa Sibilu* and many others who report to them. They work and coexist in harmony with government structures.

At present, there is a huge structure at district level *(See Figure 11).* After decentralization, many tasks had been moved to district levels. According to Article 79/1 of *Megeleta*[25] Oromia the district assembly is constituted by persons directly elected at *ganda* level.

All the district level officials and leaders of mass organizations had to go to their *gandas* to come to the district as representatives. The district council is a body that meets once in three months and is expected to decide on major strategic issues. The district assembly appoints and approves

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[25] *Megeleta* Oromia: The Constitution of the Oromia State is known as "Megeleta Oromia", it is extremely sacred to the Oromos.

appointments of the administrator and his deputy, the cabinet members, the speaker and deputy speaker. The assembly also forms several other functional committees.

According to Article 65/2 of the *Megeleta* Oromia the judges are selected by Regional Judicial Administration Commission, being presented by Oromia State Supreme Court to the *Caffee* Oromia (to be read *Chaffe* Oromia) for appointment. The administrator has a key role and power that enables him to influence the entire structure.

Figure 11: District Structure - EPRDF

(Constructed from narratives)
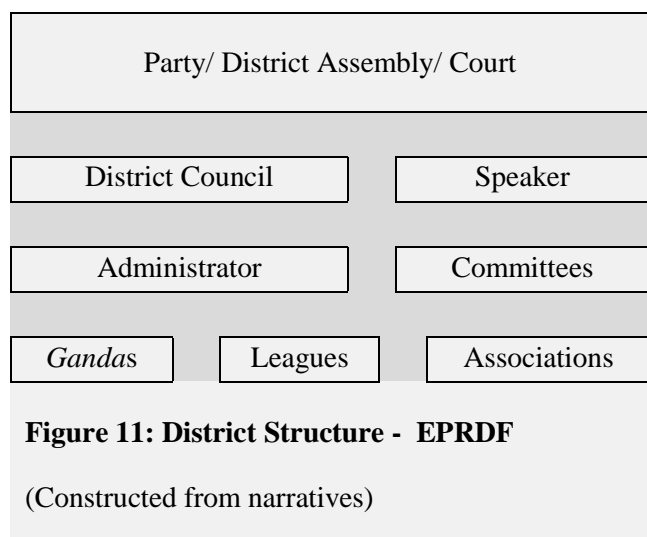
According to the data obtained from the informants as well as secondary data sources, there are about 28 appointees at district level. While the district administrator is the chairperson of the party committee, there are other party functionaries, holding office within the administration. The difference between the Dergue's and that of the current regime's structure at this level is that the party of the former had huge offices, structures and staff separate from the government office. But the current party workers are all fused into the government structure. There are youth and women's league that play great roles particularly in political activities, including election. There are also other professional associations organized to capture all sectors of the population. Even though there is always reluctance to recognize and support self-initiated associations including CSOs, both systems (the Dergue and the EPRDF) are very cautious not to leave any single individual unorganized.

As Ghinchi town is a municipal town (Grade 3/C[26]), it has a slightly different structure. While the elected bodies and the party structures are almost similar, it has a mayor, a deputy mayor and a manager, where the latter, a manager is common to all *gandas* and city administrations. The informants'[27] response, as to why the town exclusively needs a professional manager was that, *"because the town administrations need specific professions in town planning, land administration, housing, waste management, intercity roads, leisure places and other related activities"*. But still according to the informants there are not enough professionals assigned to administer and develop the town. Some posts are given to non professionals as a reward to their loyalty.

All the *gandas*, the two *ganda*s of Ghinchi, the Bodda Bosoqa semi-urban *ganda*, and the two rural *ganda*s, Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha have the same structure *(See Figure 12)*. Based

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[26] Towns are graded based on criteria set at the center, for the purpose of planning, budget and human power allocation.

[27] Ghinchi Town, *Ganda* 02 FGD, on 04/02/10)

on *Megeleta* Oromia Article 90/1, 2 and 3 the *ganda*s have the *ganda* assembly, the *ganda* council and the social court. The *ganda* assembly is constituted by the *ganda* administrators, deputy administrators, house speakers, social court members, most importantly the militias, the youth and women's leagues, other associations and persons who are elected by direct vote, including the officials making about 300 representatives. In the *ganda* council one school director, one health extension agent, one rural development agent and the *ganda* managers participate *ex-officio*.

The party is compulsory in all structures having an official hat within the structure. The *ganda* managers are party members who have better education, mostly diploma holders or persons selected from among teachers to guide and mentor the *ganda* leaders. In addition to the manager there are three rural development agents responsible for agriculture, natural resource protection and livestock. There are also two health extension agents one for primary health care and the other for hygiene and sanitation permanently assigned to each *ganda* in the health post.

Figure 12: *Ganda* Structure

(Constructed from narratives)

In the district there are a total of 54 *ganda*s of which six are urban (Ghinchi town has two *gandas*). If we multiply the 300 *ganda* assembly members with the number of *ganda*s, we get about 16,200 government activists/ participants who move the government wheel, which is about a 1:12 ratio when we compute for the whole population (192,784) in Dendi district, most likely most of them registered in political party list. The social court has three members and the house speakers are two. In the militia desk, formally called administration and justice, there is a commander, a commissar and many other armed staff.

There is also a party basic organization at *ganda* level, for which detailed data was not disclosed. Without considering the *gare*s and the general assembly, in one *ganda* alone we find a minimum of 50 persons who work almost 'regularly' at *ganda* level. 'Regularly' in this context, it means having regular programs and tasks throughout the week every day or every other day for some hours. Interviewee Dhangiya (on 05/04/2010) from Dendi Mummicha *ganda* said:

> "There is no loophole. The structure is water tight. There is no community member left outside the structure, everybody is in the net, either by gender, age, or other interest…The problem is with the results they bring or the commitment they have".

Gares are economic units where all the able bodied persons in the *ganda* are organized in 5-30 member groups and hold meetings every week to discuss political, security, economic and social issues. They are organized territorially in one village and sometimes as a taskforce for specific development works, e.g. horticulture, animal fattening, poultry, apiculture, etc… The development agents and health extension agents, together with the *ganda* deputy administrator and the manager, are responsible for these units. They prepare development plans as individual members, as a group and as a *ganda* every year. Plan accomplishment reviews are also held quarterly. The purpose is to practice a bottom-top planning principle. But, whether it is simply for formality or something that can be realized out of it will remain an issue to be discussed in the following chapters.

5.3. Work Environment

This might be an issue never ever thought of in this district, being considered as a luxury to be dealt with at later stage. However, to make the first step towards a set goal, from where you commence your operations and how you start the first steps are very critical.

Work environment includes the space, equipments used, individual and social connections (formal and informal) and physical safety of the workers that facilitate the work to be done. These include minimum functional facilities like: office settings, office facilities, quality and quantity of human power, equipment used to accomplish tasks and for mobility, inter and intra office communication technologies, job security and clear career development scheme and, above all, the social cohesion of the workers, work ethic and their relation with the service recipients.

Both physical and psychological considerations in the work environment play a decisive role for an institution to achieve its goals and to sustain itself. From this angle, although we learn from literature that many countries have their own extensive work environment Acts it is premature to say much about the case of Dandi.

At present the district administration uses as an administration center the former Workers Party of Ethiopia's office, built by the Dergue. The district council, the administrator and the deputy, the speaker of the house, the party, as well as important departments like justice and administration and communication are all squeezed into this place.

Sectors I have observed, rural development, health, finance and economic development and education have the same problem. Except for some expansion and rearrangements made based on business process reengineering (BPR)[28] layout all of them have the same setbacks. Some offices have more employees than they could accommodate. A typical example of this was the

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[28] Business process re-engineering (BPR)- is the analysis and design of workflows and processes within an organization, whereby all partitions have been demolished and employees sit in a row.

district level rural development office where, when some staff go out to do field work those who stay behind use their desks. If this was based on a schedule as in modern society where various people use one single office or desk for part of a day, it would not be a problem. But, when it is the result of a shortage or lack of coordination and planning, it is a huge problem.

Most offices are houses with mud plastered walls confiscated by the Dergue from private owners. In some offices I observed so many tables and chairs filled up to the entrance that one could hardly open the doors. Some staff has to stop their work so as to allow somebody else to go out. Surprisingly in some of these run down offices there are the latest desk-top computers, swivel chairs on rough and unleveled floors and T-tables[29] that take up most of the space, particularly in the offices of office heads. In many places the quality of office furniture does not match the kind of buildings in use. On the contrary in some other offices tables, chairs, drawers and shelves are extremely dilapidated. Many drawers of the tables in use and cabinets are dysfunctional and some are awfully maintained. Archives and record systems, except in the education office, in most places are terribly disorganized. File folders in most offices are squashed on very dusty shelves. The telephone connection is intermittent and unpredictable. One focus group discussant said; *"our telephone connection is like the rains of these days, it comes and it suddenly goes"[30]*. One cannot think about internet connections at all. It is felt that this situation is not because of only inadequate resources but is a failure in the system's organization, prioritization and coordination.

The Ghinchi Municipality is the same. The office layout, ventilation, light and furniture used in the offices all look like remnants from a war. Is this because of budget constraints or there is something else that hinders improvement of these facilities? Is it lack of knowledge or just lack of concern?

The *ganda*s in Ghinchi are not different from the district level offices. Their walls are all covered with a series of outdated data that show population, the *ganda* structure, community participation, list of associations in the *ganda*, polio immunization campaigns, list of self-help groups, etc… The facilities they are using are what successive *ganda* leaders have been using probably for the last thirty years.

The semi urban Bodda Bosoqa *ganda* office which has also been inherited from past successive regimes has relatively cheerful setting. It has its own compound with wooden fence and an open space where people can stay when they come for help. They also have different rooms for *ganda* departments and affiliated associations. There are fixed benches made from eucalyptus poles nailed together around the walls inside each room.

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[29] T-tables are when an executive table is connected to a conference table to form a "T" shape. These are common in most officials' offices; the executive table with high over head swivel chair, and about six conference chairs filling rooms up to mouth. This is not particular to Dendi, all over Oromia it is the same.

[30] Dendi Sulu *Ganda* FGD, on 03/04/2010

Even though most of it is outdated, like Ghinchi *ganda*s, the walls are decorated with data tables informing everything in the *ganda.* One prefers to sit in these rooms and copy the information on the walls than go to terribly placed files and folders. This is a better working place than the district level offices. In fact this place was a seat of Menelik II's command post during the expansion of his reign to the West and South Oromia in late 19th century that contributed as a foundation for the current setting. Besides the above mentioned factors, there are other reasons for the Bodda Bosoqa office to be better. I tried to find out in the focus group discussion what factors contributed to this. They mentioned the school, the Bodda School (grade 1-8), which was built during the reign of Haileselassei has contributed for the awareness. Teachers also supported and actively involved in the *ganda* administration compared to other *gandas*. As Bodda is a market place and a crossroad, people relatively have an attitude of 'townies'.

However, the ganda setting, which had been chosen to represent the semi-urban character, did not manifest much of this character in various criteria. It had a water supply built through a small grant obtained from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). But this scheme has not been working for the last five years due to the weaknesses of the district administration. People get water from a distant spring. The market place is the same as it was some forty years ago. The village is a muddled conglomeration of old houses with rusty roofs and dilapidated walls. One good advantage that they have is the gravel road that crosses the village and connects Ghinchi the capital and Tullu Bollo, a town on the artery asphalt road that leads to Jimma and further to southern part of the country.

The Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha *ganda*s have the worst of all facilities. Dendi Sulu *ganda* administration was using the Palace of Fitawurari Habtegiorgis, the first War Minister of Ethiopia, confiscated and wrecked by successive *ganda* leaders from the time of the Dergue. According to the informants, in 1974 when the revolution broke out, a group of people stormed the palace and looted all ivory, silver, gold and other traditional palace artifacts they found, which were sold out to souvenir shops for almost nothing. After the palace fell, the *ganda* moved to an appalling shed and unfenced site. It does not even have wind breaks-for themselves or for the people who go to the office to get services. Because of the Dambal Lake breeze and wind that comes from mountain corridors it is difficult to stay for long around the offices.

Dendi Mummicha *ganda* office is more of an open shelter scarcely better than the past traditional "oda tree shades" (which were known as the Oromo Parliament - a tree known in its scientific name as Ficus gnaphalocarpa). Actually these trees were found in the lowland areas, although it is hard to even find such trees now because of deforestation. *Picture (1)* shows the Dendi Mummicha *ganda*'s office. Previously it was a service cooperative store and an office.

At some point during the reign of the Dergue this service cooperative was one of the strongest service centers in the district. But during the change of government in 1991 all properties were irresponsibly looted and carried off to individuals' houses. There were other buildings adjacent to this, but they were dismantled, even the pieces of corrugated iron sheets were divided among

the looters. One focus group discussant[31] said the looters even shared the pans from a "*two- pan scale*" which was in the shop, to use it in their own homes as a dish. They threw away the body of the scale, which was shown to me.

What does this imply? Firstly the palace belonged to the feudal lords but this one was built by them. After the cooperatives were closed they have now started using it as a *ganda* office. It has no doors and windows. The mud plaster is already gone. Inside, dust is ankle deep. The brown roof seen in the *picture (1)* is not paint but rust. Interviewee Dhangiya (on 05/04/2010) from Dendi Mummicha *ganda* said, "*It belongs to the ganda administration day time, and in the night hyenas own it*".

Picture 1: Dendi Mumicha *Ganda* Office (Picture taken by the author)

The *ganda* stamp and important documents are always with the *ganda* administrator and usually the stamps and revenue collection receipt pads are kept in their pockets especially when they travel, go to their farms, go to local liquor outlets or other places.

Where is the change? What is the problem that hinders change? Is it a question of conviction, commitment or lack of resource, lack of knowledge? If they cannot afford renovating or building new, they could at least put up an organic fence, hedges or other trees which could also afford shelter. What improvements did the development agents bring after so much stay in the area? Why could decentralization, self rule and autonomy not lead to a better performance? Why do they [the service providers and service receivers] lack sense of ownership? Interviewee Milkesa (on 07/04/2012) from Dendi Mummicha *ganda* said:

> "It is because nobody is certain to stay in power, so they never think something sustainable; "today" is their concern not "tomorrow"; they don't know what will happen next".

He further mentioned that,

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[31] Dendi Mummicha *Ganda* FGD, on 03/04/2010

"It is a place where government agents sit; they are there not to serve us, but to serve the government".

One could argue that the natural behavior of farmers, as petty owners, most of the time their concern is: "*I*" not "*we*", but this is extreme. To see these run down and a dilapidated house for three decades is mind-numbing.

5.4. Human Power Strength

From the onset, when DLDP was launched, restructuring measures were taken in all districts. As mentioned above redeployment of staff from zonal and regional offices to districts was made. Compared to the past, and available space and the facilities, it would appear that relatively there is sufficient human power strength to govern the district.

As we can see from *Annex (II.1)* there are 1,327 employees on the payroll, 500 female and 827 male. Out of these, 915 work in the rural *ganda*s. 416 work at district level. The composition of gender, which is 36% for female, is also quite reasonable. The workers

Human Power by Education Level

- Diploma 39%
- Certificate 37%
- 12 or below 16%
- Degree 8%

Chart 1: Dendi Human Power -- (by education) (Dendi, 2009)

in the branch/ *ganda*s are employees of the education, health and rural development sectors. When we compute this with the total population it is almost 1:140; together with structure at the *ganda* level this is a tremendous force. When we look at the staff strength, distribution and level of education in each office, it indicates where the focus areas of government are; education, rural development and health take the lion's share. According to data obtained from the district there are still some 254 (16%) vacant positions at district level based on the new structure put in place to implement the DLDP.

When we see distribution at the level of education, there is one veterinary doctor and a health officer holding a Masters Degree for human health, 112 first degrees, 513 diploma, 490 certificate holders and the rest of 207 are Grades 12 or below *(See Chart 1)*. Most of the degree holders are teachers and experts in different sectors. There are only a few, one or two degree holders in the decision making bodies, in the administration and party bodies.

In 2005, there were only 24 degree holding-teachers and only one degree holder among the district level high officials. But now relatively there is a huge educated force at district level. This came about as a result of the DLDP. Most of the older staff members who remained in the
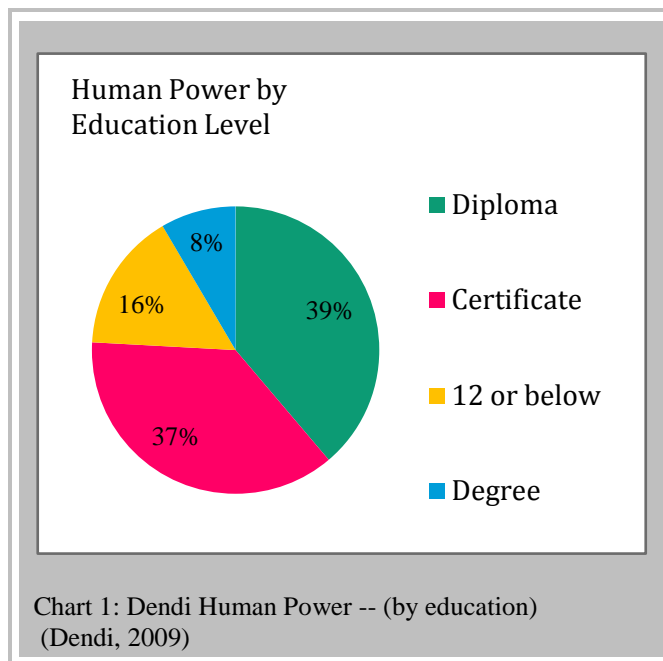
structure for a long time, through efforts they made as a means of survival to stay in the race, acquired their degree or diploma. Most employees still attend school and college through correspondence, summer courses or regular programs (Dendi, 2009).

Many workers have also been moved from zone level and even from the state level to districts. This was of course one of the failures of the DLDP implementation process. Employees who were neither wanted at the center nor had commitment and capacity were moved to the districts. On the other hand employees who challenged officials were also chasten and sent to remote districts, which caused a huge crisis at that time. The district also employed many qualified staff with its block grant.

Currently, about 50 key positions are filled *de facto* by top down appointment, using recruitment procedures only to serve formality. At least it would have been a fair one had it been done genuinely internally, by giving members a chance to compete. This practice discourages employees and negatively affects productivity. Surprisingly about 80% of these appointees are from a teaching background. The reason why political positions are dominated by teachers and its impact on development activities, itself needs a separate study (Dendi 2009).

All the interviewees complain that assignment of most workers is *de facto* based on the attachment and proximity they have with leaders of the system at various levels. The role played in party activities including while they were in the universities and colleges heavily counted for career advancement and to secure jobs. This proved to be a rampant problem; it would not be as severe as this if it was handled sincerely. But it has been observed that people join the party only to attain personal goals, while their support to the party itself is not evident. Another problem noticed is that if the district administrator is not a capable person who has confidence in his work, he always appoints person with less caliber in all horizontal and vertical positions which often create dissonance (a Machiavellian pattern). This leads us to ask ourselves certain questions like: How can we motivate and mobilize such a workforce and tap into its full energy? How can we correct mistakes and become cost effective and goal oriented? How can we bring workforce of dynamic capabilities to cope with a changing environment?

5.5.   Summarizing the Institutionalization Process

Even though judging the depth and breadth of all institutions and their sub-systems in the district is very difficult within the scope of this study alone, it seems, getting rid of elements of an old system, formal and informal is not an easy task. It is quite natural that a new system always born and grows in an old one, and the old persists within the new for some time. It shows that, institutions once established and internalized, it is always very difficult to topple them from the root at once.

Within current institutions, even surviving the Dergue regime, many elements of the feudal culture, norms and values still exist in the new systems. They appear more profuse than some of

the elements of the recent past and even the present. This is because of long term practices and extensive fusion into societal networks, being supported by religion and other social norms. When observed from practices and social relations, even though one rarely observes them formally, they are still substantial.

Therefore, some activities are instinctually tuned by these residue characters; even in formal practices let alone the informal. This is how they influence an institution which is still in the making.

Hence, compared to the importance of institutionalization in the implementation of a decentralization program, there is a lot to do in this respect. Rondinelli et al. (1989) cited in Frank Mabiriizii (2001:93) says, *"Ultimately the success of decentralization policies hinges on institutional capacity building"*.

 Development of institutions should follow a well designed path. But only by changing the structures or by putting together excessive material and human power one cannot form a sustainable institution. They should be built both from inside (commitment, knowledge and skill) and from outside (the means, facilities and working environment).

From the above, some issues can be seen that deserve highlighting: 1) forms of structures, 2) instability of staff that happens because professionals do not want to stay long in the district due to various factors, 3) instability of the leadership because of frequent removal from power, 4) instability of programs and strategies and changes that occur before previous plans attain their set goals, without leaving any foot prints and without evaluating the past achievements only in response to (external or internal) pressures as a temporary solution, 5) none existence of cohesion of the existing human power to increase productivity and program effectiveness, 6) constraints in the means to discharge assigned tasks, working space, working capital that in turn affects productivity, and 7) ineffective human power selection, recruitment and placement.

The structures of the past systems and the present have been presented above. Essentially, all of them had the same targets at district and at *ganda* levels. *De facto* there was not much difference in the way they were formed and from what they produced. Below district, they were *atibia dagna, chika shum, balabat and nachlebash…*during the reign of Haileselassie. These were changed to peasant associations, committees and militia during the Dergue. Currently they are called *ganda* administration, social court, committees, *gare*s and militias. Increase in number of employees and expansion of the structure is one significant change. The most substantive change observed is only the ownership structure. In Haileselassie's time land was private property owned by only a few individuals. In the latter systems land is owned by the government. At present, as a result of this ownership structure, there is significant psychological liberation. Of course when land is left to a remote owner, the government, it suffers the lack of sense of ownership. That is why everyone concentrates on what she/he gets from the land but not on developing it.

But in regard to changes in what new structures are expected to bring: good governance, improved service delivery, responsiveness, etc…there has hardly been tangible progress on the ground that justifies efforts of the ten years period.

What may be worth mentioning, in the current organizational practices, are the frequent changes in the structure. Folding or splitting positions is very frequent in the district organizational system. If structures are split this year and again merge in the next year, and if this process goes on nonstop, we cannot create stable institutions. We cannot in this manner bring the institutional feeling and the psychological makeup needed. Changes should always base themselves on the evaluation of the benefits and weaknesses of the past and tangible results that were anticipated from planned changes undertaken. What we need to do is enhance the quality and the means. The system needs to stabilize the structures and focus only on the changes of programs and projects and refinement of strategies and approaches, as and when needs arise. This should also not be very frequent or arbitrary. Otherwise it lacks stability to produce, like the Oromo saying goes, *"bishaan gabatee keessaa";* which means water in a bowl, once disturbed it takes a while to settle the turbulence.

Owing to dissonance created because of poor leadership of inefficient political appointees and frequent changes in structure, as presented above, the other problem is the issue of instability and high turnover of staff. No staff wants to stay in the district, except the old employees who have established themselves. These are those who have built their homes, married and have children and created their social links in the district. Several factors can be sited for the high turnover: factors such as bad leadership, bad working environment, non existence of incentives to motivate workers and gloomy career advancements.

To this effect, the newly assigned staffs either want to go for further education or move to big cities. Nobody from the newly assigned personnel and professionals has the institutional spirit at all. District level key informant, Sandaba (on 16/03/11) said; *"this is a transit station; where new employees count service-years that make them eligible to apply for transfer or further education. Nobody wants to stay in the district".* Thus, this shows that even for eligibility for transfer and promotion what counts is the years of services not what they produced or their merits.

For example, in some offices, while there are many professionals who have relevant degrees, non professionals or officials with irrelevant professions tend to take positions. This is not to say that those who have acquired a diploma or a degree always have the capacity to lead, but persons who lack both basic education that the position requires and the capacity, are generally appointed to a higher level only because of their loyalty. Though it would be naive to recommend to totally desist such practices (for known political reasons), there should at least be a limit should our intention is to bring about transformation.

Without closely studing the effect of loyalty based appointment on the broader political stability, I understand that one may not concretely state its repercussion. But it can be surmised that it

would not get structures marred with the practice anywhere. Loyalty driven appointments, without taking capability into consideration, adversely affects the entire working environment. It pollutes employees' motivation, erodes citizenry feelings and trust, and in the words of Bennett (1998:8) it deprives the district of even the most basic "*bureaucratic hygiene*".

Interviewee Abarra (on 09/02/2010) from Ghinchi Town said:

> "It is not planting a tree that matters, what matter is how you cultivate and develop it to maturity. It is a fact of this government that you cannot find an official who gave you an appointment last month in his office [*may be a little bit exaggerated*] because of high turnover. Before they broaden and deepen their roots into the society and form networks, they will be removed. Only the bad and immobile ones last longer" [comment added].

Instability of leadership is also a major problem in the district. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, but I discuss the worst part of this phenomenon. A district level expert interviewee, Guddata (on 14/03/2011) said:

> "Always we start our journey of development or change, from zero. If after moving certain distance we face some kind of obstacle, or if an incoming administrator is uncomfortable with the current strategy, or if he feels he can bring about a miracle in his own way, or if things grind to a halt, we detour and go back to zero and start our journey anew. This has happened not only during the change of government, but even within this system when officials or strategies change they come with new ideas, ruling out all the past, and blaming on the past. We wait until somebody again comes and does the same again. This is how it goes. This is why we are always at zero".

If incoming officials always reject the past and all the time start from zero, it becomes very difficult to move ahead. Change is a process. Corrections, rectification and adjustments are a continuous natural phenomenon at individual or organizational levels without waiting for a change of government. The idea of maintaining the continuum of institutional memory and the country's secrets, and also not to antagonize past relations and failures should be well adapted in our efforts to build institutions and bring about change. A system that has followed a chosen strategy or a policy may lead a group or an individual to an incorrect and destructive end however no one really wants to destroy his own country and hurt his people.

One cannot rule out the existence of self centered personalities, bent on enriching their own pockets and go out of their way to harm others just for the sake of securing their ill-gotten position and/or resources. However, it is just to promote an appreciative enquiry into institutional life; which means a positive, strength-based approach to change, finding the best in people, in past performances and the world around them, co-creating inspiring future images, focusing on what we want more of and finding and unleashing the positive core (Kelm, 2005).

The same is true with the programs and projects. If soft or hard returns are made from the midst of the process before the goal is reached, no progress can be made. We can change and reengineer programs frequently, but if they are not well planned (appropriate structure, resource and realistic time frames) they immediately wilt before their fruits can be seen. If programs are designed implicitly to divert the public's attention or in response to pressures from international or public side these only buy time and achieve nothing. There have been so many "beginning works" in the past at all levels. Interviewee Washatu (on 03/05/2011) from Ghinchi Town mentioned a saying in Oromo culture, with regard to the above:

> "In Oromo culture finishing a work that has been started is a very crucial criterion, in past, to select a female partner. It goes like this, '*calqaba kuttii*?' It sounds: 'does she complete what she has started?' It means if she starts this and that but does not finish any of them, she is more of a dream than reality; as only starting something does not guarantee that it will be finished".

Even though it may not go in line with today's feminism, it says a lot with regard to starting a project and working and realizing its goal.

Regarding cohesion, productivity and innovativeness of the human power at district level, as the saying goes, *"everything that is counted does not count"*, this too needs rethinking. Compared to past regimes there has been drastic numerical change. But is it really functional? No, it is not, it is a mass of people put together not yet institutionalized. As the Oromos say, *sangaa loonii fi sangaa roobii*, it is like, yoking hippopotamus to an ox. It means, an ox pulls in the direction of the house and the hippo drags to the river or water where it lives. Observations got and evidences obtained from the informants show the state of total fragmentation. There is no well established common interest that binds the human power together.

The description of equilibrium discussed in the conceptual part of this chapter is relevant here. Elster (1989: pviii) says, *"Institutions keep society from falling apart, provided that there is something to keep institutions from falling apart"*. On the other hand there must also be a reason, formal or/and informal, why members of a given institution keep the institution from falling apart. There are several reasons why the members of a given institution were unable to say, "Yes this is my institution"; "I own it", "I have to develop it and I have to maintain it".

One of the focus group discussants set out his grievance as follows. He is the only one in his family who has succeeded in earning a college education and getting a government job. He still complains. He is dissatisfied because he compares his position to that of his friends whom he thinks are under-performers, in academics and their capabilities in discharging duties. As discussed this is about relative deprivation:

> "As the Oromo saying goes, '*you cannot complain about destiny, it is only time that can reverse it'*. By complaining alone, I cannot make change. I was among the top three when

I graduated from the university. My friends who achieved less in the college are enjoying better lives in the big cities with their families. I have a five year old child and have to spend much of my time looking after him because there is no good kindergarten where you can have your child cared for. He could end up having my fate[32]".

This is mostly the feeling of every one and what everybody expects as an outcome of higher education; which is often understood as detaching oneself from rural life. However, we can also sense elements of unfair selection and placement of employees from this quotation.

Many years ago (1776), this was clearly written by Adam Smith in his *The Wealth of Nations* cited in Minowitz (2004:385):

"Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of the society, which he has in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally, or rather necessarily leads him to prefer that employment which is most advantageous to the society" (*WN:* 454).

Still another problem is the lack of confidence and trust among employees. It seems like a takeover race by being closer to the political appointees, because the decision to promote/demote is in the hands of these bosses. This has created a loss of trust and self confidence within employees and also make them think of 'a way out' rather than building and maintaining the institution. There is always turbulence in the structures that could not be calmed down to show consistent growth.

Hence, as a theoretical base for the understanding of the importance of the cohesion of staff, let us again look at the elaborated version of North's (1991:97) explanation of contents and functions of institutions:

"They [institutions] consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights)… Together with the standard constraints of economics they define the choice set and therefore determine transaction and production costs and hence profitability and feasibility of engaging in economic activity. They evolve incrementally, connecting the past with the present and the future; history in consequence is largely a story of institutional evolution in which the historical performance of economies can only be understood as a part of a sequential story. Institutions provide the incentive structure of an economy; as that structure evolves, it shapes the direction of economic change towards growth, stagnation, or decline".

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[32] Ghinchi Town, *Ganda* 02 FGD on 04/02/2010

The role of institutional economics would be very important here. As mentioned above, numerically there has been a tremendous change in the human power strength. But it needs to calculate a return and productivity of each staff member as well as cost benefit analysis of the establishment of each office and changes undertaken (as BSC applies). To create a good working atmosphere in the district, resizing of the staff needs to be undertaken. Offices should be opened based only on actual demand and availability of resources to keep them progressing. Creating facilities that attract professionals to the district and make them stay for at least one strategic period (five years) is very vital.

The other big problem is the budget, issues related to facilities and the recruitment procedures. These will be discussed in the next chapters. However, offices have only salaries, no working capital at all. Employees cannot get per diem to move from place to place and there are no vehicles to move around and accomplish their tasks. Day-in and day-out they see themselves only signing a time sheet and then perhaps writing bogus reports at the end of the month. This also contributes to their motivation and cohesion. Interviewee Abarra (on/09/2010) from Ghinchi Town explained the effects of idleness as follows:

> "Like the Oromo saying goes, "*sammuun, hojii dhabu daba hindhabu*", [something like saying, an idle mind is the devil's play ground], people simply think inward and spend their time gossiping if they are idle. The most important thing is to create jobs, not salaries" [interpretation added].

Positions need to be opened only when there is something to do for at least eight hours a day and when there is relatively sufficient input for what that specific task demands (facilities, resource, etc…). Currently, everyone, particularly political appointees are 'working' the whole day including weekends (even though mostly meeting), harassing others and disturbing families - if this can all be considered as work. Actually, work by its very nature (be it in natural or social sciences) must have an input and output within a given time frame, otherwise, if no result is achieved or no distance is moved, it cannot be considered as a work. I think this kind of hysteria neither moves us in the intended direction nor does it makes us more productive.

It can be said that the problem of offices and working spaces have come about because of budget constraints. But strategy also matters. The district could come up with a strategy to provide something tangible in such a long period of time at least. They could build on what had been attempted by the Dergue, standardizing the layout of offices and furniture for similar structures. We see nothing new or only a few changes regarding offices in the past twenty years.

As mentioned above, the district administration is using office and some office furniture, built for the district Workers Party of Ethiopia by the Dergue. The Dergue built offices for districts and zones in phases, this year to district/zone (X), and next year to district/zone (Y). Even the districts chosen for new buildings could schedule completing the whole layout in phases: this

year one block, next year another block…it goes on like that. In this way we could achieve something tangible in ten or twenty years.

This could start at least with one or two districts in the zone and also doing the same in the *gandas* based on the standards we set at that level. Doing this we can see something tangible in ten or twenty years, and the replication effect will be very high. Otherwise everything will become like our farm lands, where we disburse the scarce seeds on extensive and unproductive areas without proper cultivation and input and get no, or insignificant yield.

Standards for offices and refurbishment are also very important, to correct practices such as using furniture that costs more than the building and moving swivel chairs onto uneven floors. I think it is good to build on the past experience of the Dergue, where furniture for all similar offices are purchased based on standards jointly set.

For the offices, even though budgets are not sufficient, like I mentioned above it would have been possible to take a good space and decorate it with plants based on a master layout and do only parts every year; instead of suffocating oneself in small rooms when there is plenty of space.

Chapter VI: Extent of Decentralization (Decision Making Power and Resources)

6.1. Motives to Decentralize Authority

RQ # 2: How pragmatic and enabling is the transfer of decision making authority and resources to realize the DLDP? To what extent the authorities legally provided been utilized/ exploited? This question has two main parts. The first question is believed to generate data on the causes that influence the adequacy, fairness and timeliness of the transfer of authority & resources. The second one is targeted to check how well the transferred and available authority and resources have been utilized.

There are various reasons for a nation to decentralize authority from center to lower tiers. Three main drives why nations decentralize their system of governance will be explained next. The first one is based on the interest of nations, nationalities and people's desire for *self–rule* on the one hand and the interest of maintaining *shared rule* for mutual benefits on the other hand. Then, the interest in this regard as Elazar (1987) explains is to create a system of authority in which neither the center nor the constituent units can unilaterally alter the distribution of power and hence the balance between self rule and shared rule will be maintained. This is a drive that can be explained under identity pressure.

The second is functional interest, which can be explained under externalities and scale effects of functional characteristics of public goods. This is about balancing externality or spill–over that occurs when a decision causes costs or benefits to people on the one hand; and on the other hand the scale effects that occur when more units of goods or services can be produced on a larger scale with relatively less input costs at the center. As we see in this case the interest for decentralization is not the ethnic or identity interest, it is functional interest (Besley and Coate, 2003).

This can be best explained under the 'decentralization theorem' which explicitly states that heterogeneous preferences of any kind may lead to decentralization. Schakel (2009:17) explains the functional interest as follows:

> "…the 'decentralization theorem' draws attention to the fact that the observed degree of decentralization does not need to solely reflect the presence of ethnic minorities or differences in local preferences. A certain degree of decentralization is efficient and possibly inevitable because of the functional characteristics of policies provided by government. In this perspective, each policy has its own optimal jurisdictional size which may range from the local to the global. A certain degree of decentralization may always be expected and is dependent upon the specific policies provided by government".

As a matter of fact, it is the functional pressure that has played a great role in many countries for turning to the decentralization program. Schakel extensively explains that one can understand that creating '*multi-level governance*" to increase efficiency is a major concern of multilateral organizations as well, from the huge amount of money they allocate every year for this purpose. He said, *if anything, stasis does not apply to the institutional landscape of regional authorities.* States must move to maintain the country's momentum. It is the sum total of achievements in each state that counts to the overall performance of the nation.
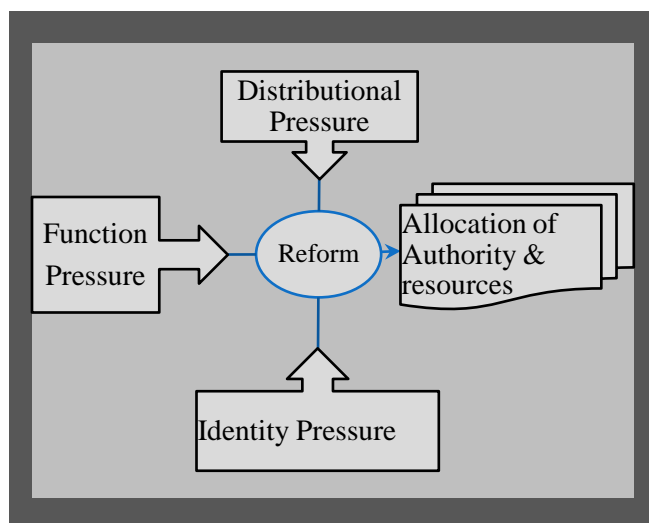
Figure 13: Drives to Decentralization
(Adapted frm Schakel, 2009:21)

The third driving condition, of course to a lesser extent compared to identity and functional reason is, distributional interest. This factor deals with equity, the political opportunity structure and economic benefits offered to lower tiers and various regions. *Figure (13)* clearly shows how the combination of all the three drives leads to allocation of authority and resources across government tiers. Of course, the debate on whether focus on '*productivity*' comes first or fighting about '*equity*' and '*distribution*' where there is no production is also something we have to see in a subtle mind.

In the case of Ethiopia, while identity issue was a burning one for many years, after the change of the government in 1991 the other two (functional and distributional) pressures were also factors that compelled the government to decentralize the system. After a task is accomplished and one objective is achieved, then, the "*so what*?" question follows. There was a dominance of the distributional factor at some point, but it seems that there is a shift to the functional factor at present. After the identity issue has been relatively resolved, people started to think about tangible benefits in their actual life. Government also understood that there is a lot to do to address various gaps in the society, beyond the identity issue.

Reasons for multilateral agencies to push in this line and the emergence of the DLDP were also based on increasing functional efficiency, focus on increasing productivity and the GDP of the country, paving ways to democratic practices and encouraging preparation of development plans from bottom to top.

Hence Oromia, as a state, was one of the states where the issue of national question, equity, underdevelopment and extreme marginalization used to be, and still is to a larger degree, an agenda of politicians and the people as a whole. With this regard at least in principle, on basic state documents the measure towards federalism and decentralization was a fundamental step.

6.2. Sequences of Decentralization

As explained in the literature, a prominent decentralization expert Falleti (2005:327) explains how the sequences of decentralization matter. For the interest of emphasis, she says:

> "If the process starts with administrative decentralization it is simply a deconcentration of tasks. It is simply pushing away routines from the center. Decentralization of this type is not different from establishing field offices by local staff".

When political decentralization takes place and is followed by administrative, it is again only passing over of responsibilities, not authorities to lower bodies. This type of sequence only pushes complaints to lower bodies. If political tasks are devolved and administration is deconcentrated without finance (resources), it does not serve the real purpose of decentralization.

As it is unlikely that governments decentralize the fiscal task first, Falleti proposes the sequence shown in *Figure (14)* which she thinks is more practical, if the program is to bring about change and enhance development. This transfer can take four "forms" specific to the dimensions and based on the extent of decentralization.

Action	Dimensions	Forms
Transfer of Decision Making Authority	• Political • Fiscal • Administrative • Economic/ Market	• Deconcentration • Delegation • Devolution • Privatization

Figure 14: Sequential Theory – Decentralization
(Tabulated from narratives)

The decentralization program in Ethiopia followed: Political ⇨ Administrative ⇨ Fiscal sequence. The economic/market dimension has not been mentioned because it requires further assessment as it is almost nonexistent or perhaps it is still at a very early stage.

During the first wave of decentralization, that only went as far as states it followed "Political ⇨ Administrative" form. But in the second wave of decentralization, when the DLDP was commenced fiscal decentralization took place.

Nevertheless, it is not only this sequence that matters for the success of the decentralization program. There are many other complicated factors such as the weight of the leading party, the accountability issue (if the legislative is *de facto* accountable to the executive), the weight of states (their capacity to influence the center and their resilience to courageously utilize their legitimate powers) given the need for the consent of the leading party for each and every step of the way and also for many other reasons.

With regard to economic/market decentralization, there is little to mention. The question of involving the private sector in production, service delivery and starting the exercises to privatize

some economic and social activities still needs attention to get space. Of course in a district where about 95% of the economic base is underdeveloped agricultural system, it would be very difficult to talk about market regulations/deregulations. However, the district administrative and political body is still not clear of the role the private sector should have or the future trends.

Notwithstanding the shortages of resources, the district is exercising to a lesser extent these authorities entrusted to it as a result of the DLDP since its commencement. However, I am not certain to what degree the influences of political leadership behind the scenes complicate the process by playing bridle and bit.

6.3. Explaining Authority and Power

From the point of view of management, authority is a legitimate provision (acquired in several forms) to have control over functions and resources in relation to explicit rules, regulations and the constitution at large. Power on the other hand is the ability to exercise or exhaustively utilize this legitimate authority (sometimes even beyond) by exerting different kinds of influences.

Management scientists group 'power' into six types: *reward, coercive, legitimate, informational/multidimensional, referent and expert*; where one may have one or more of these in various combinations (Alanazi and Rodrigues, 2003:375-395).

Hence, authority is measured from the angle of formally availed or acquired rights through constitutions, special statutes, rules, regulations and in some cases, established norms; whereas, the measurement of power is connected to party structures, partisanship, local and regional leadership capability and public pressure, all of them exponentiated with any one or a group of the six types of power mentioned above (Schakel, 2009:25).

From the explanation we may understand that authority is a constrained resource; like the sources of solar, wind, hydro energies and other natural resources. They are always there. But they need to be transformed to power, to become valuable. Again it needs enhanced capacity to transform these resources including the transformation of authority to a power. Therefore, what matters is the power that states and localities acquire to make the best use of these resources not only the availability of authority provided in papers.

Thus, what is apparent at the district level with regard to transfer of authority, changing it to power and utilizing authority can be summarized as follows. It is how a system disables the local bodies or sectors, even when ample authority is there in the documents: 1) Assignment of incapable persons only based on loyalty criteria, who cannot change the authority to power and properly utilize the transferred authority, 2) Depriving the means that facilitates the realization of the authority: it is a tie that disables even capable persons if they do not have the means to implement or to exercise the authority transferred, 3) To play the bridle and bit game openly or through hidden hands, where the upper tiers exert overt or covert control over the lower tiers and localities to motivate or halt activities, 4) To disable the officially transferred authority by

applying additional guidelines and rules, 5) To divert the implementers from important developmental activities and making them busy with trivial tasks (like meeting, other desk assignments, preparation of events, resolving inter-organizational conflicts, etc…). It is very difficult to exhaust the list. How this actually affects the efficiency and productivity will be discussed under the next subtopics.

6.4. Transfer and Utilization of Decision Making Authority

Provisions for regional autonomy and the relationship between each tier of government have been regulated by the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995). The constitution clearly sets down federal and state powers. The principle of mutual respect, reciprocity and support are unequivocally stated. Article 39(1-4)*, Rights of Nations, Nationalities and People* addresses responses to identity pressure, going further up to the possibility to secede.

Article 50 (4-7) and Article 52 (1and 2), which determined the reengineering of the structure of the state organs and powers and functions of states responds to the functional interest of the decentralization program. The national policy principles and objectives are well stipulated under Articles 88-92. These articles set out political, economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives and address equity, social responsibility issues, concerns about environment and the future generation…everything in response to distributional pressures (FDRE, 1995).

In line with the federal constitution*, Megeleta Oromia* (2001) of the Oromia state explicitly regulates the powers and duties of district and the *ganda* tiers under Articles 76 -100. According to this constitution the authority to develop their locality and to protect the rights of their people to a required level is handed over. Cross-cutting issues like political, economic, cultural, social and environmental issues are also clearly and extensively promulgated in this constitution, Articles 102-107 (*Megeleta* Oromia, 2001).

The Decentralization Policy and Strategies Framework document which had been revised and adopted in 2007 by the *Caffee Oromiyaa* (to be read Chaffe Oromia) enumerates procedures, rights and duties of each tier in the implementation of the DLDP. Being founded on the federal and state constitutions this policy framework sets the mission and vision of the DLDP and defines local governance. Local governments according to this document are the zones, the districts and the *gandas (*Oromia State, 2007:7).

Based on this document the main objectives of the DLDP are summarized as follows:

1. To promote good governance and strengthen democracy by enhancing accountability, transparency and responsiveness.
2. To empower people through enhanced participation in planning and decision making and creating a sense of ownership.

3. To enhance economic development, ensure equity and raise the living standards of the community by applying creative, competitive and all inclusive (the government, the private sector, the civil society organizations and the community at large) administration systems.
4. To strengthen downward and horizontal devolution of power in order to enhance local and sectoral capacities.

While these are the main objectives, the framework also elaborates issues which are not detailed in the *Megeleta* Oromia. In the *Megeleta* the legal position of cities and towns in the government tiers were not explained separately in detail. This framework explains their vertical and horizontal relations and further describes the criteria to determine the rank of a city to have a zonal or a district status.

In this policy framework, responsibility, powers and functions of the local government/district have been elaborated. It has been stated that all organs have the dual accountability- to the community and upwards. All organs have the responsibility to coordinate sectors, CSO and the private sector to make best use of scant resources.

All organs have the responsibility to empower the *gandas* and cooperate with adjacent local government bodies in matters that go across boundaries. Under the long list of powers and functions, planning, natural resources management, service delivery, peace and legislative issues and culture have been comprehensively placed. Decision making authorities provided to local governments in this regard and principles that guide their implementation have also been explicitly detailed.

However, as repeatedly said, the problem is not merely with the provision of authority in documents or even the question of just giving out power (empowerment), but using power (action) has a pivotal importance. The actual practices are always constrained by several implicit or explicit factors.

Ayenew (1998:6) wrote the following:

> "The authority of decentralized governments is often eroded by central government intrusion into the affairs of the former. Multi-ethnic nation states have excessive concerns about national unity and this compels them to interfere in the internal administration of regional states. Whenever central governments perceive threats to the survival of the state and subversive activities that will undermine national unity, they suspend the powers and authority given to sub-national governments. This unprecedented action may take the forms of declaring a state of emergency in the area concerned, temporarily ending home rule or imposing direct central rule upon recalcitrant sub-national governments. Whatever form it may take, the end result is the further erosion of the legal authority and independence of the concerned regional unit of government to administer itself".

Obviously this is a pervasively embedded nature of the system at all levels. But sometimes, obsessions and excessive suspicions tie the local governments' hands and make all their movements doubtful. This in turn leads to very low productivity, existence of unproductive functionaries with no initiative and innovation, all of which, at the end of the day, negatively affects the program implementation and development of the country.

The findings of this study indicate that there is a formal structure and devolution of authority. But capacity has not yet been created at district level to absorb these authorities. Besides this, the party structure is the mighty force behind this formal structure that influences the whole movement. It is a shadow that follows every step of these bodies. The one party rule, which is not yet decentralized, is a command from one center. Fused into the system, head to tail with various layers that do not even know each other in many cases, they play slowing or accelerating, motivating or demotivating roles.

The district level expert interviewee, Guddata (on 14/03/11) reflected the following:

> "Yet they [*the district officials*] are not on their legs. When some kind of instruction comes from above, they rush to convey it even before they swallow what they have in their mouth" [Bracket added].

As observed in most writings political parties in developed countries have almost grown to having similar core party programs with slight differences. Most programs concerning national issues converge in many cases. The parties are not official forces that directly influence the government. Even if they play a great role, it goes through the government by securing positions in the government structure. This is not observed in our case. If the moves were fair and strengths head in the right direction, all inclusive and to the required speed it would not be a problem at all. Even then it needs plurality that sharpens its way and pace, or as in the west, critical discourse on issues must be prevalent at all levels of the structure including within the party systems.

When I say competition among opposition, I am not referring to the past experiences in our country where incrimination, blackmail and antagonism reigned and confused the people, a state that lead to neither progress nor development, but simply blaming each other. I refer to the experience of civilized societies where focus is on policies, strategies and ideas; not on narrow ethnic thinking or attacking of personalities, scratching scars and wounds in the past instead of looking ahead.

The district level key informant, Sandaba (on 16/03/11) remarked:

> "Many of the party members have joined the party to secure job. They are not truly committed to the party's program. It is pretension. The incidence of election 2005 has perfectly proved this. It needs rethinking".

People follow the party for many reasons: for security, because of fear of being labeled with this or that opposition, for security of their property or business, for benefits and/or because they have no other choice.

Of course there are some who revere parties as it was in the time of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks or like spiritual institutions in both the opposition and the ruling parties. Most of the followers in the opposition and ruling party support even without knowing the programs. These associates are even more fanatical than those who accepted the programs consciously, understanding the programs. In the era when people in the developed world exercise '*split ticket*' options and significantly use these rights (meaning voting for different parties at different levels), citizens in this part of the world are considered as arch enemies if they reflect any deviation. This kind of feeling is not limited to only the ruling party; it includes all the so called oppositions.

Actually there are no as such competing parties. Those parities that existed narrowly have all been disabled. This non existence of a multi-party system and irrational support of the ruling political party to the death by some members, or only joining the party for shelter, render the system dull and immobile.

To this effect, because of lack of committed and capable leaders in local government, the authority transferred to the local government simply "decorates shelves". The locals are not yet able to change them to powers that mobilize the community in a true sense. If there are no congruent forces that thrust the workings of the system that is how they will naturally perform. At this point we can see the truth of the congruence theory which has been mentioned in the literature review chapter that hypothesizes:

> "Governments perform well to the extent that their authority patterns are congruent with the authority patterns of other units of society. More specifically, high performance (above a threshold) requires high congruence, and, for all cases, performance increases monotonically as a function of congruence" (Eckstein, 1997:1).

What is missing? Is this the best government/ the leading party can come up with? Or are there issues that threaten the decision makers to embark on enhanced capacity? There are clear visions, missions and strategies posted in front of every office that I visited at district level and even at the *ganda* offices. But they are not active; they have mainly been displayed to fulfill formal interest. As we see from Annex (II.1) there are many professionals, but they are not engaged in practical work.

Through the interviews I came to know that authorities, responsibilities and functions given to the districts are not known by many of the development practitioners. They just run here and there instinctively, come up at the end of the month with no tangible result. As mentioned above there are no opposition parties or strong civil society organizations to provoke and put thrust on state functionaries in order to obtain congruent services.

Interviewee Abarra (on/09/2010) from Ghinchi Town remarked the following:

> "There is everything on papers, but for two reasons they are not utilizing the authority transferred to them. Firstly they do not abide by the official rules. These official rules, regulations, and proclamations are for shelf consumption. Their work is based on inconsistent daily routine directives that flow from the upper tiers, mainly verbal or in a meeting. The second one is capacity limitation. For some of them they are perfectly doing their job, there is no better performance that competes to theirs. They may also feel that they have already achieved their final goal, and people cannot get anything better than this".

In conclusion, the findings show that there are ample authorities transferred to the district following the DLDP, however they are extremely constrained by the political system explicitly and/or implicitly. Notwithstanding, the conditional intrusion by higher tiers there is no adequate capacity nor commitment to change the supplied authorities to power, to practice and to exhaustively utilize them. It needs wise leadership to bring on board capable persons who can perfectly play the role, fix the local system and create a competitive environment.

6.5. Transfer, Adequacy and Utilization of Resources

In the preceding subtopic, I have mentioned that authority is a resource, an intangible resource. But, besides authority what resources are required to realize the DLDP? How adequately have they been transferred to this district? Before I discuss the transfer of resources it would be relevant to elucidate what resources mean in this context. The emphasis was on human power, material and finance.

When the DLDP was launched the initial intention was to deconcentrate human power, material and finance from the state and zonal levels to the districts. It took an upheaval of almost one fiscal year that ended with a lot of grievances. This has been gradually settled and things are now relatively on a move. Regionalism and narrow thinking had been reflected by the decision makers while they moved employees to the district. As I repeatedly mentioned this is what makes this issue of identity or ethnic biases complex and endless.

According to the informants, during the commencement of the DLDP, materials such as vehicles, office furniture and equipment, motorcycles and other used items were relocated to the district. But the zones kept what they wanted and distributed worn and torn materials, non functional vehicles and motorcycles. This in itself diminishes the commitment of people at the receiving end to bring about change and to accept decisions with conviction.

With regard to human power as explained above, inappropriate actions were taken that amounted to misuse or abuse of this vital resource. Zones and regions pushed out employees resented for several reasons; one of which could be the weakness of the employees but in most cases the corruption driven decisions of higher officials. Those who had no strong informal networks were

also victimized in this process. However, the district has hired many new employees and tried to fill positions from the district to the *ganda*s. They may have taken on more people than necessary compared to the facility and their annual working capital. But, according to the district structure, there is still a gap if ambitions are to be realized. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Fiscal decentralization is considered core to all other dimensions. The formula to distribute the intergovernmental revenue allocation bases itself on the federal constitution. *Table (3)* shows the revenue assignment in Ethiopia as stipulated under Articles 96, 97 and 98 in the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and *Megeleta* Oromia Article 47 (h-p), pulled together (FDRE 1995 and *Megeleta* Oromia 2001):

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Revenue Assignment		
Federal Government	States	Federal and States (joint)
Custom duties, taxes and other payments on imports and exports	Income tax of state and private enterprise employees	Income and profits of enterprises they jointly establish; jointly levy and collect taxes on profits of corporations and dividends paid to share holders
Income tax on Ethiopian employees of international organizations	Fees for land use rights	
Income, profit and sales taxes on government enterprises	Tax on income of private farmers and incorporated farmers	
Tax on proceeds of national lotteries and those of other games of chance	Tax on profit of state resident merchants and sales taxes	Income derived from large scale mining, petroleum and gas operations and royalties
Taxes on proceeds of air, rail and water and sea transport services	Water transport fees within the state	
	Taxes on income derived from private property within the state; rent on houses they own	
Rental incomes on federal government houses and properties, and fix and collect rents	Taxes on profit and income of government enterprises located within the state; sales taxes	
Federal license fees	Without prejudice to Article 98(3) income tax from mining operations, royalty fees and land rent	
Tax on income on government monopolies	Fees for state license and services	
Stamp duties	Royalty fees for use of forest resources	

Table 4: FDRE Revenue Assignment

This is a huge step forward. Formulas have been modified several times and revenue shares have been revised. Nevertheless, Ethiopian economists still comment on the unfairness of revenue sharing arrangements, compared to the huge tasks devolved to the states. Keller (2002:42) remarked in his article, saying:

"The heavy reliance of regional states on the Federal Government for fiscal resources is only part of the story. In spite of an admirable development strategy centered on the principle of revenue sharing, regional states tend not as a rule to be able to make any significant headway".

Even though the issue is about DLDP, it is worth mentioning to understand the state of revenue actual sharing and flow from source, to identify where blame should be laid.

No.	Level	Title	Amount
Oromia Budget Disbursement (2009)			
1.	Oromia & Zones		3,621,430,049
1.1.		Recurrent	1,683,010,605
1.2.		Capital	1,788,419,444
1.3.		Contingency	150,000,000
2.	Districts	Block	4,686,946,000
Total Oromia Budget			8,308,376,049

Table 5: Oromia Budget
Source: Oromia State (2009)

Table (4) shows Oromia's (27,158,471 population) budget disbursement of 2009 (Ethiopia's general government expenditure for the same year, 2009, was about Birr 57, 774,000,000 - average exchange rate for the year was 1USD=11.78Birr). It is substantial figure, but when inflation is factored its actual effect on development activities may not be significant. The 4,686,946,000 Birr untied budget goes to all the districts and municipal towns (about 325), and mainly covers the recurrent expenses as shown in *chart (3)* below.

As to revenue sharing between the district and the state there is not clear rule or regulation in the *Megeleta*, but there is a clear formula set out separately by Oromia Finance and Economic Development Bureau. Article 79 of *Megeleta* Oromia (2001), under Powers and Duties of District Council, states:

"g) Ensure the proper collection of land use taxes, and similar other taxes as determined by law; h) Utilize revenues other than those that fall within the domain of the Regional State; deliberate upon and approve its budget".

This is only about the task to follow up, and additions to these articles may make the provision equal to none; additions that bind implementation by referring to separate laws. This was the point where the extent of control over the revenue should have been legitimized. Even though, districts and *gandas* are the front line collectors of revenue, nothing has been explicitly mentioned in the *Megeleta*, let alone for the revenue sharing, not even for the duties entrusted to them with regard to fiscal autonomy. Therefore, this shows that these lower tiers have no concrete income on which to plan. They depend entirely on the state and ultimately on the center.
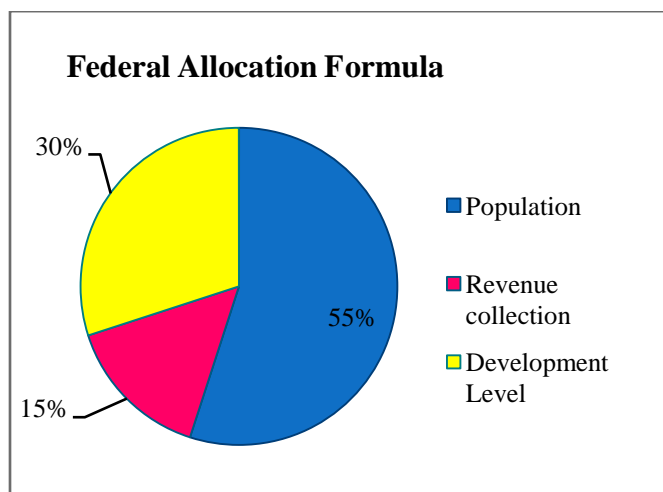
Federal Allocation Formula

30%

55%

15%

- Population
- Revenue collection
- Development Level

Chart 2: Federal Budget Allocation
Sorce: Lissane & Mohammed (2005) cited in Asefa &
Gebre-Egziabher (2007:28)

The allocation and transfer of the annual budget from Oromia to districts is based on fundamental principles established by the federal government but with slight differences. The general country level formula allocates 55% for the population index, 30% for development level index, and 15% for own revenue collection index, which of course is periodically subject to change (Asefa & Gebre-Egziabher, 2007:28).

But currently, the formulas are more refined in Oromia. While the main principles are maintained in all the variables, they are more specified to avoid ambiguity and subjective decisions. This modification includes uses of cost derivatives and unit cost by sectors and a consideration of local expenditure needs (*See Annex II.2.*). How the formula originated, and how the indexes have been progressively or regressively applied is a very good exercise. According to the budget formula guidelines, all allocations are based on government policies and priorities, because budget is the instrument to implement them (Oromia State, 2004).

To this effect, theoretically, the variables to be used in the budget formula essentially incorporate policy variables. They take into consideration questions like: What are the government's priorities? What does the government want to do in the short and long term? What are the state's development action plans within the national development policy framework?

Furthermore, in calculating the allocation, the formula takes into consideration balances between sectors, between the capital and recurrent budget, between the development level of the districts and other particulars. It also determines ceiling for the recurrent, based on inter district balances. It has also some factors that motivate the best performers in revenue collection. However, the problem lies with the volume of share that comes from the center to the states and that the lion's share of the allocation goes to administration costs.

The district level expert interviewee, Guddata (on 14/03/11) remarked:

"You cannot find any fault in the formula and how it has been derived. If we take the education sector alone, total population of the district, number of schools, classrooms, students (gender consideration as an incentive) enrolment rate, number of teachers (salary and adjustment based on student - teacher ratio), deficit in infrastructure, distance from

center…various important parameters have been considered to allocate both recurrent and capital budgets. The problem is with the volume of money the state gets".

Heymans and Mohammed (2004) cited in Asefa and Gebre-Egziabher (2007:28) explains other instruments used by states to meet unforeseen expenses, to adjust and balance the transfer as follows:

"While both the formula and the expenditure based approaches are used to implement the instrument of block grant, there are other transfer instruments used. For instance, budget adjustments, contingency assistance, training support, selected cash transfer for capital and operating purposes, food security grants and food aid, asset transfer are some of the different methods used to transfer resources from regions to local governments".

This indicates the efforts/ showcase made to make the formula complete, all inclusive and fair, and of course it also shows a room for retaining some amount of money to flexibly utilize. In view of establishing a new decentralized system and empowering districts to better play the autonomous role, this is theoretically a great advance. Prior to the DLDP, budgets were allocated to zones. Zones, after taking the lion's share, made disbursements to districts using incomprehensible allocation formulas, as there was no binding or established formula. The allocation was subjective and mainly only served security purposes.

Currently, there is a formula but the problem again lies with shortage. As the Oromo saying goes, *short blanket*, *you pull it to your head, you legs are bared; pull it over to your legs, your head is deprived*. This happens not only because the size of the blanket is constant, but there is a significant increase of users (size and other parameters). It becomes even worse when the distribution is unfair.

We always hear officials saying that today is better than yesterday, and try to list what people have achieved. However, the issue is what has been achieved compared to the promises and expectations, in relation to where other countries reached, in relation to the time elapsed and above all compared to what we could achieve if we had better management. Actually shortage or scarcity is relative. Like the social scientists explain, it is a relative deprivation of something. Some complain for availability of food, some complain about the quality, and some may even complain about the quantity. Even if one's pocket is full, if another one with big pocket grabs more, he/she tends to prepare another pocket, nobody in a group or an individual has the tendency to say, "I have enough with regard to wealth". Bennett (1990:4) explains relative deprivation as follows:

"These developments entail a number of subsidiary concepts. One is a '*relative deprivation*'. Even if poor people and lower income areas had provision for a high level of needs, they lack access to certain goods. Indeed the more highly developed an economy; the greater the level of its general wealth, the more these people, places, or local governments that lacked certain items could be argued to be in relative poverty".

I was astonished and almost burst in laughter in the library, when I saw indicators of poverty mentioned by Townsend (1984) cited in Bennett (1990:4) which include: lack of hot breakfast, birthday parties, holidays, and the habit of dining out. Even though I understand social setting, deprivation and needs are always relative, for a person like me who has come from a society where the exact birth date of most of the population is unknown, let alone has a birthday party (to be honest including myself); it is hard to understand the disparity in the concept of relative poverty.
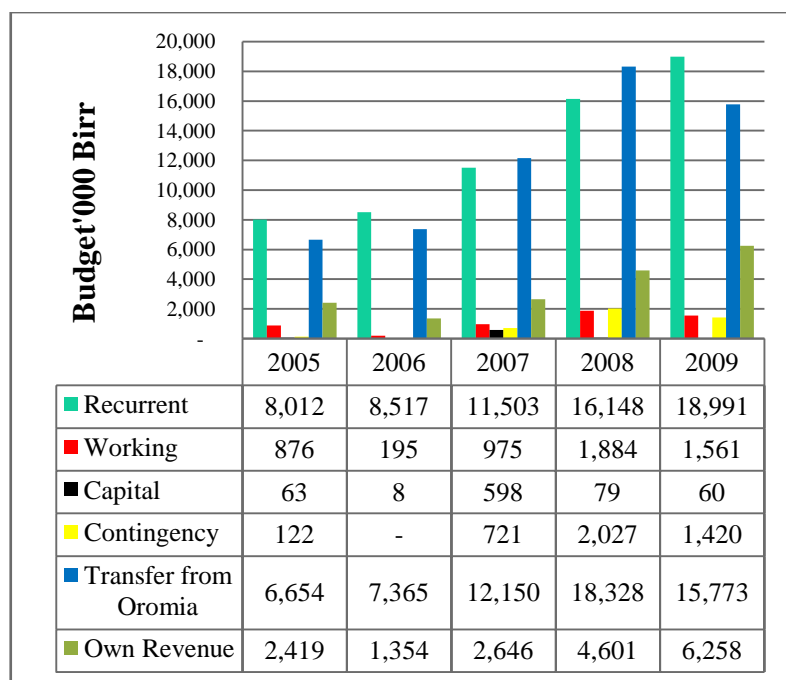
Budget'000 Birr	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Recurrent	8,012	8,517	11,503	16,148	18,991
Working	876	195	975	1,884	1,561
Capital	63	8	598	79	60
Contingency	122	-	721	2,027	1,420
Transfer from Oromia	6,654	7,365	12,150	18,328	15,773
Own Revenue	2,419	1,354	2,646	4,601	6,258

Chart 3: Dendi District Budget
(Dendi, 2009)

Chart (3) shows the budget transfer of five consecutive years (2005-2009) to Dendi district. It shows a significant numerical growth. But given the increase in the number of employees, the inflation and sharp rise in prices one needs to calculate what the real increase is. A large amount of the total budget goes to salaries (recurrent). If we look at the capital budget which the district uses for the implementation of projects, it is abysmally low.

Budget for working expenses is also very small. This working budget is for per diems, office utilities, stationery, fuel, lubricant and maintenance of the three cars they, the district sectors, have as well as for the maintenance of buildings. This is the amount that goes to the entire sector offices.

However, at the end of the day, most of this working capital goes to expenses for frequent meetings in the district, at zonal or state levels. In times of security unrest almost every activity freezes and the entire human power, materials and available finances get redirected to maintaining order.

Chart (4), shows a breakdown of the block budget assignment to sectors in the district. We can also see from this chart how 94% of the budget goes to administration expenses, which includes all the sectors. Many offices are not covered by the budget, they get salaries, services from the pools and wait; may be for additional allocation.

Ghinchi town generate its revenue from different sources. As part of decentralization the town is authorized to depend on its own income and no budget is set for the municipality except for some subsidies. The DLDP clearly does not include municipalities in its framework. But the state level implementation framework has put guidelines for municipal towns as well. Thus, municipalities mainly work based on their plans and capacity to generate income. The Ghinchi town's revenue sources are:

Land rents and building taxes,
Licenses on trades and professions,
Market fees (for stalls and use of market),
Fees for municipal services, which includes:
sanitary services, slaughterhouses (abattoir),
building plan approval, property registration
and surveys, use of municipal equipment,
Water rates,
Management and control of stray animals,
Posting of public notices, etc…

It is just a struggle for existence. Even though it was not possible to get consolidated data on built up environment, on the surface it appears that, buildings, internal roads and market places are almost what they were several years ago. Compared

Chart 4: Dendi, Budget Distribution (Dendi, 2009)

to neighboring districts, given all the location advantages mentioned above, it could have developed better. But the lack of stability of mayors and profound leadership of officials appointed to different posts in the municipality constrains development.

In all the *ganda*s, the Ghinchi *ganda*s, Bodda Bosoqa 'semi-urban', the two rural *ganda*s (Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha) there is a huge problem relating to finance. They only receive a very small amount of money for stationery and other things from the issue of ID cards, the social court files and fines. They sometimes sell community owned trees including indigenous trees and grass, and the town *ganda*s rarely obtain some income from waste management.

It was once attempted to pay Birr 50-150 to the office bearers in the rural *gandas*. The chair person was earning Birr 150, the heads of the three offices (Administration, Community Mobilization and the Deputy - who deals with development works) Birr 50 each, for the chair person of the social court Birr 75 and the secretary and the member of the social court Birr 50 each. On the whole Birr 475 (about Euro 20 as of January 2012) was going to the *ganda* monthly. But as it turned out, the payment had negative implications on the community's participation. People started to refuse community participation saying to the officials *"you are paid you have to discharge"*. Hence, it has been stopped.
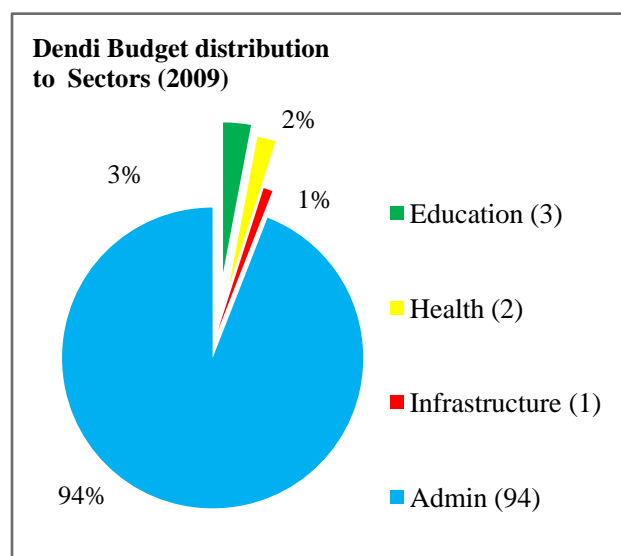
With regard to finance that comes to this district from different sources, except for the regular budget and the insignificant amount of revenue locally collected, there is not much to mention. There are not many international or local NGOs and investors working and bringing in money and creating job opportunities. Even though an empirical comparative study is needed, one could say this is one of the most disadvantaged areas. Without comparing to other states, from my own experience (some years ago) even within Oromia, there are districts that receive amounts triple to the state budget allocation from external support resources.

Another informant from a focus group mentioned the same about the share of resource from the center:

> "The problem is not with the formula, it is the share we get from the main bread. If large portion of the revenue is held at the center and whatever smart formula is prepared for the remaining insignificant amount to distribute to more than 300 districts, it does not sound fair and it makes no change"[33].

The state must focus on the share from the main source. Focusing only on fair disbursement of the small share that hardly goes beyond the salaries of employees, does not help much to bring about change. The following quotation is about revenue sharing process in Germany Lehmbruch (2000:13):

> "The rules for revenue-sharing are subject to approval by the *Bundesrat* and hence must be agreed, always after extremely laborious negotiations, between the *Bund* (the federal level of government) and the *Länder*. The functioning of federal decentralisation is thus strongly dependent on the system of revenue-sharing. On this issue the larger west German *Länder* have a veto position in the *Bundesrat"*.

When we see how this issue of revenue sharing goes, we need to embark on more transparent and rational procedures.

Finally, even though we feel we have progressed considerably, we must understand that there is still much to do and still a long way to go, compared to what other countries have achieved and the dire needs of our people. Hence, we must avoid extreme euphoria and rethink how we better perform. There is no question that this process of decentralization has been of great benefit as a practical/ pilot exercise and as a framework to gradually install the anticipated system for local administration or regional autonomy.

As preceding research findings show (Chanie, 2007) it will be decentralizing culpability if every year the annual budget only goes as a salary for the subsistence of employees at district level. I am not trying to say that all development achievements are only those which we can count; I understand there are to some extent attitudinal and behavioral changes at all levels, though the

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[33] Ghinchi Town, *Ganda* 02 FGD on 04/02/2010

extent needs empirical study. Every day, time and experiences, events and interactions count on the way ahead, this is natural, sometimes even more than we think and may be in the direction we may not think.

But the question is can we move more quickly and can we go further if we are able to unpack the real problems in order to get genuine solutions? Are we in the process of enhancing our capabilities dynamically following the dynamic world or we are still locked into old styles, suspicions and apprehension? It would be relevant to quote Albert Einstein who said, "*We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them*". The issue of a paradigm shift, which has been continually emphasized by several elites, still needs consideration.

If the share from the center is fairly fixed and what has been transferred is used for productive activities then we could say the exercise is encouraging. The issue is not to overstretch resources that the country presently possesses. It is rather a question of designing a practical strategy. For example, if our approach is geographically and thematically focused, where the multiplication effect would be very high, we can eventually cover the whole country with tangible results. As mentioned previously, reducing the unproductive labor force, involving CSOs and the private sector, following a phasing strategy and trying to show tangible results will take us ahead step by step. We cannot promise people, time and again an overly rosy world we want to install; they will ask us to provide one tangible result.

The multilateral organizations and international donor communities are also expected to ask along the same line- along the issue of the bottom line - the result. That is, they need to ask what concrete result comes out of projects they finance that have bearing on sustainable development. Of course this is not to undermine the emergency responses and live saving activities accomplished by the international community (leaving aside the argument about the dependency syndrome it creates). I also understand the importance of accommodating a portion of the skilled and none skilled local workforces. However, the issue is how to bring about permanent solution to the country's problem, bring about radical societal change and sustainable development.

Chapter VII: Performance of the District Structure in Implementing the DLDP

7.1. Setting the Content of the Chapter

RQ # 3: How planned, efficient, economic and effective is the DLDP implementation process? This question is aimed at checking the causes that dominated the process and effects that emerged in the project/program cycle management as a whole, from planning to monitoring and evaluation.

The purpose in this chapter is not to conduct a detail program evaluation research. I do not go deeply into outcome/impact evaluation, nor a cost benefit, or a cost effectiveness analysis. I try to discuss and draw analytical generalization how well the functions have been designed, whether the implementation process is going smoothly or not and whether functionaries are discharging their responsibilities properly or not. There is a general consensus among development practitioners that a program or a policy is successful when the needs of the stakeholders, who are directly or indirectly affected, have been met; which implies that figures alone do not matter when talking about the success of development program.

7.2. Planning Practices in the District

As discussed above no effort has been reserved to make the development of the country predictable through various approaches to planning by all the successive governments. These efforts go back to the 1950s, when the first national planning efforts were made. Since then, the practice has only continued by changing focus sectors, focus areas, approaches and practitioners, slogans, with little or no positive effect on the real development of the country.

These strategic planning practices were not ignored tools even during the Dergue regime. Much has been said and much has been spent on the institutionalization of central and regional planning offices, and preparation and implementation of development programs over all these years. However, failures of these attempts are obvious. It cannot be said that they failed, solely because of the weaknesses of the planners or because past and present leaders do not want the development of the country. The country used mainly same experts across all the systems in various sectors. The problem can be cited in the mismatch and attempts to bring about change where the subjective conditions have not yet been developed; being compelled by incoming political forces. Disparity between our ambitions and actual capabilities (knowledge and skills, resource base) and driving conditions in the way we seek to attain them. Disparity between the

reality in our country and the models we want to adopt; and above all prioritization of our interventions (geographically and thematically).

In the Dendi district, most employees, experts, officials, extension and development agents etc… are familiar with nearly all the modern terminologies in planning. There have been several attempts to prepare long and short term plans for areas and sectors with wide-ranging programs and projects. Several attempts have been made to make these planning efforts top to bottom and bottom-top as well. Preparation of annual strategic plans, based on the recurring five year federal and state strategic plans had long become an institutional culture at least on paper.

While the strategic plan is for overall district development programs, some sectors have started exercising Business Process Reengineering (BPR) models to enhance institutional capability, and increase responsiveness in service delivery **a**nd productivity. Surprisingly, at present, some sectors in the district have enhanced the performance based planning practices to the "Balanced Scorecard" (BSC)[34] model. It must again be mentioned that this is many steps ahead as a planning exercise, modernizing organizational culture, and increasing efficiency and as well as in broadening perception of program implementation.

Regarding the annual plan, there are sector specific and uniform formats for the *gandas* that should be carried out every year based on the time table prepared by the district administrative council and approved by the district council. This format includes the profile of the district in relation to the sector that submits the plan, achievements of the previous year, limitations and strengths observed and detailed plans for the current year with time table and costs.

The attempt theoretically is to follow bottom–top approach of planning. Towns with municipalities, as in Ghinchi and Olankomi, prepare their independent plans, after the approval of the city council, and then submit them to the district council. For rural areas, individuals' plans are compiled by the *gare*s and submitted to the *gandas*. The *ganda* administrative council compiles the plans of each *gare*, combine it with the plans of the sectors that operate in the *ganda* (e.g., education, health, agriculture, communal works…) and submit them to the *ganda* assembly for discussion and approval. After approval of the *ganda* council (which is very formal in most cases) it goes to the district. The district planning committee sorts and prepares the district planning document.

The district planning committee does not prepare a single option; they set up different scenarios based on availability of funds and risks they predict. Subsequent to all these processes, and after it gets the blessing of the district council, the planning document goes to the zone to be transmitted to the state level planning committee. After it gets approval at state level (with cuts

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[34] Balanced Score Card (BSC) is a strategic performance measure focusing on key links such as: finance, customer, internal business process, learning and growth. In the improved version it focuses even on more specific links that affect the process.

and additions) it goes back to the district with a budget. Unlike in the past, the approval of the budget also has a fixed timeframe for submission, approval and disbursement. This is apparently ideal as a learning exercise, and as a foundation for future practices its contribution is immense. The problem however is still with the substance of the process and the question as to what extent it may realistically be. I observed health posts built some years ago in Tuka zone of Bodda Bosoqa and Mereno Gonjab *ganda*s, but are not yet equipped and manned to give services. It seems that they fall before they give the intended services. Many other similar unplanned and uncoordinated activities can be mentioned in the area: the Kotoba village health station which has no access road, water and power supply, the health post and school in Abba Bukure village which are partly falling down.

Of course to review and prepare a realistic planning document that encompasses 48 rural *gandas* and six town *ganda*s, given the poor communication facilities, gap in knowledge and the scarce resource, it is not an easy task. It is not a simple compilation of data; it needs synthesis and analysis of close and distant environment. Yet, the question is, whether the district level leadership itself has this awareness, capacity and coordination skill or not.

7.3. Issue of Capacity in the District

Capacity needs to be defined based on the content of the issue under discussion. Various authors have defined it in a similar manner, but in its broad or narrow sense. Morgan (1998:2), who has done extensive work on capacity building and contributed to current debates and practice, defines capacity as:

> "the *organizational and technical abilities, relationships and values* that enable countries, organizations, groups and individuals at any level of society to carry out functions and achieve their development objectives over time. Capacity is about institutional, organizational and behavioral outcomes. Indicators of capacity usually focus on the performance of some sort of organizational function or activity such as decision making, leadership, service delivery, financial management, ability to learn and adapt, pride and motivation, organizational integrity and many others".

Hildebrand and Grindle (1994:10) define capacity as '*the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably*'. Loubser (1993:23), on the other hand, assembles a list of the elements of capacity as follows:

- Specified objectives - including vision, values, policies, strategies and interests
- Efforts - including will, energy, concentration, work ethic and efficiency
- Capabilities - including intelligence, skills, knowledge and mental sets
- Resources - including human, natural, technological, cultural and financial
- Work organization - including planning, designing, sequencing and mobilizing

To gauge the case studied with these measurements would be unrealistic, but some relevant issues can be dealt with here. All the influences (positive and/or negative) which were discussed in chapters V and VI have been reflected at this implementation stage. If we look at Loubser's definition of capacity above, as to the paper works, visions, missions, values, policies and strategies…these are abundantly available in all offices. Even a passer-by can find them posted in front of each office. But other substantive issues such as, selection, placement, dynamic capability, sound work organization and coordination the district's performance need to be worked on. At this point I want to quote Waldo (1948:10) who remarked the following with regard to the conditions right after WWI in the USA:

> "Voices were raised and hearts were troubled, seeking an answer to the question why the unrighteous should thus flourish. The answer was "efficiency". If democracy were to survive it had somehow to add efficiency to its ideals of liberty and equality. It had to bring efficiency out of factory, schools, and home, where it was already a popular ideal, and make the nation as a whole an efficient business".

This was an analysis forwarded for the situation in early 1920s, more than 90 years ago. Though countries struggle at different degrees to overcome the challenges, in most cases still it is unaddressed issue in our part of the world.

Notwithstanding the shortage of qualified staff in development and public administration disciplines, incorrect placing of experts and officials is a common practice that contributes to the complications, inefficiency and ineffectiveness of programs. To appoint a teacher to head the water works, or a lawyer to head the financial sector, has been observed across all the sectors; as the saying goes, it is like '*trying to fit a round peg into a square hole'*. This happens mainly when persons in charge of offices, or top district officials look for who the loyal will be for them - a Machiavellian design.

In Dendi district, the number of employees which was less than 800 in 2002 has grown to 1,324 in 2008. Qualitatively and quantitatively this is an enormous change. However, compared to the goals this is not still enough. As shown in Annex (II.1.) they still need 254 (16%) additional employees in various disciplines.

The Ghinchi *gandas* have no regular workers except the managers. All officials work on a part time basis and most of them are teachers as usual. Sometimes they forgo their regular work to deliver services in the *gandas*. Twice a week, for half a day they are exempted from their regular work to engage in this community service delivery task. But it is far less than what the work requires.

Likewise, there are no permanent assignees at rural *ganda* level, except one manager. Hence, this manager is the only person working permanently in the office. However, *ganda* managers rarely appear at their offices, because they run a one-person office, and are usually a long distance away from control. These *ganda* managers have no control over the health extension workers

and development agents. All the *ganda* managers from 48 ganda take their salary from Ghinchi, capital of the district. So, five days of a month with some additions are always spent for this purpose.

Similarly, the development and extension agents also take their salaries from nearby accessible centers (where the cashiers from the district can reach with vehicle). But nobody comes to work place after the pay; they go visit families, friends and also do other personal matters. This takes about ten days in a month on average. The schools are better organized in this regard; only the director or person in charge goes to these centers and collects salaries. Others could also use the same system, or the schools could take this delegation and the service could be provided from one center.

The attendance of the rural *ganda* officials is much better compared to that of the urban *gandas*, because all of them are small traders and farmers with relatively less time constraints. Particularly in the slack seasons, they spend most of their time in the office. However, it appears that the role of *gandas* as the third tier of government is not yet developed; it needs a lot of work to establish a sound institution and enable them to provide good service to the community.

The *ganda* leaders share 2% of the tax they collect; apart from this, other collected revenue goes to the upper tiers. Their work is mainly to keep peace and tranquility of their respective *gandas*. They also mobilize people when there is a need, e.g. if there is an external threat or if some kind of epidemic is reported.

The following had been written in a research report sponsored by Oxfam (2005:12):

> "Kebeles [*gandas*] in general cannot be classified as administrative units in the real sense of the term. Most of them have no offices and archives, and officials are in general not paid… they have not their own revenue sources. Some kebeles collect taxes but submit all of it to woreda [district]…Except keeping peace and order and mobilization of people for administrative and development activities, kebeles do not provide other recognizable services".

The other chronic problem in the organizational environment, from what I have observed and from the data obtained from informants is the issue of identity in its narrowest sense. This is very complex as discussed in Chapter V. It has abundant layers of skin, like onion. In a group of people with homogeneous nationality, clan or region becomes an issue. Again within a clan or district, *ganda* becomes a point of segregation or affiliation. It goes up to a family. Similarly there is another pattern that follows religion. Of course this behavior is not limited to the district level only; it is prevalent everywhere, including amongst the intelligentsia and politicians at higher levels.

Though difficult to support it with concrete empirical data non-meritorious appointment of officials was also one of the problems observed in the district. This is a great dividing and

demotivating factor. When I compare this situation that lacks merit based recognition and career advancement in a relatively more homogeneous society with that of a country like Germany that accommodates 15.3 million people with migrants background, 19% of the population, of which seven million are first generation immigrants, I consider our case is the result of our lower position in the socio-economic development scale (Focus Migration Germany, 2007).This is not a compatible practice with development efforts. In an environment where competition is very demanding and fierce, appointing an incompetent CEO to a position, purely based on nepotism, because one is related to a family or a friend or loyal, and has special affinity towards a certain social group would cause institutional failure.

Of course, I am not trying to say that Ethiopians are not accommodative of either their people or foreigners. It is a proven fact by many authors that Ethiopians are the most hospitable people. I also know, currently that there are more than a quarter of a million refugees and asylum seekers from Somalia, Eritrea, the Sudan and other countries in Ethiopia. There are also millions of first and second generation migrants who emigrated from different parts of the world and comfortably live in Ethiopia.

As a social science person, I can also understand that these situations occur not only because of the weaknesses of personalities, but because certain social systems or behaviors or nature of the government are contributing factors. However, it is a tendency that we have to fight against and shape our thinking beyond this limiting horizon.

The quality and quantity of performance of the district in program implementation has also been marred by shortages in some places and overstaffing in others, as well as incorrect use of available human power and lack of commitment and motivation. This was what has been explained by most informants.

What has proved true about this district is the capability of the structures at all levels in security awareness, prevention and control. As the district is a hub to many other districts, sometimes there are security incidences. However, as most of them are armed and militant they were able to suppress all kinds of subversive activities that occurred for different reasons. I think the existence of big number of employees, usually when being organized as a team to accomplish various tasks has also helped to secure the large area of the district.

7.4. Interplay of Theories and their Implication

What theories can best explain this back and forth motion of societal development? The interplay of three theories: democratic decentralization, neopatrimonialism and congruence theories can be applied here. The greater the thrust from the public sphere grows, the more it demands a congruent response which sequentially reduces the practices of neopatrimonialism and increases the practices of democratic decentralization. If there is no thrust from the side of the public it worsens the practices of neopatrimonialism and diminishes democracy as we see in the diagram

(Figure 15). They all have a 'to and fro' effect; the development of democracy enhances the degree of congruence and suppresses the practices of neopatrimonialism and vice versa. The two upward arrows are variables that can be influenced by the degree of congruence; the green arrow pushes in the democratic direction while the red worsens the neopatrimonialism.

The congruence theory alone and the interplay of these three theories, resembles the old philosophy, *unity of opposites and struggle* in some literature known as *drives of development*. The unity of opposites and struggle is a situation in which the existence, identity or development of a thing (or situation) depends on the co-existence of at least two conditions which are opposite to each other, yet dependent on each other and presupposing each other, within a field of tension. The Law of "*unity of opposites and struggle*" was first suggested by Heraclitus (ca. 535–475 BC) a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, and further developed by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The issue here is not only the economic growth, but it goes with overall development, social development, human development and cultural transformation, because we know of many countries with a very high economic growth but very low democratic values and practices, where human rights are abused. It is only when an all-round development is attained that we can be certain about the dominance of democracy and its sustainability.

Figure 15: Interplay of Theories

(Own construct)
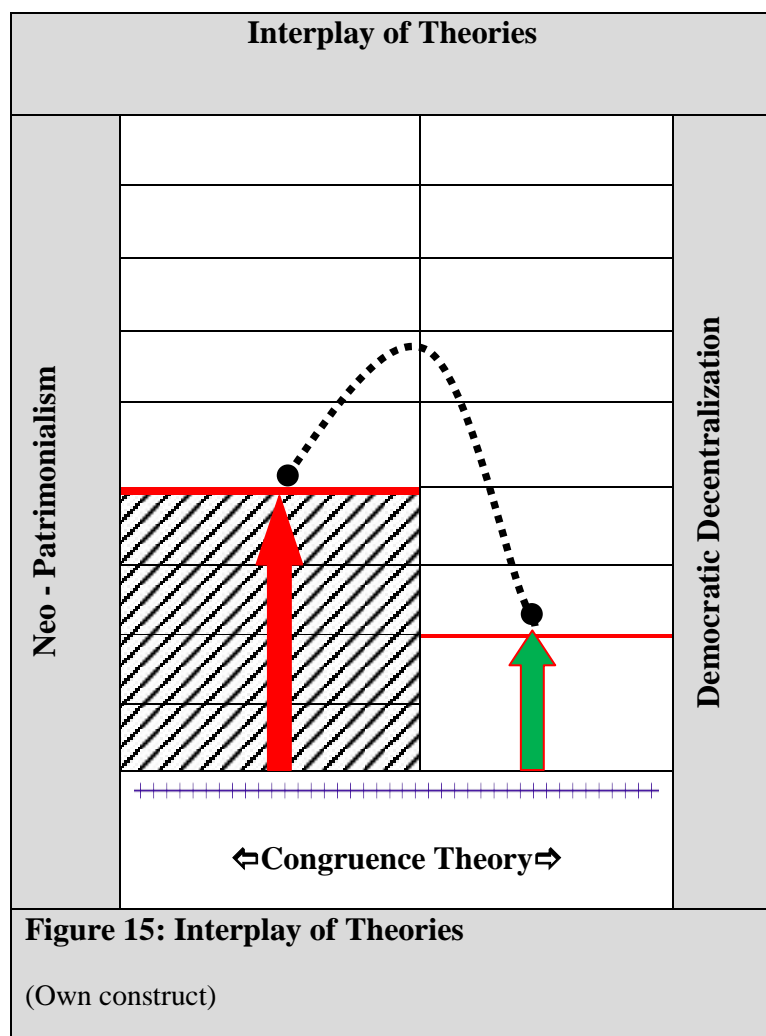
We have discussed what these three theories are briefly and how they imply to the case under study, in the literature part of this work. It may be important to define and explain the term neopatrimonialism with its components, clientelism and patronage for a better understanding, as it may have insufficiently been discussed in the literature part and deliberately brought forward. Neopatrimonialism is the vertical distribution of resources that give rise to patron-client networks based around a powerful individual or party. Clientelism takes a variety of forms in different cultural settings. Kaufman (1974:285) explains that clientelism always manifests itself as follows:

(a) The relationship occurs between actors of unequal power and status,
(b) It is based on the principle of reciprocity; it is a self-regulating form of interpersonal exchange, the maintenance of which depends on the return that each participant expects to obtain by rendering goods and services to each other and which ceases once the expected rewards fail to materialize,
(c) The relationship is particularistic and private; anchored only loosely in public law or community norms.

Similarly, patronage is a term that has open and latent functions. It is a centralized arrangement where an individual at higher level shields a subordinate for reciprocal interest. OECD (2004:63) explains patronage as, "*an exchange relationship between not-equal parties*", this mainly happens in the form of having legal cover in institutions. On the other hand, patronage has also latent functions which most of the time go indirectly through others or under a specially designed disguise. According to Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith (2002:10) these are reflected as replacement of staff with unqualified political "hacks"; firing staff as part of "spoils" system; favoritism in personnel decisions; building informal teams that aggravate all the problems; preferential treatment to the clienteles and sheltering the clienteles in the structure.

A member of a focus group remarked[35]:

> "*De facto* the district administrator is accountable to the upper tiers. Community and the administrative council have no influence on him. He decides whatever he wants, he influences the office heads, the council members. He is the one who appointed them, so they cannot refuse whatever he says. He is supported and protected by the upper tiers".

The Jimma Oromos have a good explanation for this. They have a traditional group dance where by everybody in a row regulates his/her height by flexing their knees and making their shoulders adjacent. They call it "*Gurmuu galfachuu*". It is something like saying 'adjusting yourself to the boss's interest'. The effort of subordinates in such conditions is always to try to fit into the interests of the upper echelons (which could be considered as 'excellence' by some), not to those of the people or the principles.

If there is not enough thrust from the public, prevalence of these mal-practices is inevitable. That is what is learned from the congruence theory. Whatever layer of control we establish within a one party system, it is very difficult to do away with such a behavior. During the Dergue era there were several layers of control at all levels, the audit commission, the control commission, the police, the security, the revolution guard, to some extent the media, the party itself and internal audits and controls for each organization. At the end of the day the National Control Commissioner himself was accused of participating in the illegal export of gold. This is how the Oromo saying goes,"*silaahuu sihuu eeguu, mana eegi*" which means, 'even though, it is you

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[35] Ghinchi Town, *Ganda* 02 FGD on 04/02/2010

yourself who is to be watched over, please take care of the house'. So, unless we create a system whereby oppositions play a strong role and also try to close the loopholes that tempt officials, it would be very difficult to stop such misconducts.

Hence, if these practices outweigh the democratic values and norms, and if the congruent gauge is still moving down in the direction of "zero" coordinate as a result of low public thrust, the district may not be forced to look into changing and scaling up the quality of services. However, a cumulative effect of this condition undoubtedly leads to an outbreak of resistance, which may cost the country a lot.

7.5. The Interagency Collaboration and Implementation Process

The DLDP had a detail implementation framework. How to share the scarce resource and facilities and how to minimize overhead costs by introducing a "pool system" were predesigned actions and where measures have been taken at the start. To this effect, the district categorized related sectors into four centers, which are hosted by major sectors (actually three centers – because one pool is dedicated to administration alone) and organized the services from these pools. All the eleven sector offices get their budget and other facilities from these pools. Support and clerical personnel are all based in these pools to deliver services to the sectors. Machines like photocopiers, duplicators and other similar equipment commonly used are all placed in these pools. This pool system was supposed to maximize efficiency with limited resource and to facilitate networking and coordination among different sectors. It was also thought to limit corruption and misappropriation of resources by individual offices. Through transparent planning and utilization reports on the allocated resources, it is believed that this system serves the internal control purpose as well. Though I doubt how much they were realistic, no energy was reserved to make the program successful at that level, at least in designs.

There are no special implementation arrangements in the *gandas*. All the *gandas* complain about budgets, facilities and shortage of permanent staff and inefficiency of the existing one.

Then how does it work? As mentioned above all the sectors prepare their plans and submit them to the district administration council. Following the procedure explained above when these are approved, further action plans are prepared. To save time and resources the action plans are not prepared and attached to the main plans submitted, because of the uncertainty of approval.

Everything is perfect on paper, but when it comes to reality we find everybody in unplanned activities. Without adequate resources and creative human power who knows what has to be done, how to do it, it would be very difficult to accomplish the program. Though the problem in most cases stems from the assignment of incapable persons, local leaders must learn from their peers and try to be competitive. The designed coordination system is good, but it has hardly worked since its formation, because of incomplete elements of implementation capacity. The

prevalence of euphoria for something on paper has lived in this country for decades. We see things beautifully done on paper, and we get excited and expect positive results but to no avail.

The district is still in the process of institutionalizing itself. The struggle is still to organize and to reorganize the structure. Though numerically the strength of the human power is sufficient to implement the current plans, budgets to turn the wheels and fair working facilities have not yet been attained.

According to the informants and own observation, when somebody from a sector wants to go to a distant *ganda* he/she has to present his/her travel schedule (itinerary) to the pool. Sectors that have vehicles have to report when they plan to travel or it will be easily identified when they request money for fuel and other travel expenses from the pool. Then all who want to go in that direction will be informed to coordinate their trips. The one who planned for a week, and the other who planned for two days, travel together. In this case the one who planned for two days will be forced to stay for a week. This is why economists often say *"poverty is very expensive"*. This means because of a shortage of money an institution or an individual spends additional money. For the reason that sectors don't have their own vehicles, they pay per diem for a week. The person is out of office and unproductive, which is a triple loss. A typical example of *"poverty is expensive"* is families buying products from a retail shop daily, because they cannot afford buying wholesale monthly, which could be less expensive.

To this effect, there is always a debate that decentralization is an untimely action or it would have been better if it had done in a "phase" strategy, which means starting with a few districts then gradually expanding to others. Even though it appears that it conflicts with the identity interest, it sounds true. Some researchers comment that responsibilities were decentralized without commensurate capacity. District–zone relations were disconnected before the districts developed their capacity, and states could not provide the required services and also play a coordinating role efficiently. They further commented that "it is simply decentralizing culpability rather than a development targeted objective" (OECD, 2004).

Even though, there is some truth in the above argument that states the decentralization is untimely practice, I cannot fully accept this. Empowering local government bodies and decentralizing the system has to take place at some point in time. As the saying goes, *"a thousand miles journey starts with one step"*. This process cannot wait for the country to attain a degree of wealth that enables it to offer sufficient resources. Moreover, the purpose of this program is to bring about this capacity through the concerted effort of local chambers. The second option, the phasing strategy is an option I would also vote for.

Nevertheless, though scarcity is unarguably a crippling factor, there are other factors within the district's scope which needs to be corrected. Making selective, productive and best use of the available resources and trying to match tasks to professionals who can innovatively exercise them, could truly make the local effort more productive. Opponents must sense that the

"capable" center is a product of different districts. The problem is with the mind set and the engineering of tasks and commitment, to truly empower the local chambers.

In summary, data gathered from different sources revealed that the process lacks coordination, and is short of resource and appropriate utilization. It appears that the block grant for development has turned to social security fund; because most of it goes to salaries of employees. On the other hand, as a learning process and ground-work it is a tremendous step forward. Again if the critical connections that halt the free movement of the states and local governments are loosened, this would be a great opportunity for any open minded leader or political group to register change at local level which ultimately contributes to the whole nation.

Responsiveness

One of the objectives of decentralization is to foster greater responsiveness of the government to the will and interests of citizens by placing services closer to the people, which would result in a closer *congruence* between public preference and public policies. This is also to make local development practitioners and decision makers more accountable to the local people, which could be realized through local elections. In democratic nations where people have true power if policies are imposed against the will of people, they can remove officials from office through their votes. But there must be a true democracy, concerned and well informed citizens to do this.

As a matter of fact it is a proven fact that government alone cannot satisfy requirements of public services. Nations with successful service delivery systems are those who have privatized the various sectors of service delivery, albeit it may clash with the "developmental state theory" which is at present a topical issue under debate in my country. Highly developed and modern service delivery models advocate the withdrawal of government from many service delivery sectors (though it has its own drawbacks as evidenced by the current economic turmoil in Europe). This model relieves government from challenges it faces as a sole service provider. It also limits the consumers' concept that they believe in the right of "*services to be delivered equal*" (OECD, 2004). Consequently, it alerts citizens to the cost implication of services on the one hand, but encourages and gives space to the private sector on the other hand.

Responsiveness to the people involves variations of services and demands which cannot be addressed by a single service provider. Tastes change overtime, quantity and quality of needs also change continuously and people want to have services of their own choice rather than those imposed on them, irrespective of how perfect the products provided without preference may be. To this effect government needs to shift its role to regulate and stimulate service provision by various competitive individuals and CSOs by creating private and public partnerships. Government structures should also play the role of checks and balance in the case of market irregularities, by outsourcing direct service delivery tasks and privatizing small activities that could open corruption loopholes to officials.

A UK based public corporation Audit Commission's (cited in Bennett 1990:13) list, highlights eight key items of strategic framework within which local governments should seek to work to attain a high standard of responsiveness to their people:

(1) understand its customers,
(2) respond to the electorate,
(3) set and pursue consistent, achievable objectives,
(4) assign clear management responsibilities,
(5) train and motivate their personnel,
(6) communicate effectively,
(7) monitor results, and
(8) adapt quickly to changes.

This strategic framework has a lot to do in most developed countries with decentralized and privatized systems. In the case of Ethiopia where most, if not all, of the key services are under the sole responsibility of the government, it would be difficult to see them fully or even partially achieved. The government struggles to solve problems in a traditional way, using trial and error method. It would be good if the government was able to gradually try "out-sourcing" in certain geographic areas and sectors, and expand this, based on frequent and periodic evaluation of results.

In the Dendi district much has been attempted to build better relation between government and those using their services, following the DLDP, by exercising and attempting to implement BPR and BSC. Jobs have been analyzed and structures reengineered several times. Office layouts have been organized so as to allow office heads to monitor activities at each desk and to ease mobility and interaction as much as the resources allow. Employees were ordered to have nametags/ badges on their desks and on their chests and sufficient nametag holders with hangers were abundantly purchased and issued to every employee. It was thought this would help patrons identify who was who without asking the service provider's name, and identify the right person for the services desired (though most service seekers are illiterate), thus increasing accountability.

This started off with great enthusiasm, to the extent of penalizing somebody who forgot his/her badge at home, but gradually it went back to its previous state. At present one hardly finds an employee with a nametag, the revolution is over.

In the developed world service deliveries have almost become the combined responsibility of the government, private sector, CSOs and a collaborative task even with the community at large. The system needs to build the trust of other citizens with all its constraints and challenges. If the issue is about corruption and misappropriation, who will guarantee that officials in the government structure will be honest? If engaging and empowering the "petty bourgeoisie" is seen as a threat

to unity and macro political stability, how long can that last? So it needs courage, a change in mind set and a paradigm shift.

Notwithstanding the capacity issue there is always an eager desire to bring about change at the district level. But this must be within the system; it cannot just be attained only because we want it. We must identify the avenue that properly leads to that direction and know how to perform. The misconception that change can be achieved in the blink of an eye will always lead to frustration when it fails. This is when efforts decline, employees morale sway and blaming on each other starts. In most cases this is the stage where the *qoranno*[36] (offensive scrutiny of employees) comes into play.

Accountability

Accountability can be explained in two broad ways. Firstly, internal accountability which deals with internal managerial systems, transparency of the accountancy, strong internal control systems, clear segregation of incompatible duties, unambiguous identification of a person in charge for certain decisions, harmony between political practices and financial policies and periodic accomplishment reports to those concerned.

There must be a synergy between units, horizontally and vertically, to reduce costs and minimize ambiguities. The line of authority must be clear and there must always be one responsible person unequivocally responsible for certain decisions.

In the case of the Dendi district, accountability is a big link, which prevents every office and individual official from taking independent actions. Still the dominance of "*committee work*" is prevalent. For most, if not all decisions, important or trivial, the district administrative council must sit for a day or more in long drawn meetings, usually ones which only the starting times are known, but not their end. Even the district administrator who leads the meeting does not know. They spend most of their time deliberating behind close door.

A focus group discussant said:

> "Once I went to the administration office three times in the morning. The secretary told me the meeting would be concluded at 10:00 AM. I popped in at 10:15AM, 11:00AM, 12:00 noon not yet, and then I gave up and went home. My case is still unsolved, but I am afraid to go there again"[37].

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[36] *Qoranno* (*Gimgama* in *Amharic*) is a system that has its foundation in the socialist party systems. It is a criticism and self criticism practice. But in most cases it can be also used as a tool to ostracize an unwanted member by organizing and mobilizing other members to attack him/her. If it was consciously done with main focus on performance and important issues, supported by evidence, instead of focusing on harassing individuals, it would have been of great significance for our situation.

[37] Ghinchi Town, *Ganda* 02 FGD on 04/02/2010

 I understand this structure cannot solve every problem that comes from the community because of several factors and constraints; and yet I believe that lack of confidence and competence makes the situation worse.

Committees breed like mushrooms, every day, even when there are responsible sectors to handle certain issues, committees with overlapping tasks will be organized. Much of the district's work can be explained as "*committee works*", like the critics during the Dergue regime maintained, "*A committee to evaluate the works of a committee",* only the names have been changed to *garee, humna, tuuta*… All the district level officials are organized in various taskforces. They have divided the district into six frontiers. These taskforces are responsible for everything in these areas, including duties relevant to their particular office and other offices, on issues of which they have sufficient know-how and on issues beyond their expertise. Each has coordinators from the cabinet, the most responsible high official. Mainly they deal with collection of taxes, other contributions and government debts, but more often focus on security and other topical political agendas. They also report on the performance of *gandas* and grapevines in the community. It is not bad, this only works as a transitional practice, it needs a sustainable solution because the district is a permanent entity.

This extensive committee work makes individual responsibilities blurred. In principle, an assigned responsibility cannot be delegated, only authority can be delegated, the person in charge always being accountable for all duties entrusted to him/her. I am not complaining about this arrangement. However, the issue is that if the work needs this kind of structure permanently year in and year out, should we not be thinking of configuring and changing the models? This issue is my concern.

External accountability is all about representation. Representation is a manifestation and democratic link between individuals ↔ community (which includes the private sectors and CSOs) ↔ government. With regard to external accountability, Bennett (1990:19) outlines four possible areas:

Accountability to tax payers. This is the issue of "no taxation without representation". However the question is complex since tax payers are often only a small proportion of the electorate.

Accountability to local business. Local administrations provide services to businesses as well as people. How is their interest be represented and accountability achieved?

Accountability to higher level government. In all countries central government, or federal plus state/regional governments, are a dominant force in providing financial resources and in laying down statutory requirements for local administrators. How is this wider state or national interest to be maintained within local administrative decisions?

Accountability to the electorate. Although it maintained the focus of much writing, this form of accountability is almost a residual, after taking account of the restrictions under which

administrators must act to achieve other forms of accountability. Hence, there is usually limited real scope to follow particular strategies developed from local community desires and political priorities. Bennett (1990:20) further elaborates on this point saying:

> "However it is being increasingly questioned whether this form of representation is the most important or can assure governmental efficiency and customer responsiveness. Instead the new agenda appears to be increasingly to seek more frequent transaction through fees or charges and market choices which are more likely to lead to closer relationships of supply and demand and a better representation of customer interests".

In the modern world this question has mainly shifted to market transactions, where individual choices depend on a natural bargain between supply and demand (including services). Hence, there is not much controversy of representation and accountability, because individuals have full right on their choices.

Returning to the report, in the case of the study area, perhaps only the third point is relevant, accountability to higher level governments. That is where the survival of the local officials is determined; satisfying the interests of the upper tiers to the level best they can. On the other hand, people are not also aware that they pay taxes to get services; they just take it as a rule. Paying tax has almost become a norm, particularly in the rural areas. They have been paying for the feudal and the Dergue regimes without questioning why and where the money goes, and without getting any services in return. Officials also do not understand the rights these tax payers deserve.

Accountability to the electorates is also dominated more by formalism, than genuine practice. From my own observation and from the expert interview, in the implementation of programs and projects and introduction of new technologies, there is still no clear demarcation between what needs the consent of the people at large and what should go based on expert intervention and top-down policy provisions. The choice of this is actually based on the scale of literacy/ information dissemination, what people can and cannot decide and people's awareness of what their rights are and as well as what are and what are not their obligations.

With respect to need identification also what the communities need first and next requires painstaking assessment and judgments beyond propaganda consumption. I have observed in the field in some instances when issues that cannot get decisions by the community are presented at community meetings simply for the sake of formality (termed in the local language "*mari'achiisuu*", which literally means consensus building), while other very important issues were just imposed without the consent of the community. These kind of meaningless meetings that detach the farmers from their production work even in the peak seasons (during planting and harvesting) were and still are numerous in the district.

7.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

In the district structure there is a position for the task of "monitoring, evaluation and support", even though it has not yet been filled. It even includes "support", which means not only to monitor, evaluate and ascertain limitations but also to support on how to fill the gaps observed. This is perfect and, as an idea on the ground for future work and preparedness it helps much. But it has not yet been established. As a matter of fact if there is no capital budget to undertake development projects that worth full-time monitoring and evaluation work, the significance of this function may not be very crucial.

Nevertheless, there is another model of monitoring, called "*qoranno*" (offensive collective and individual scrutiny of employees). This *qoranno* starts from personal life and goes up to program accomplishment. This is a system that worked best at one point in time and under different circumstances. It can still serve to deter some misbehavior in organizations. But the issue now is about dealing with performance measures that need professional examination. The task is to check how the type or level of program/ function/policy implementation activities are conducted (process). It is how to measure the direct products and services delivered by a program (outputs). Above all it is measuring the results of those products and services (outcomes) which may also include analysis of cost benefits, cost effectiveness and economies of scale. It is a process of audit if there should be misappropriation.

But this "*qoranno*" is a bit like public scrutiny where all employees meet in a hall and discuss each individual's personal and institutional activities, sometimes it takes weeks and even months, until all the criticisms have been sorted and the subjects admit their mistakes. This is a place where functionaries' outlooks and inclinations are unpacked to determine whether they can go along with the system or not, mainly predesigned. Yimer, Muhammed Seid (2006), cited in Asefa and Gebre-Egziabher (2007:145), wrote the following:

> "Besides, there is an evaluation forum called "*gimgema*"[38] (which means *qoranno* in *Amharic)* that is held periodically and at any time as necessary. The objective of the forum ("*gimgema*") is to encourage those who register good performance and to criticize those who have had bad records in their performance. Such approach is very helpful in terms of experience sharing and in terms of ensuring accountability. However, some people have a negative attitude towards such forums, ("*gimgema*"). They argue that its implementation is full of subjectivity due to lack of standard performance indicators and procedures. Besides, there is no material incentive for good achievers. The counter argument is that some personnel have attitudinal problem to appreciate and encourage change in this respect".

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[38] Gimgema – gimgima – gimgama – spellings are different; because they depend on how one pronounces it, the Oromos, foreigners, Amharic speakers…

My argument matches with the first block, that says *qoranno* is subjective and lacks standard. It is a kind of homework, in which everyone always studies "attack and defense" mechanisms, where each person tries to capture and dwell on the mental line of the leaders, leaving reality aside to obtain recognition. I think this kind of move cannot get us far, it is better to be true to ourselves. It may have a better result if it is conducted among peer groups, and have certain established standards. It can also be more productive if it is focused on ideas and issues and follow more structured approaches. This is not a naive comment without knowing all the aspects and central aim of the *qoranno* which in most cases targets removing the unwanted from power. This needs to be modified; it is an extremely overused tool. Keller (2002:45) wrote the following:

> "As in the past, the EPRDF regime promotes the use of *gim gima* (self criticism) sessions for bureaucrats as a way of addressing charges of corruption. However, in recent years, this method has proven to be grossly inadequate to address the problem of official corruption".

The worst is actions taken based on the results of these *qorannos,* the demotion and the promotion and floating, though dismissals occur rarely. It is as simple as demoting, promoting, adding and deleting shapes in computer chart. The demoted take position and work on a revenge strategy. After some years or months he/she comes out of the recycle bin and takes higher position again. He/she declares war and starts a vendetta. This has happened continuously, in a vicious cycle, like a wrestling game during the past two decades. One can also imagine how it affects efficiency. We learn from behavioral science that a once reprimanded person in most cases becomes very coward in giving decisions and submissive and develops ill feeling against her/his peers. I think it has to discontinue somewhere and the leadership has to think of a pragmatic evaluation and a paradigm shift, which will definitely be done by future group if it is not done now.

Finally, even though there are several factors that limit the performance of the district, one worth mentioning is the size and variations in populations of the districts and the *gandas*. I do not think there is standard for the establishment of districts and *gandas* as well.

Some districts have more than fifty *gandas* and some have less than twenty. For example in Dendi, from the district town, Ghinchi, to the other edge one has to walk 59 kilometers in some directions. A document from Oromia Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (2006) shows, that the size of population in different districts also varies to a great extent, from 7,000 - 400,000. This issue needs to be thought out well along with formulation of standard weight and structures, perhaps at country level because it affects the budget allocation and performances.

The same is true with *ganda*s as well. Some *ganda*s are a merger of two or three *ganda*s. Originally, during the Dergue in most cases the *gandas* had 800 hectares (20 *wantaas*[39]) of land area, particularly in highland and semi-highland agrarian areas.

In conclusion, even though attempts have been made to touch on the nature of the problems and possible solutions under each section, I shall try to reiterate some points. Several actions have been taken to change the old systems and relations. The issue at stake is that these changes must bring transformation, measurable results in due course - between where we started and where we are now - in political, socio-economic and environmental arena and above all in contrast to the global condition.

Scientists explain the difference between change and transformation as follows. Existing change is what has been discussed above, change of organizations, guidelines, human elements and strategies. While transformation is to create something new that has never existed before (tangible or intangible) and could not be predicted from the past. Transformation is a "change" in mindset. It is based on *learning a system of profound knowledge and taking actions based on knowledge and leading with courage* (Iles, 2001).

A once very popular political party in the struggle to bring a democratic people's government in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)[40], wrote in one of *Democracia*'s (party organ) publications, "*To bring intra-party transformation and power shift requires as scarifies and courage as the struggle to seize power*". It is like the saying goes, *not easy to climb on a ladder, but easier than landing*. Though this idea appears remote from the discussion above, in essence it explains the situation. Hence, the system needs to bring about this transformation which of course is not an easy task at all.

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[39] 1 *Wantaa* in Oromia = 40 hectares of land

[40] EPRP, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party was the first multinational political party in Ethiopia, before the fall of the monarchy. It had a very popular organ called "*DEMOCRACIA*", which was able to mobilize and truly united the youth under one motto. Its main slogan during the Dergue was to create *"Provisional Popular Government*, but only a few leading members survived, the creams were all victimized.

Chapter VIII: Participation of Stakeholders in the DLDP

RQ # 4: How do communities perceive the DLDP and are they involved in its realization? How can the recognition and use of indigenous knowledge, social capital, civil society organizations and the participation of the private sector be described?

8.1. Operationalizing Participation

A thorough study has been made to understand and explain how well the community, CSOs and the private sector participate in matters that affect their present and future lives. Finally attempts have been made to critically analyze the findings taking into consideration the arguments on how, at what level and in which activities people should participate and can best contribute. These will be explained under three subtopics, political participation (mainly focused on elections), people's participation in development (in a group and/or individually) and people's participation in local administration.

Before we explore these subtopics we need to redefine and contextualize participation. According to Midgley et al. (1986:23) the notion of popular participation and that of community participation are interlinked. The former is concerned with the broad issues of social development and the creation of opportunities for the involvement of people in the political, economic and social life of a nation, 'the latter suggests the direct involvement of ordinary people in local affairs. Jennings (2000) defines participation as "*involvement by a local population and, at times, additional stakeholders in the creation, content and conduct of a program or policy designed to change their lives.*

Crook and Manor (1998:7) who describe participation in relation to election and politics define as:

> "Citizen's active engagement with public institutions, an activity which falls into three well defined modes: voting, election campaigning, and contacting or pressuring either individually or through group activity, including non violent protests".

Crook and Manor have deliberately excluded the attitude and rural development aspects of participation because they focus only on representation.

There are various models or typologies of community participation formulated by different authors. Some of them focus on political participation and others on development. However, a key issue that they try to explain is '*the extent of people's involvement in the decisions that affect*

them'. Some of them draw *ladders* (Arnstein, 1969) for the stages of participation and others explain it as a *continuum* that goes along the development stages of a country (*see Annex I.4*[41]).

8.2. Political Participation

Historical background: Since this issue of political participation is mainly engineered from the center, it would be relevant to discuss some historical matters. In Ethiopia, the formation of a strong central government as explained by various historians and briefly explained above can be traced back to the early 20th century. Emperor Menelik II announced in 1906 that all local kings, *rases*, *amirs* and sultanates should report to him; and should they hesitate or refuse he could take away their authority at any time. Some submitted and others like King Tona of Wolaita, and the Oromos in Arsi, West Shoa, Hararghe etc. tried to challenge his pronouncement to the bitter end, but eventually, using divide and rule systems Menelik managed to seize almost all the regions that constituted the current Ethiopia. Actually he was the only king who carried out his role well at that time. In some circumstances, compared to his peers, the monarchies in other African countries and, even in comparison to his predecessors and successors, he went the extra miles that glorify his reign. That was the time when the palace was mostly occupied by multinationals, through merit (in measures relevant to that specific time). That time people's participation can only be explained in wars, invasion and defense. No elections, it was a serf, slave and master relationship. The whole country and its people belonged to the king, until intelligent elites like Gebrehiwot Bykedagne hit on the government systems to demarcate what belonged to the palace and what belonged to the nation. Menelik was such a flexible king who accommodated the suggestions given by the elites (Pankhurst, 1961).

Following Menelik II, Haileselassie's rule is worth mentioning here. He started as a relatively enlightened monarch but ended up as a diehard with a long life in power. Later on, out of desperation, he distrusted officials who surrounded him. He introduced the first written constitution in 1931, which in effect was to strengthen the centralism by weakening the local governors. The purpose was to centralize the tax system and bring all regions under the budget command of the central government. The constitution brought all the three organs of state, the legislative, judiciary and executive under his absolute rule. Following the provisions of this constitution filling the structures with venal partisans from the center has been legitimized. Districts and *awurajas* were awarded to the most loyal persons and family members of the king some of whom were very uncouth, and as well as to the potential rivals as an incentive/ softener. Consequently, hostilities between rulers and the ruled became more and more aggravated and which eventually led to the bloody end of the regime in 1974.

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[41] Participation Typologies: There are various typologies in literature. Most of them are formulated based on their specific contexts. This one is a well summarized typology that helps to understand various approaches to a single subject in different contexts. Source: Journal of American Science, 2011; 7(2) http://www.americanscience.org

Based on the 1931 constitution the first parliament was established. It was bi-cameral in nature and had a chamber of deputies (lower house) and the senate (the upper house). While members of the senate were being appointed by the king, members of the chamber of deputies were nominated by local nobility and local chiefs at district levels. However, based on the amended constitution of 1955, five 'elections' were conducted up to 1974. Nevertheless, many authors including Fiseha (2007) mark these practices as "*legitimacy for the consolidation of the absolute monarchy*".

The collection of information during the study has covered the experiences and participation of people in past elections as a background to the current situation. During the reign of Haileselassie participation as a candidate and success depended on various factors such as, wealth-rank, social status, and strength (in numbers and influence) of the candidates' clan and network within the local chiefs. With the wealth the candidates bought votes. They threaten the voters in case if they divert their votes after they collected the money. According to the informants, the amount of money voters got ranged from one - two Birr based on the intensity of the competition, where the brokers of the candidates also got much of the money (perhaps they are called 'election managers' in other part of the world).

The second in strength is the clan. The clan extends to the four grandparents (grandmothers and grandfathers) of the candidate, and may also include the candidate's relations by marriage, the four grandparents of his wife, and in the same line, the relations of their children through marriage…it extends like that.

The third, network with local chiefs, land lords, *qallus*, school communities and churches were also very important factors. The land lords obliged all the tenants. They, the tenants, could not deviate because it was a question of life and death for them; they would be evicted from tenancy otherwise. All other institutionalized bodies play a great role in the same line.

The last general election was carried out under the rule of the monarchy in 1973 to elect the 250 members of the Chamber of Deputies of the Ethiopian Parliament. This was slightly different from previous ones. Elites and students from the university and the high school got more involved than ever. This was the time when public thrust, demands for land reform, resistance to the rule of the monarchy and quest for the right of nations and nationalities from different corners started brewing. This time there were some radical candidates who were able to mobilize citizens across the board. I, the author, was a student in grade 11at that time. I practiced at three polling stations to vote for a candidate who had a diploma level education in law.

As ascertained from the data collected, with regard to the people's perception of what these candidates did after being elected, what their predecessors had contributed to the area, what the constitution and election really meant …only a few had scanty knowledge. They just considered

it a race between clans and networks for the benefit of the candidates; not in a sense to serve and respond to the demands and needs of the people.

The Dergue's era also experienced elections by mass and professional organizations, even though all of them were controlled by pre-arrangement (*dirijitawi sira*) by the party (Workers Party of Ethiopia). Most of these elections followed the representation (indirect election) model from lower chambers to the upper bodies.

With regard to the formation of a popular government, one stride worth mentioning is may be the Dergue's 1987 constitution. A referendum was held in February 1987 on the draft constitution. It was reported that out of 96% of fourteen million eligible voters 81% of the electorates endorsed the constitution while 18% opposed and 1% were disqualified. These figures are noteworthy (in line with the proverb, "*everything that can be counted…*") and needs critical analysis as they indicate the citizenry's participation exceeding that of even in the most democratic countries (PDRE, 1984).

The constitution officially came to effect on February 22, 1987, when the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, a unitary state was proclaimed, and later on a Shengo[42] was formed, with 835 members. This Shengo met annually. However, the elections and the efficacy of the Shengo, which was under the command of a "single party"/ the Dergue was '*a business as usual*', just a cost for formality. It was simply legitimizing what had been happening without any basic change. One good practice worth noting was the process of citizen's discussion on the draft constitution. It was a very interesting public exercise. One million copies of the 120 article draft constitution were distributed all over the country where security conditions allowed, to 25,000 locations. Some of the participants attended voluntarily or for fear of retribution, some others because it was their duty as party members and still others because they were forced to (directly or indirectly).

Nevertheless, the draft was discussed for two months. From my own memory as a participant and organizer of the process, from data gathered and various documents, many interesting questions were raised by the public in the course of this discussion. Among some were questions relating to the rights of nations, family and marriage issues (particularly an article that prohibited polygamy), tax related issues, secularity and questions related to religion, citizenship rights and obligations. Finally, the commission reported that people had brought up more than 500,000 (PDRE, 1984) comments and questions, which were reportedly carefully considered. It was a good learning process. However, the end goal is not only to learn about the constitution and abide by it, but to enjoy the rights and positive changes it provides.

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[42] Shengo means " Assembly" in Amharic

Tiruneh (2009:228) wrote on the efficacy of this *Shengo* as follows;

> "…coupled with the tendency of Shengo members to toe the official line, is taken into consideration, it is obvious that what the deputies are left with is the annual session when they listen to anything that is read to them, raise their hands unanimously in support of whatever motion is proposed to them and go home in peace. Whatever it is, the National Shengo is certainly not a democratically elected legislature with powers to make laws, curb the powers of the government and control the purse of the state".

After the fall of the Dergue regime, there were several elections; while a few of them were very emotional some were very detached. The first multiparty regional and district elections were held in June 1992 (Proclamations to Provide for the establishment of National/Regional Self-Governments, 1992, Proc. No.7, Negarit Gazeta 1st year No.2.). These elections were concluded with the political failure (losers of the game) of the opposition parties (like the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and other forces such as All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), Ethiopian Democratic Action Group (EDAG)…), when they withdrew from the transitional government at the 11th hour for fatal reasons. Even though the international observers classified the election as "sterile, surreal and wholly formalistic", the EPRDF received 96.6% of the vote (NDI, 1992).

Elections for a Constituent Assembly were held in Ethiopia in June 1994, which can be labeled as a multi-party election exercise. The results were a landslide in favor of EPRDF, with an 85% out of 87.5% voters' turnout. Since then, consecutive elections that have taken place every five years were concluded with similar results, as shown in *Table (2)* above. Except for 2005 where the results were as shown in *Table (5).*

Likewise, 112 members were elected for a term of five years for the House of the Federation through a representation (indirect election) model from Nations, Nationalities and People. I have explained at length in several chapters above about the 1995 constitution as it is directly and indirectly linked to the DLDP, the case understudy. However, again noteworthy is the creation of awareness and

15 May/21 August 2005 House of People's Representatives Election (Number of Seats 547)	
Party/[Coalition]	Seats
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF]	327
Coalition for Unity and Democracy [CUD]	109
United Ethiopian Democratic Forces [UEDF]	52
Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM)	11
Benishangul-Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF)	08
Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP)	08
Gambela People's Democratic Movement (GPDM)	03
Sheko and Mezenger People's Democratic Unity Organization (SMPDUO)	01
Harari National League (HNL)	01
Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP)	23
Argoba National Democratic Organization (ANDO)	01
Independent	01
Vacant	02

Table 6: Election 2005 Ethiopia
Source: http://www.ethemb.se/ee_eth_election2010.htm

learning - which could eventually lead to internalizing the benefits of elections and conscious participation of citizens.

The current condition: The research findings on perception and participation of people in elections do not show much improvement compared to the four decades perfunctory exercises. Nomination is always top-down. One good practice by EPRDF is the prior discussion on the degree to which candidates are accepted by the constituencies (something like vote of confidence). This is practiced first in the absence of the candidates and finally presenting them directly to the public in some selected centers. Even though people have little to say against, the opportunity and the simulation is a good beginning. But it had to mature after several years of such an exercise and compared to costs paid; life and resources.

The case study shows that still only a few people understand the constitution, the election process and its outcomes. In election 2005 people got involved emotionally and voted for whoever stood against the ruling party. It was because of the extensive propaganda work on the part of the opposition and neglect on the part of the ruling party. If the decision had been because of people's conviction they would not have reversed their votes in the next election, because no miracle had taken place in the five years that satisfied their 2005 demands. The difference in the voting in 2005 was because of the intense involvement of students in convincing families to vote for the opposition, which was also a case in 1973. The central issues for the 2005 conviction were issues related to the rights of nationalities, the human rights, the lack of visible change and of course issues relating to resource distribution. Here, one can also question why people can be agitated by students, their children at least on political issues? Why not they decide on their own? If they always vote based on the intensity of campaigning or being influenced by their significant others, is the validity of such votes not questionable?

Concepts and practices in political participation: I was able to observe the challenges of realizing genuine participation in the case study area. Like "*pro*", "*against*" and the "*moderate*" arguments go, all the concerns of the social scientists become apparent when it comes to reality. Next I shall try to discuss the problems in participation with theories that best explain them. The problems of theories, however, are the huge difference between where they stem from and where we want to apply them. Most theories originate from the developed world and we always find various socio-economic mismatches when we try to apply them to our own condition.

The five well developed models of political participation in the political science literature are (1) the civic voluntarism model, (2) the rational choice model, (3) the social psychological model, (4) the mobilization model, and (5) the general incentives model.

The civic voluntarism model as explained by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995:269)

> "We focus on three factors to account for political activity. We suggested earlier that one helpful way to understand the three factors is to invert the usual question and ask instead

why people do not become political activists. Three answers come to mind: because they cannot; because they don't want [to]; or because nobody asked [them]. In other words people may be inactive because they lack resources, because they lack psychological engagement with politics, or because they are outside of the recruitment networks that bring people into politics".

This theory explains why people don't participate in politics, and explicitly classifies three reasons: (1) resource, which can be explained in terms of money, time and civic skill or knowledge; (2) psychological commitment – which means political value; and, (3) proximity to get involved.

The concept of "*rational choice theory*" is that, patterns of behavior in societies reflect the choices made by individuals as they try to maximize their benefits and minimize their costs. In other words, people make decisions about how they should act by comparing the costs and benefits of different courses of action. As a result of those choices, patterns of behavior will develop within the society (Axelrod, 1997). The idea is, since people want to get the most useful products at the lowest price, they will judge the benefits of a certain object (for example, how useful it is or how attractive it is) compared to similar objects. Then they will compare prices (or costs). In general, people will choose the object that provides the greatest reward at the lowest cost. This theory focuses only on the cost benefit and profit part. We cannot conclude that they have no influence on the preference of people in political participation as economies of scale are always instinctually attached to the human mind. So, people may ask, what benefit do I get from this? From the past experience I gained nothing individually and/or as part of a society; why is then whoever wins the contest important to me?

The *social psychological* model participation is derived by more mental line aspects – conscience of a person (sense of good or bad and sense of right or wrong), which is being influenced by social norms (private/internal or public/external) activated by significant others or people who the individual knows and respects (Muller, 1979:25). It is also explained as a 'unity principle', a norm that all members of the group should contribute to collective action if the collective good is to be provided (Finkel, Muller and Opp, 1989). This theory undermines the public choice aspect and emphasizes only collective action to achieve common goals. The case of students that influenced their families in the 2005 election can be connected to this theory. Similarly to break away from path- dependency and converge with a mental line is also an evaluation of good or bad and right or wrong from an individual point of view and resolution in its own mental line, because in the 2005 election, including the leading party activists, almost all people voted for the opposition in a dark room, where they are governed only by their beliefs (be they right or wrong). The social psychological model was perceptible at that time.

The *mobilization* model explains that participation occurs when people anticipate opportunities in participating and also when they are persuaded by others. This theory is criticized for over

induction and curtailing reality, and disabling participants to objectively see the advantages and disadvantages of participation.

This is the most apparent model in the case study area. In most cases people vote for candidates they do not know or have not heard about before the campaign. Notwithstanding illiteracy, media coverage is very low in our country. In the study area, one hardly finds more than one or two radio apparatuses in a village of about twenty households. Newspapers in the local language are never seen in the area. Those who fought to use the local language as a medium of instruction and as a working language are not contributing enough to develop it compared to the sacrifices they made to achieve this right. I have repeatedly observed when young intellectuals were unable to publish their works, dramas, films, songs, books…written in *Afaan Oromoo.*

Interviewee Dhuguma (on 18/02/2010) from Bodda Bosoqa *ganda* responded as follows when he has been asked how he participates in the elections:

> "I have never participated in any of the elections directly. I always send the government card through my son, because the government may ask me why I did not return it. I do not know the procedures and I do not know what they do after election. Because none of them have appeared in this area from the former contestants, even I do not personally know whether he was black or white [*gurraacha haa ta'uu diimaa*]".

People are always convinced by others to vote for this or that person. They are visited every five years, and they have no prior communication with the incumbents being elected. The EPRDF exploited this opportune situation to beat the opposition in the 2010 election. Compared to the above, I really wonder what people say about persuasion or mobilization in the developed world. This was written in the British Election Study (2001:51) "*It is not clear why citizens should be persuaded to participate by a stranger who knocks on their door or calls them on the telephone*".

According to the informants, in the research area it is in this pre - election that many employees were deployed to approach people door to door and persuade them (1) to get registered and to participate, (2) to appear at the polling station on time on the voting day, and, (3) to vote for the party. A lot of money, time and energy were spent only to serve formalism. This scarce resource could be better spent on more productive activities, installation of the communication system and other facilities first and foremost to increase people's understanding about election and their participation instead of spending it on something that has not been able to bring about change for years, just so as to satisfy the international community and deceive oneself.

The so called "election observers", who always come to monitor a task which is solely of our concern, also need to be explained; since they are regular visitors every five years to witness how elections go. A large number of them appear every five years wearing different uniforms: European   Union, UN, AU, Carter Center, etc… in exclusive land cruisers. Millions of dollars

are poured into this observers' operation, which could significantly contribute to the development of at least one district. They rush about and make noise after every election about the unfairness of the election: vote rigging, harassment, cheating, etc… This drum is loud for some six months after elections and then it calms down until the next time around. This is what one can expect during every election in the country. I am not trying to say reports of these observers are fabricated or wrong, but anybody can expect that it goes wrong if it already happened three or four times. No one has tried to recommend a model that could improve the situation and fit for our condition and bring about a sustainable solution that could continue without downplaying the democratic route. It has repeatedly been observed when illiterate mothers and fathers had their thumbs directed to where they have to sign. They saw people being misled by demagogues. Every five years, before election, during election and post election many people are sent to jail, under various allegations. On several occasions death tolls on both sides were high during the election process, both from the security forces and the people. Many citizens die for something they do not individually or as part of the society benefit from.

The *general incentive* model is a theory that explains how people can participate in political activities in response to a wide array of incentives, unlike public choice which is limited to only economic benefits. These can be benefits anticipated in the process (entertainment, catharsis and way of meeting likeminded personalities), outcomes-which imply private benefit (adds on political career, aspiring to hold a position, business network and opportunity), and ideological (seeking to get leverage to radicalize the ideology either to the extreme left or extreme right).

In Ethiopia's condition elections have never been entertaining, for both the candidates and voters. It is always a challenge, like walking through an area full of landmines or thorns. But issues relating to personal incentives, which are prevalent all over, and to some extent the ideological issue could be true at higher levels, from both the voters' side and on the candidates' side. In the study area, in the 2010 election, the private sector improved its involvement in order to harmonize its relations with the government which had been hostile in the past. Notwithstanding many other factors, the educated part of the population, teachers, students and employees at all levels also participated in their disapproval of the opposition, because of the fragmentation that occurred within the opposition right after the 2005 election.

Nevertheless, numerically the turnout is always very high (see *Table 2*), as had been even in the time of Dergue. Compared to the developed nations where participation is declining significantly, in Ethiopia it always ranks in the nineties in percentile, for both registration and turnouts. In this regard, Miller and Shanks (1996:11) wrote,

> "There is no evidence of increase in the political participation…in the case of USA both voting turnout and participation in voluntary organizations have actually declined rather than increased".

As discussed above, each of these models have something to explain about the situation and practices of participation in the study area. But the problem with most models is about the actual context. When we refer to 'people' en block, our explanations turn deceptive. In the study area, most of the 'people' are predominantly illiterate farmers, who have had no exposure or formal/non-formal education (as non-formal education includes lore through interpersonal and social relations – here it means literacy education through non-formal arrangements). What we are trying to impose may be something that they are not prepared for, or something in which they find neither individual nor collective value. So, as many authors, including Prime Minister Melese Zenawi say, it needs a paradigm shift.

8.3. Participation in Development Works

The analyses of the findings prompt discussion in four areas: (1) More insight on participatory development and its practicality; (2) knowledge gap: perception and motivation of the communities; (3) the condition of civil society organizations; and (4) the current position of the private sector

More insight on participatory development and its practicality: There are several ways of classifying world economic growth. Based on the most conventional explanations, world economic growth is currently marked at the "fifth wave of economic development", even though it would be difficult to guess what will come out of the current European Sovereign Debt Crisis and the emerging dictatorship of finance.

It would be very difficult to fully classify the country understudy in any of these waves, because we find practices related to all five waves concomitantly within the system in Ethiopia at present. However, the participatory economic development of our concern was a global issue in the third wave, in the early 1990s. It was marked with increased focus on strategies such as public-private partnerships, establishment of regional networks, development of industrial clusters, and enhancement of human capital as an engine to development. In this period decentralization and empowerment of local governments to enhance development and service delivery to the public at large, were important elements.

For our understanding it would be good to touch on the earlier and latter waves of economic development as well. The first wave was marked by facilitating industrialization through attracting investors and making the working environment conducive to employees to increase productivity. It was characterized by decreasing land lease, tax and other production costs. The second wave is about increasing competitiveness through extending the scope of intervention which enables entrepreneurs to reach a broader market. The most interesting wave which takes the future into consideration is the fourth wave, which was all about sustainable development and high concern for the global environment. The current wave, the fifth, is a stage at which

strategies are lifted to regional thinking and consideration of regional and global comparative advantages.

Hence, going back to the issue of participation, there is still a heated debate over the importance, extent and practicality of participatory approaches to development. These participatory approaches to development were formulated as a reaction to modernization and dependency paradigms. They were criticized for their focus on top-down diffusion of western knowledge and practices into the Third World and interpretation of underdevelopment as a result of unequal relation between developed and developing economies (Olberding, 2002).

In contemporary literature the most cited proponents of participatory development and empowerment of the poor are a Brazilian educator Freire – the author of PRA (1972) - in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Chambers – author of RRA (1983) in his profound work '*Rural Development: Putting the last first"* and Friedmann (1992) in his, *Empowerment: The politics of Alternative Development.* Freire argues that development should come from within, it should not be superimposed, the only role of development practitioners should be to increase their networks of partnership, gradually building up their confidence in their own knowledge and abilities, and consequently also a sense of entitlement (Freire, 1972:100). He further explains that development should be a two way interaction where poor people themselves play an important role in decisions that affect them; in planning, implementation and control systems which as a result could increase sustainability of development interventions.

Chambers (1983:72) in line with this adds that development can come only by '*putting the last first'*. Chambers also elaborates on decentralization of the system in order to include the rural poor in planning and controlling the development process, which ultimately empowers and makes them capable of taking their livelihoods into their own hands; which he thinks is central to sustainable development.

Friedmann (1992:viii), argues that the development process should be people-centered. He explained that empowering the poor is at the center of a nation's development as follows:

> "If poverty is a condition of relative disempowerment with respect to a household's access to specified bases of social power, then a key to the overcoming of mass poverty is the social and political empowerment of the poor".

On the other hand, as explained in the literature section of this work, there have been various criticisms recently against these highly advocated 'participatory' approaches to development. Among notable development theorists and practitioners who propose to see the negative side of "fuzzy term" – "participatory approach" are, Kothari and Cooke (2001:4-6). They say that, "*the concept of participation bears within it a 'tyrannical potential' for oppressing the already poor and marginalized, whom it seeks to empower";* defining tyranny as "*the illegitimate and/or unjust exercise of power*".   They call upon development practitioners to reconsider their

obsession with the extraordinary [*only*] positive results expected from the participatory approach in development.

Furthermore, Kothari and Cooke (2001:16-35) also argues that rather than empowering people, 'participatory' approaches in many instances are used merely as legitimizing devices that "*serve to represent external interests* as *local needs, dominant interests* as *community concerns*".

There are several incidents where this has happened in Ethiopia's reality as well, where implementers say, "*It is the decision of the people, and people chose to do this or that*". Mosse (2001:24) even comments on PRA; that implementers often use it as '*risk aversion*' mechanism and to curtail the main societal problems which are actually based in bad governance and policy issues. As Kothari and Cooke (2001:143) said, from this point of view, the participatory development approach can be misused and worsen people's condition by "*disempowering them to challenge the prevailing hierarchies and inequalities in society*". They also explain the dangers of participatory approach in group interactions, where the group is dominated by patronage/clientele relation and when harmful traditional practices are prevalent within certain communities.

There is still another dimension to this argument. Some authors say: over emphasizing the role of people in development covers the weaknesses of the government and pushes the ball to the people's side. This gives relief to bad governments. They further ask that, which country on earth has overcome the complicated challenges of poverty without having a transformational leadership. They feel that this overemphasis of participation is simply a misleading and bogus idea that comes from unrealistic expectation to win publicity.

Figure 16: *Ganda* **Structure (Current)**
(Constructed from narratives)
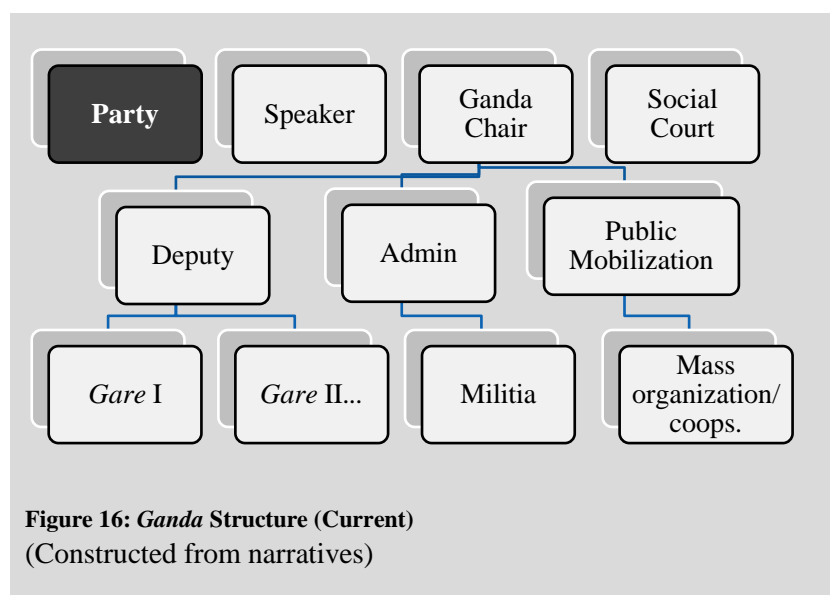
"*Revolution will not succeed without the active participation of the broad masses*" - this was a catchphrase from the slogans of the 'National Democratic Revolution' of the Dergue regime. In the literature section we have also discussed how the Weimar Republic collapsed with its high rate of mass participation.

With this background, based on the empirical data obtained, I try to explain community participation in development activities and the inputs of DLDP to this process in the study area.

The Gares (See Figure 16): The idea of organizing *gare*s (5-30 members) is mainly to exercise planning, to develop work ethic and to increase productivity through support and experience sharing with one another. These task forces are organized in each zone (lower structure of a *ganda*) based on neighborhood and their specialties. Specialties include: horticulture producers, fruit producers, grain producers, small scale enterprises like - carpentry, tannery, pottery, poultry, apiculture/beekeeping, cattle breeding, etc… There are areas where this system has worked better. But in the Dendi district, in all the three rural *ganda*s, there have been no significant results that prove their success. People consider them as superimposed structures to scrutinize on the activities of people.

It is through these *gare*s that the *ganda* administration performs all its activities. When there are new orders from the government, they use these structures to reach each household. They also use them for the collection of tax, government debts and other contributions. These structures were started before the introduction of the DLDP, and mainly focused on securing peace and tranquility and for the purpose of election. Currently, after the introduction of the DLDP, there have been attempts to activate them as a primary structure for area development planning, implementation and control. The development agents also use them separately as models of production units. Unlike the structure in *Figure (16)* depicts, though it appears that they are only responsible to the deputy chairperson, who is in charge of all development activities, they also take orders from other officials.

The preparation of the *ganda* development plan hypothetically starts from the individual household. As explained above, *gare*s help individuals to develop their annual plans. *Gare*s are also thought to be forums for various kinds of training, where extension agents meet farmers at work sites. The training encompasses, hygiene and sanitation, natural resources conservation and proper utilization – which is about forest management, land management, gully protection, protection of grazing in the reserve forests, agriculture, home economics and various other socio-economic activities.

According to the data obtained from all *ganda*s under study, in most cases they simply serve formality, which seems like a children's playhouse game. The purpose of grouping the scattered households together to increase productivity, ease service delivery and enhance social cohesion - was not a bad or wrong idea. As a management person, I believe in organizing people and joining them into small or larger groups to maximize results, though realizing it has several problems. But when these structures are superimposed, farmers are strongly against whatever results they may bring. It would be difficult to realize such plans particularly in areas where the essence of 'democracy' is totally misunderstood.

During the 2005 elections, the following was a song people officially sang against these *gare*s; "*yaa garee mila kobootaa amma caamsaatti nu moota*" – which literally means, 'the bare foot *gares* -your time will only be up to the May election'. I think we have to learn from the past as

well, when as mentioned elsewhere people dismantled their own service and producers' cooperatives in a day during the change of government in 1991.

On the other hand, leaving these *gare*s aside, people actively participate in the traditional social structures and labor arrangements such as, *shani, dabo, dado, iqubi* and other social practices…which still work in perfect parallel with these superimposed structures. While the superimposed structures are attended for formality, the traditional ones are practiced on a voluntary basis. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. As learnt from the informants, all members consider the *gares* and the tasks they perform as obligations enforced by government.

Interviewee Eregegne (on 26/03/2010) from Dendi Sulu *ganda* said the following:

> "I cannot forfeit the government work. They will penalize me. I prefer to be absent from Obbo [Mister] Suphas dabo". *I asked him, what is the government work?* "The *gare* he said".

We can see from this that they are not yet convinced that the *gare*s are organized to serve their own needs. I wonder at our inability to learn from the past. There were very simple ways to this, just empowering the social structures*, dabo,dado*… that have existed for several years.

In two places in the study *ganda*s I observed a good beginning of two *gare*s that started a horticultural garden. But they said, '*we are just doing it for home consumption, because of the inaccessibility to market'*. According to one participant in the focus group there was a time when they distributed their whole product to the community for free, because it was difficult to take it to market.

With regard to effects of market access in economic development, Gebre-Medhin, Eleni (2007), CEO of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange quoted Sen (1981), an Indian Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics, and explained the 1984 drought in Ethiopia as follows:

> "Famine is not so much about availability of food supply, but the ability to acquire or entitle oneself to that food through market.
>
> In 1984, in what can only be considered [as] one of the greatest crimes of humanity nearly one million people died in my country of birth Ethiopia, not because there was not enough food, because actually there was surplus food in the fertile regions of the southern part of the country, but because people in the north could not access or entitle themselves to that food" (TED, 2007).

It is a great idea, but it is actually one where so much is said but little is done or learned. The Dendi *gandas,* who could not bring their potatoes to market, are only 100 kilometers away from Finfinne. It needs a set of thinkers and doers who can open-mindedly embark on sustainable solutions for such problems.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA): This is where we can see success stories in community participation. Some discussions are needed on the conceptual aspect and historical background to the community's participation in education. In Ethiopia education used to be a priority agenda of most governments who came to power, starting from Menelik II's time, none of the governments reserved resources and policy provisions to enhance the sector.

It was in Haileselassie's reign that a campaign entitled "*The National Army of Basic Education*" was launched under a motto, "*Education for All*", which was said to have been initiated by General Taddese Biru, Former Commander of Police Forces and Territorial Army at that time, who was killed by the Dergue. However, extended delivery of non-formal and formal education (locally and by excessively sending the youth, children of the disadvantaged, to socialist countries) started during the Dergue's regime. A campaign known as "*Development through Cooperation, Work and Literacy Campaign*" was launched in 1974 where 60,000 university and high school students were mobilized for two years to all 500 districts in the country. I was one of the participants from Addis Ababa University. This was followed by the "*National Literacy Campaign*". Notwithstanding some limitations both initiatives made their own contributions in many respects, introducing cross-cultural differences to the youth that participated in the campaign and the recipient communities; and implementation of various policy decisions. The Dergue had an education policy anchored on three principles: 1) to cultivate Marxist-Leninist ideology in the youth, 2) to develop knowledge in science and technology, and 3) to integrate and coordinate research with production so as to enable the revolution to move forward and secure productive citizens (MoE, 1977). Every development initiative had its own "tag" based on the orders of that time.

The transformation of education, qualitatively and quantitatively took place following policies of regional autonomy and decentralization after 1991. Here, 'qualitative' refers to the introduction of primary education in mother tongues of various nations and nationalities. Since 1991 various measures have been taken to increase all levels of education (non-formal, primary, secondary and tertiary), including vocational training. It was within this frame that Parent - Teacher Associations (PTA), were being empowered to ensure that students are learning, teachers are teaching properly and the school management is going well.

While it existed even in the Dergue era, this strategy was improved based on the 1994 Education Sector Strategy of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, which stated:

> "Schools will be strongly linked with the community, which will take responsibility in its well-being and upkeep. They will be made to be responsive to the local needs and requirements and shall act as centers for all educational activities of the community. The management of each school will be democratized and run with the participation of the community, the teachers, the students and the relevant government institutions". (TGE 1994:16–17)

In fact community participation in school management is a well practiced and developed strategy by many developed and underdeveloped nations. In the above mentioned government document various conceptual issues have also been discussed regarding the expected outcomes of community participation in education: 1) maximizing limited resources, 2) developing relevant curriculum and learning materials, 3) identifying and addressing problems, 4) promoting girls' education, 5) creating and nourishing community-school partnerships, 6) realizing democracy, 7) increasing accountability, 8) ensuring sustainability, and 9) improving the home environment.

The PTAs in the study area are elected from the community, *ganda* administration, associations (youth, women…), students and teachers' representatives. They meet every month and the election takes place every two years.

Concurrently, the PTAs in all the four *ganda*s work actively in line with this concept. PTAs mobilize contributions in cash and kind for the maintenance and expansion of classrooms and furniture. Where there is a dire shortage, and government is unable to assign enough teachers, like Dendi Mummicha "Hiwot Birhan School", they hire additional teachers, librarians, etc… with their contribution. The day I visited the school, students were carrying wooden poles for the repair of the school fence.

Picture 2: Labor Education (Picture taken by the author)

Picture (2) shows Asgori (a small village nearby Ghinchi) students cutting and carrying *teff* [43] and grass from a farm owned by the school.

PTAs monitor enrolment, attendance and discipline of students and teachers. They check on gender based school abuse/violence and try to create an environment conducive to girls' attendance, such as preparation of a separate room and toilet where they can get services during their menstrual cycles. PTAs also actively work in finding income generation strategies. They mobilize communities to build and maintain teachers' houses and additional classrooms. School based activities such as: sports, gender, HIV/AIDS protection, Information, Communication and

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[43] *Teff* is an important food grain in Ethiopia, an annual grass, a species of love grass (Wikpedia)

Education (ICE), environment and other subject related clubs, also have good attendance and support from the PTAs.

This prompted me to analyze why PTAs are active and have survived in different forms for almost the last four decades, while many other structures have became unstable and dysfunctional.

Interviewee Tammana (on 01/04/2010) from Dendi Sulu *ganda* said:

> "It is about our children. This school and the Saint Mary Church are what we got in a hundred years time from the government; of course our contribution is also there. What else do we have? We have no clinic; we have no potable water project, we have never thought of electricity... You know how difficult it was to go to Bodda School which is 10 kilometers away from here, particularly for girls (who were always been threatened by abduction) and children under ten. We need it that is why we are concerned…"

I said to him but you also need service cooperatives…why did you destroy these during the transition of the government?

> "He said, their services were not clean…we got services but they also took our products without our will…we could not sell our products in free market…and they forced us also to buy what we did not use…for example, soft paper, plastic shoes? What do we do with these? They brought materials of poor quality…for example sickle that did not last even one season. Moreover, they became institutions for the enrichment of a few groups".

In the focus group discussion, they tried to work out why this committee, the PTA, is different from others. I have tried to paraphrase their words as follows: 1) the organizer is the director of the school. He knows what to do. He always prepares an agenda for discussion. He has always concrete issues when he calls meetings. Unlike the *ganda* or the *gare* leaders he has better knowledge than us to convince and motivate us, 2) it is about our children's future. Land is degraded and population has greatly increased. They have no hope to stay here unless they learn and find another option, 3) Not only to attain means of livelihood, but to change our way of life our children must go to school. We see the difference in the way of living of families who have educated children and those who don't 4) If we don't support this school, government does not give a single *mezzo* (*mezzo* is the last denominator of a coin in the area). So, it is related to our life and which is why it is sustainable and PTAs are active and stable.

What we see here is the weight children exert on families and the community to shape their thinking and daily practices and the influence of the school director and /or the school team. The public choice theory, where they calculate the cost and benefit of each activity is also reflected here. So can we use this for other similar situations? This will be discussed in the next chapter and in the conclusion.

Participation in environmental protection and management of communal property: Slogans about the importance of the participation of people are not new agendas for good and/or bad missions. Environmental protection and proper utilization is every day chant of all government bodies. There are always community and private plantation programs, millions of seedlings every year, but we hardly see something on the ground. May be they die the very day they are planted. A lot of campaigns are waged every year and a lot of money and energy spent in vain.

I have tried to see the annual development plan of one household. The format for the preparation of the household plan has a column that shows a household's plan in plantation of trees and grasses like vetiver, alfalfa, etc…It also asks if a family has a plan for gully protection and construction of in-farm terraces. The attempt is complete. But the results and conviction of the farmers are far removed from these interventions.

Communal grazing lands and space for various activities have been reserved in all the *gandas,* spaces for: ritual ceremonies – such as *gadaa* celebration, meadow for horse races, *gannoo* (to be read *ganno*) games (something like cricket), *adaabbinnaa* (space for group dancing and singing – where girls and boys can meet), water spring catchments, forests, plantations in the churches, schools and clinics. Communities have a collective responsibility to develop, protect them from intruders and utilize them following accepted norms. But there is always a struggle over these resources. Most of them have been totally raided and turned into individual farm lands. Some have been narrowed to a small strip of land. Everybody tries to grab and privatize. Every year on the eve of Easter there was a tradition called *adamo* which is hunting for edible animals (only a few wild animals are edible by Ethiopians) like: even-toed (hoofed) wild animals, antelope of various kinds, bushbucks, etc… and birds. Because followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church never eat animal products (when fasting) for two months before Easter, they fetch meat from the bush for the celebration. But now, one hardly finds even shade for domestic animals in the area.

Hence, it always seems that the private ownership feeling gravitates and negatively affects the communal works and properties. What I observed in the course of interviews and focus group discussions is that people value the penny they privately own, more than the great wealth they have in common.

Knowledge gap and perception of the communities: The other problem which has always persisted in the community is the knowledge gap between the development agents and the community. As a result of the DLDP, development agents have been assigned to all the *ganda*s. They are about five in each *ganda*. Each of them is responsible for different tasks; for hygiene and sanitation, for primary health, for veterinary health, for natural resource protection, conservation and development and for general agriculture. This is a huge human capital compared to the pre- decentralization condition. But, communities stick to the traditional way of life and systems of production. Development agents immediately want to turn upside down the communities' indigenous knowledge and substitute it with their expertise. From what I observed from the communities is that they greatly undermine the development agents, because of their

behavior, their seriousness on development, their weak expertise, their age (most of them are in the early 20s) and their work disciplines. If it was like NGOs that implement projects and go to farmers with tangible inputs: selected seed, new technology tools, and other incentives the farmers should have listened to these agents.

So, the money paid to the development agents does not appear to translate into sound extension services for the communities. The monitoring and supervision mechanism is very weak. As a matter of fact given the capacity of the district that they do not have enough vehicles and other means of transportation it is difficult to travel far. The poor access road also aggravates the transportation situation and utterly limiting a better outreach.

Actually, communities are not expected to know theoretically what decentralization means and what the objectives of the DLDP are. However, attempts have been made to ascertain the actual perception of the communities about activities related to the DLDP program.

Schmidt-Kallert and Diaw (1990:32) wrote the following:

> "Local people do not think in terms of regional development. The district is an artificial creation that has no place in their life world".

The concern of the community is not the issue of this or that program but what they can get at their farm gate. What is true about the above is that there are not many associations with the government that impact on the lives of the rural community because of underdeveloped and minimum service delivery. There were times when people in Ethiopia survived respecting and accommodating each other without government (during the change of government and when vacuums were created at the center). There are still areas that live only with a very thin '*relation thread*' connecting them to government. This is not because of the prevalence of the neo-liberal systems (whereby trans-boundary business networks pay little attention to the existence of governments), but because of underdevelopment and uneven development. This will be further discussed in the next chapter under the title of social capital.

Civil society organizations: Well defined by Diamond (1994), the term in a broad sense encompasses a wide range of societal organizations covering a variety of interests in diverse forms and at different levels. With this understanding, perhaps we can categorize CSOs into two: those which emerge with current understanding of CSOs and those indigenous institutions under different names, that have for a long time been practiced by Ethiopian people all over the country.

The legal provision for the formation of CSOs in Ethiopia can be traced back to the Imperial Constitution of 1955; Article 45, which reads, "*Ethiopian subjects shall have the right in accordance with the conditions prescribed by law, to assemble peaceably and without arms*"; and Article 47, which reads, "*Every Ethiopian subjects has the right to engage in any occupation and to form or join occupational associations, in accordance with the law*". I mention this to

show that the intention to legitimize CSOs has been long lived provision at least in papers. Of course based on this provision professional organizations mushroomed in the 1960s and were noteworthy energetic blocks that played a great role in the struggle to weaken forces of the monarchy.

During the Dergue, there was no stratum of society that was not organized, territorially, professionally, by industry, by age, by sex, etc… These for example include, *Matrik Quslegnochi Mahiber* (MaQuMa), which means "Ethiopian School Living Certificate Examination Victims Association". However, they all fall under a single party program and rule. It was a strategy whereby the party allows them to get organized, but diverts their mission and makes them play the games of the party. I am not trying to mention this as a blame, as it was the order of that day.

Regarding indigenous organizations, such as *iddir* (self help economic units), territorial associations and self-help associations (such as- Mecha Tulama Development Association) during the reign of the Dergue, which at a time were mostly suppressed, being suspected of subversive intentions or activities, Daka (1978: 20) remarked the following:

> "The legal status and activities of the ethnic *iddirs* have been affected as a result of the involvement of an *iddir* in subversive political activities. A general, who was the president of the Mecha Tulama Mahiber, was accused of having advanced political motives through the Mahiber. This incident precipitated governmental action of serious consequences as far as the formation and expansion of *iddirs* and private organizations were concerned. The government not only disbanded the Mecha Tulama Association but also strongly suppressed other associations of similar nature. Even other *iddirs* were required to register with the Security Department and their constitutions were to include phrases similar to the following. 'This *iddir* will not interfere with any government policy or will not pursue any political objective".

Currently, theoretically the government understood that CSOs hold the third axis of the state systems: government–private sector–CSOs. Notwithstanding some comments that they could expand more than this, the numerical increase of CSOs since 1991 is also significant, even though most of them are only concentrated around Finfinne.

Table (6) shows data for seven different years. Among these 176 local NGOs (LNGOs) and 53 International NGOs (INGOs) totally 229 NGOs operate in Oromia state. The increase of the local

Year	LNGO	INGO	Total
1993	11	44	55
1994	24	46	70
1996	96	96	192
1998	160	119	270
2000	246	122	368
2004	405	260	665
2007	1742	234	1976

Table 7: NGOs in Ethiopia
Rahmato, et al. (2008[b])

NGOs is very high compared to the increase of international NGOs. The reason behind this

variation could be saturation on the international NGOs side and/or increased awareness and relative space on the local NGOs side. Compared to our neighbor Kenya, which has a land area of 580,370 square kilometers (equivalent to Oromia) and a population of 39,002,772 (less than half of Ethiopia's population) had 23,000 women's associations and 1,441 international and local NGOs by 1995, registered by the NGO Coordination Bureau, under the Office of the President of Kenya (Kameri-Mbote, 2000). When we see this far less number we understand that a lot need to be done.

With this background we return to the research area. In Dendi district there are some NGOs that work in the areas of gender, child care, micro-finance, agricultural technology dissemination, construction of social service structures (school, water, clinics) and land use management. In 2009 there were three international and four local NGOs working in very limited *ganda*s. In the study rural *ganda*s (Bodda Bosoqa, Dendi Mummicha and Dendi Sulu) Land Use Planning and Resource Use Management (LUPO) - GTZ implemented micro-projects that included small scale irrigation, drinking water supply, spring development, soil and water conservation supported by indigenous knowledge from Konso[44], savings and credit for women's groups, highland fruit promotion, vegetables, etc. It is the first NGO that appeared in this area. Other NGOs work in the area of micro credit, women and youth empowerment (through funds obtained from Korea Development organization), Chilimo forest conservation, school construction (Save the Children USA), agricultural technology transfer and other similar activities. Even though the areas they touch seem far reaching, their geographic and population coverage and the amount of money they bring to the area is very limited.

However, informants explain that the presence of LUPO has impacted on their lives and the conservation of the land significantly. People have started to plant apples and gain from the fruits. Some households have learned how to secure the lands that slope and protect soil from erosion. They have also learned how to identify and prioritize problems in the area and how to prepare community action plans to tackle communal problems with locally available resources. But the problem with the LUPO was the same as that with the government; it lasted for a short period of time.

Another mentionable activity by NGOs in the area is the activities of the Alliance of Knowledge and Action for Sustainable Livelihood Management Association (AKAM) that operates in three *gandas* of the district around Kotoba. A graduate from the Technical University of Dortmund, Faculty of Spatial Planning (Fakultät Raumplanung), Spatial Planning for Regions in Growing Economies (SPRING) Program, initiated AKAM and currently it works in community empowerment and promotion of sustainable agriculture and rural development practices. This is the first "barefoot" NGO that reached where there is no road access at all; like the early Chinese "Barefoot Doctors", who were serving their communities in inaccessible rural areas. This is a

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[44] Konso is a tribe in South Ethiopia, known for their traditional land use management

model practice; if everybody puts in this much effort, it would significantly contribute to bring about change and build a strong self-reliant community. School children in the town of Werther, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany have also been involved with this NGO, under a slogan "Heart from Werther to Kotoba" (Kotoba is name of the *ganda* where this NGO operates) to raise funds for the school support, construction and facilitation of libraries in this project area.

At district level, compared to other areas, officials are not good at attracting NGOs to their area. According to data obtained from the informants, they do not include CSOs in their annual preparation of plans and review meetings. Involving the CSOs in political activities is absolutely unthinkable, but they could at least contribute on an advisory basis in the area of economic and social development.

In point of fact, poor communication facilities in the district are also a limiting factor for many NGOs. Interviewee Magarsa (on 08/02/210) from Ghinchi Town *Ganda* 02 said, *"our telephone is like children's 'hide and seek' play; the network for both land line and mobile appears for a moment and suddenly goes"*.

Besides all these shortfalls, the district also needs to maintain a data base of donors in the country. They need to prepare complete profiles of the district (which I couldn't find) and give special attention to the sector. They should not limit themselves to receiving only those who come to them. Knowing that the annual budget they receive from the state hardly goes beyond per diem of selected employees, they must look around for the additional inputs that come from CSOs.

According to the informants one recent intervention is micro-finance activity in the area. The micro-finance institutions, especially Oromia Credit and Saving Share Company (OCSSCO), give short term loans for purchase of fertilizers, selected seed and other livestock based activities. In this regard some have used the opportunity well; others have misused the money and involved their families in a very serious crisis. Many of the interviewees were victims of this problem. The microfinance institutions should have to give training before handing out money. As the interest rate is very high compared to conventional banks, both the lender and the borrower will have great problems.

From the focus group discussion and interviewees I learned that there are several traditional units in all spheres of life. The problem is no one pays attention to building on these existing structures. They always want to superimpose new structures which fail after a while.
Let us look at the following structures that have survived through the suppression of all the regimes:
For production: *Jigi, Dabo, Shani, Dado…*
For social support: *Golobe, Modi…*
For conflict resolution: *Ya'i, Guma* [blood money], *Tuma…*
Girls' peer group for entertainment: *Adabina, Addoyye…*

Boys' peer group for entertainment: *Folle, Michu, Qille, Facho*, horse riders association…

Each of the above has their own significant role in the community. No extension worker or written document is needed here. They have become norms of society. We could rectify the bad (in relation to the current conventions) elements in them and promote the good and productive ones.

The following is a brief explanation of what they are:

Shani – literally means a group of five. It is a peer group, almost permanent, organized voluntarily for land preparation, sowing and harvesting. *Debo* – is more extended (in number of participants) labor based cooperation for one day, for land preparation, harvest, sowing, weeding, when the work demands more than the capacity of the *shani. Debo* is particularly prepared to match activities with the seasons. At this event abundant food and local drinks are served, special songs that motivate the group work are sung and sometimes they consume even more than the work they deliver. *Jigi* – literally means abundance. This is a more extended type of labor arrangement where participants come from distant places, together with family members, children-in-law, brothers, cousins, etc… This is a big festivity where food and drinks are also abundantly served as in *Debo*, traditional songs are enjoyed during the work and when drinks are served. *Dado* – is called *wanfala* in lowland areas (two or more persons – temporarily); reflects a "*today for you- tomorrow for me*" notion.

Golobe and *modi* are related to funeral ceremonies and assistance rendered to a family when a family member dies. *Ya'i*, *guma* and *tuma* are community practices to resolve conflicts, stop mal practices in the village (for example theft of sheep, vegetables from the fields, adultery, etc…) these are stopped by *tuma*. If the elders say "do not do it", if you still violate and do what has been prohibited, your future generations will be immoral. This is how they believe. To this effect everybody respects the rules. This is stronger even than the enforcement by the police, militia or the *ganda* social court. Even the *ganda* social courts use these structures when things get out of hand. *Ya'i* is a meeting for scrutiny. *Adabinna* (in September) and *addoyye* (during harvest) are the dancing and singing ceremonies of the girls, going from house to house or in a selected place, sometimes continuously for fifteen days. This is where they sometimes find their marriage partners and at least get chance to touch and talk to their favorite ones. The boys' games are different seasonal games, *michuu, foollee (to be read folle), etc…* where they practice fighting, endurance and at the same time friendship and team spirit.

There are also other religious based social groups: *sanbate*, *mabara,* as well as other *Gadaa* related traditional belief arrangements for safety of animal, environment and other community relations, such as *atete, tolcha, irrecha…* The problem however, is that no government has tried to select the positive and adaptable ones and build on these arrangements. They try to dismantle these systems and superimpose what they think is 'best' and 'modern'. They always come up with new models that fail. Here the main problem is that they do not try to build on the existing

social capital, which the people have experienced throughout their lives and are sentimentally attached to. This will be discussed more in the next chapter.

Current Position of the Private Sector: The private sector development in Ethiopia is still in its infancy. Most existing private companies are owned and run by family members with ambiguous transactions. The state still owns manufacturing industries such as tanneries, food and beverages, textiles and garments, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and vehicles. In this sector the state accounts for about 60% of total output, and most of the employment (38,000). Although the state lessened its influence in the sector from 86% in 1996 to 53% in 2002, it has remained at this level for a few years, even increasing to 57% in 2004 (IDC, 2005). Of the rest, the significant share is owned by the private sector, domestic and transnational. However, the focus given to this sector, particularly to domestic investors does not match with proposed plans nor what is promoted theoretically; it means there is not much evidence of toeing the anticipated line.

I am tempted to present the following three quotations from a working paper of the Development Bank of South Africa (2009:4-6, 11), before I present the current position of the private sector.

> "The idea of 'a centralized state interacting with the private sector from a position of pre-eminence so as to secure development objectives' (Wade, 1990) is generally called the 'developmental state' theory" (Johnson, 1982; White, 1988)

> "Importantly, in successful developmental states - technocratic autonomy was given primacy over political power, although it was embedded in society, as well as in private sector and industrial networks" (UNCTAD, 2007:61).

> "Most developmental states have flourished in mixed capitalist states. In these states there are dynamic alliances in pursuit of a common goal – economic growth and development – between - political powers and the private sector, and between banks and public and private firms', sometimes dubbed 'alliance capitalism" (UNCTAD, 2007:61).

What we learn from these three quotations is the importance of the private sector for the so called 'developmental state' to be successful. There should be a social and economic pact between these two, public and private, to increase productivity, competitiveness (local and international) and register growth.

There have been some attempts to include the private sector in the system. There was a project called "Ethiopia Private Sector Development Capacity Building Project" initiated by the World Bank in 2004, which is still under implementation by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI). This project aims to create conditions to improve private sector productivity and competitiveness. The project was founded under four major components: 1) accelerating the implementation of the privatization program; 2) improving the business environment through implementation of a competition policy; 3) strengthening integration of Ethiopia into the global economy through support to World Trade Organization (WTO) accession; and 4) strengthening

the international competitiveness of the private sector and the capacities of its representative organizations. Ultimately, the higher level objective of the project is to facilitate increased growth and competitiveness of the Ethiopian private sector (MoTI, 2004).

There were also attempts by GTZ and the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Italian Development Cooperation, DFID…to enhance the public-private partnership in the areas of agriculture, construction, tourism, energy supply and other social services. USAID had also a loan portfolio guarantee to encourage Micro and Small Enterprise Development (MSED) which was designed to serve, first the agricultural cooperative unions, and then the agriculture sector in general (MoTI, 2004).

Officially what the government says and what all the development partners advocate is the importance of the private sector. But the understanding and the space given to this sector, particularly at the state, zonal and district levels especially to domestic entrepreneurs is very gloomy. Being threatened by the tools such as "rent seeking" and "patronage/clientelism" of the central government, all structures keep a distance (at least officially) from the private sector. Practically, it seems that the understanding of most implementers about the term "people" does not include this sector; which I have repeatedly mentioned, particularly the domestic entrepreneurs. The giant private holders and foreign investors seem to be immune from the "rent seeking" and "patronage/clientelism" syndrome.

On the other hand there appear efforts, at least at desk level, to narrow the gap, strengthen the private segment and enhance partnership with the public sector. In 2002 a forum called Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) was created by the central government to work closely with the private sector under a conceptual framework termed, "Smart Partnership" (UNDP, 2007). The purpose was to possess shared vision, cooperation and create a win-win partnership between the government and the private sector, through dialogue and reciprocal support. This forum has been further developed and in 2011 a memorandum of understanding was signed to officially start the joint-consultative forum right away. The problem is that most of the policies and changes of policies come into existence in response to certain pressures (external or internal) and immediately melt away when the push has calmed down.

In Oromia there was a huge mobilization of the private sector during the preparation for 2010 election. There were also some who struggled to survive under very difficult conditions. Of course the existing private sector is also mostly characterized by very limited business experience, lack of transparency and tax aversion.

Within this frame, the condition of the private sector, particularly the domestic entrepreneurs in Dendi district is hard to explain. All the government chambers say the right thing, but act the wrong way. First of all there is no genuine perception and conviction of the importance of the private sector. They, the district officials, rush as if they can only build the nation through the government structure alone. Evidently, there is a fear that compels implementers to get closer to

local entrepreneurs; not to be suspected as a rent-seeker. Apart from this there are individual implementers' weaknesses and gaps in understanding the importance of the private sector in local development. This condition sometimes leads to believe what some politicians say – that it is deliberate conspiracy to weaken the indigenous growing force.

In Dendi district, let alone down the tiers in the *gandas*, even at the district level, the attention and support given to this sector is almost none existent. The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia has recently opened a branch and there are also three micro- finance institutions operating in the district: OCSSCO, Busa Gonofa and Wasasa Micro-Finance Institutions. Besides the very limited practices of people in utilizing loans, savings and insurance facilities, they operate only in very limited areas, with inadequate capital and limited technical support. All these factors hinder the growth of the private sector by narrowing the transaction scale.

The issue of considering the business community as part of the system generally needs a shift in mindset. Seventeen years of communist orientation still influences the thinking and actions of most unawake decision makers in the political arena. Hence, as a reflection of this, the middle line officials, particularly those with limited confidence, still prefer to keep a distance from the business community (at least officially) but in reality where they are increasingly getting influence in some sectors. As future thinking is contrary to this, it needs thorough attention.

Interviewee Magarsa (on 08/02/2010) from Ghinchi Town *Ganda* 02 said: "*it is only in the evening that we freely greet with business men, if somebody observes you standing with them during the day, you will be labeled a rent seeker, particularly with the local ones*". It is not at all a secret that this condition is the out outcome of the best engineered indoctrination from the upper tiers; because it is widespread, at least in Oromia. The worst and discouraging part is still when it is revealed as preferential treatment, as a result of unfair service providers' actions.

However, it is not quite a *fait accompli*. Some external investors have started to move in, to use the location advantage and the agro-climatic conditions in the district. Amongst these, one is the Chinese Mixed Agriculture and Technology Dissemination Project, two kilometers west of Ghinchi. The second big investment is *Anmol Products Ethiopia PLC*, an Indian paper production company. This is the second paper producing company in the country which has 15 Indian professionals and also offered job opportunities to 70 local people. The product is assumed to cover the country's 15,000 tons of paper. Per capita paper consumption per year is estimated at 0.46 kg in Ethiopia (earthtrends.wri.org). When this consumption rate is compared with that of Germany which consumes 219.47, the USA 307.54, and Kenya 4.37 kg per year per capita, it somehow indicates a long walk ahead of us to attain the development goals anticipated, as consumption of paper is connected publications, home use, schools… Even though, currently the world advocates a "*paper free environment*", one can understand that our minimum consumption is not a matter of choice but of poverty.

There are also other companies like flower farm, gypsum manufacturing, edible oil processing and building material (gravel of different sizes) production. The district is well known for its production of 'water filter spherical rocks' from river basins, used in bore holes as a back fill for perforated casings. As this is a rare material the district could generate better revenue from this source.

This appears a good start. The problem observed at the very beginning of these companies' operation, however, is the irresponsible release of waste into the air and Awash River (local people call it Hawas). This has happened as a result of a lack of awareness on the part of the district officials. As Awash River - the most utilized river: for agriculture, potable water and generation of power - starts its long inland journey from this place, the negative effect caused by pollution could be imagined all the way. From the expert interview, I learned that the district is not aware of costs of the long term and short term repercussions of environmental damages. Without being too alarmist about pollution created with only two small plants, it would be wise to plan and pre-empt the potential impact of pollution and do whatever legally and technically possible, without hampering the production at the very start.

8.4. Participation in Administration

As one of the objectives of the decentralization program is to enhance people's direct and indirect participation in the administration of their locality, I will try to explain how such participation takes place at grassroots level in the following few paragraphs. People's participation in administration in the district can be explained in four major areas: local administration; collection of taxes and other government debts and contributions; and conflict resolution and crime prevention.

Participation in local administration: The district council has about 200 members in their councils, based on the district's population. Out of these about 28 are elected as administrative council members, speakers of the house, audit commission members and many others are also organized in various committees and taskforces. The *ganda* council has more than 300 members in most cases. From the *ganda* council about 10 are elected as *ganda* administration council members. Leaders of the leagues (women and youth) and leaders of the associations are also members of this assembly. Unlike the federal and state level (*Chaffee*) assemblies there are many participants from the private sector at the district level and town *ganda*s. Even though their role is more formal at district level it is at least a good trend that they are included here. So this is where participation in administration at district level is being manifested.

At the *ganda* level the assemblies are livelier than in the upper tiers, because they discuss issues that directly touch each family's life. They are conducted with less paper work and prearrangement. They enquire about issues dear to the *ganda* and challenge the *ganda* leadership when they find it lacking transparency and accountability. One assembly I attended at my birth place was a very interactive and heated discussion which continued from morning to dusk.

At the *ganda* level the social court plays a significant role. They see civil cases ≤ Birr 1,500 (on 01/17/2012 exchange rate which equals €68). The *ganda* social courts issue confirmation letters on marriage status, IDs and other relations evident at *ganda* level. They verify ownership title issues and confirm inability to pay for health services so that a person gets free health treatment from government health institutions. They arbitrate boundary issues between neighborhood farm lands, village footpaths and waste disposal sites.

The election process at the *ganda* level is not as easy as election for the upper tiers. As there is no salary paid to officials at this level, competition is only to maintain the influence of a clan or an informal group, for decisions on land ownership, grazing land, forest products, etc… Notwithstanding elements of coercion in some *ganda*s, all informants observe that corruption is not that rife.

During the Dergue, this structure was called "Farmers' Association". As mentioned elsewhere above, it was more coercive, they even had prison cells; but at present it is a government administrative tier, a constitutional body that supposedly works based on the rights provided in the state's constitution.

Of course still there are some who go beyond their authority and coerce the community; this happens in most cases as a result of their (the *ganda* leaders) patrimonial relations with the upper tiers. These are the only categories of leaders at *ganda* level who do not want to leave power. Thus, in such relations, the more they stay in power the more they delve into crimes. Being afraid of retributions if they lose power, they at all cost, attempt to stick to power. These are the kind of leaders who have lost their power base with the people and survive only by the support of their informal group and/or patrons in the upper tiers.

Interviewee Dhangia (on 05/04/2010) from Dendi Mummicha *Ganda* indicated the following about one such administrator from the *ganda*s visited:

> "A person makes a fence to protect his animals and other belongings from hyena and robbers, if the fence itself becomes a hyena or a robber…what can he do? In the same token we elected him to serve us, to be a good bridge between us and the government. But if he is a one-way bridge who takes the taxes to government, mars our relations and loyalty and brings us no good, what can we do? We tried to remove him from power. However, he is strongly sheltered here in a network and well connected to the upper tier patrons".

These *ganda* administrators follow different methods to pass on government orders. While coercion is one instrument, others plead and beg the community that they will be rebuked by government if they do not do so. Still another method is to use the networks which are based on interest groups, friendship and/or clan.

Thus people participate in administration, by holding office and by electing officials. Moreover, people also try to challenge bad governances if situations allow. They also engage in various administrative committees.

Collection of taxes, other debts and contributions: This is the main task of all the *ganda* administration. Even though the amount of money they collect from each *ganda* is not much, collection is not an easy task. Farmers never want to pay money to the government treasury, even though paying tax has become a culture as I mentioned above. They are even very reluctant to repay their debts. They want everything for free having been spoilt by the subsidies they enjoyed in the past. There was time when opposition promised wavering taxes to get votes. These and many other factors related to the behavior of farmers make collection of taxes very complex. The 2% the *ganda* leaders receive for collection is quite insignificant. Such an amount could be raised from fattening one ox and selling it for good price.

As mentioned above, to discharge their responsibilities the *ganda* leaders use different mechanisms. They use the informal network to convince people. They also try to create a sense of competition between other neighboring *ganda*s as a means to agitate people, as well as other systems based on the capacity of the *ganda* leaders to influence people. Coercive leaders always tell people, *"that it is a violation of the constitution", "you are being prompted by the opposition", "you will be taken to prison", "you will pay more in future if you do not pay now", etc...* all of which terrifies the farmers. Of course the *gare*s and the militia play a great role here. So can this be considered participation?

Conflict resolution in the ganda: Conflicts break out for several reasons: encroachment onto ones private property, trespassing, petty crimes, sense of vendetta, adultery, prestige, liquor, a slip of the tongue, harmful traditional practices such as abduction, group interests, clan or ethnic reasons - most of them unintentional. When they occur they divide the community. Resolving such conflicts is the most important duty of the *ganda* administration together with religious and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms like the *Gadaa* system. Even though it gets less attention from the government, I feel this system is the basis on which the tradition of peaceful coexistence of the society is deeply anchored. There were many incidents that have resulted in homicide in the area, which have been arbitrated and resolved through traditional mechanisms (*guma, tuma*…) without taking them to government judiciaries.

Crime prevention and control in the gandas: Physical fighting with sticks used to be a tradition and considered a game in the area. Still injuries from fighting in market places and local liquor shops are among top ten clinical incidents in the area (Bodda Health Station 2009). Attempts of robbery, ambushing trucks, and stealing cattle from grazing field or from market, break-ins at night sometimes do happen in the area.

In the past such robberies were frequent occurrences, but they never resulted within a neighborhood. One had to go to a very distant place, crossing many *gandas* and bring what he

has stolen. But at present every *ganda* requests a permission paper even when they take their own animals to a market for sale or exchange. This paper must detail the number and identification of the animals, color, and type (bull, cow, ox, horse, mule…), so they can be taken across any other *gandas*.

Thus, only minor thefts take place within the *ganda* or in market places when owners lose control of their property because they are drunk. This is mainly controlled by the community and also post-theft scrutiny (yaa'ii, *baasuu*) is managed through the participation of all mature community members. In this regard, were it not for such participation of the community, with government's limited control over most of the remote areas and the almost none existent communication systems, a lot of chaos would take place in all neighborhoods.

The study thus reveals that people's participation in political activities such as elections, in development and in administration could be further developed if local social structures were more wisely used. Moreover, realistic and productive strategies need to be applied to bring about a true and sustainable participation of communities individually or as a group.

Chapter IX: Achievements on the ground as a Result of the DLDP

9.1. Explanation on the Purpose and Approach of the Chapter

RQ # 5: How did the program intervention impact the household livelihoods, individual and communal ways of life? Is the fact that loopholes have prevailed in relation to the above issues affecting the realization of the overall DLDP?

In this chapter I have attempted to present analytical report on actual gains at the grassroots level based on data obtained from the field. The study was not an evaluation research that tested in detail what has actually been achieved against what had been planned. It is neither an impact assessment in its full sense that exhaustively checked on the outcomes of a certain program or project, applying quantitative measures. It is a broad-spectrum study and analysis of the process and gains attained as a result of the DLDP through a range of packages in relation to the past and trends ahead.

Even though I use quantities for some analyses, more focus has been given to the qualitative and conceptual aspects. I acknowledge that a household socioeconomic survey, based on previous baseline surveys would better concretely explain the statistical progression/regression. But my intention is to find out and explain in a broader sense the quality of life attained at the grassroots level. Changes one can see, feel and observe, not changes based on counting alone. Hence, exposure to some related concepts and background information would be important. The DLDP was designed to bring about and accelerate development and change in districts: in the livelihood bases, environment and human development. I will try to present these with relevant concepts and the background data at national and state levels.

Many of us had a vision to transform our society through accelerated development interventions and community participation. But now we learned that change is such a time and resource consuming issue, going back and forth process and which still requires more sacrifices directly or indirectly. And yet because it is about relative deprivation it is a continuous phenomenon that never stops. It is a deprivation in relation to others in the near or far environment, a deprivation in relation to the extent of exposure, asymmetric increase and change of personal and community needs, increase in knowledge and self actualization. The intricate part still is that it is very difficult to recognize the achievements, particularly in the area of behavioral and attitudinal changes. These challenges are compounded when the development practitioners in the process could not accommodate each other, overturn each others' ideas and strategies and always tend to start from ground zero as already explained.

In the study area it is not difficult to recognize community problems. It does not need much research, investment and expertise. Perhaps prioritizing the problems and identifying necessary

interventions requires concerted efforts by both community and development practitioners. One of the political parties during the Dergue, 'All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (MEISON)', in its Political Organ '*Ye Seffiwu Hizb Dim'ts*' always used to highlight in its header, *"Even though it is not easy to demolish an old system, reconstruction still needs more resource, knowledge and wisdom"*. It is true both processes are very costly and both processes need courage. They are costly in terms of human sacrifice, resources (time, material and financial) and in terms of psychological and morale they exact.

A famous social scientist, Friedmann (1987:60), wrote the following about complexity of building a society:

> "Engineers can build bridges and automata; it is an illusion to think that they can "build" society. There was a moment in time when aeronautic and space engineers thought that, having reached the moon, they could now turn their energies to solving the problem of growing violence in cities, along with other urban "crisis". But the two types of problems - how to conquer space and how to eliminate urban violence - were of an essentially different nature, and the engineers' discovery that urban violence would not yield to engineering solutions was not long in coming".

From this quotation, we understand the intricacy of building a society. Particularly, in a society like Ethiopia, where external and internal challenges dynamically influence plans and programs, it needs a dynamic thinking and capability to cope with and bring about change.

Scholars explain changes and their occurrence in various ways. However, the frequently used explanation is the one contributed by Ackerman (1997) who classified three types of changes: *developmental, transitional* and *transformational.*

Iles and Sutherland (2001:14) have linked this definition with explanations by other scholars. They explained that *developmental change* may be either planned or emergent; it is first order, or incremental. They further elaborated on the tasks of change of this type, that it enhances or corrects existing aspects of a system, often focusing on the improvement of a skill or process.

Transitional change is a search for a leap from an existing system to a quantitatively and qualitatively new order. This type of change is episodic, planned and second order, or radical.

Transformational change is emergence of a new situation, which is unfamiliar until it takes a new form, out of the birth-growth-decline -decay of the old system. Mostly it is radical or second order in characteristic. It requires a shift in assumptions and mind set, in terms of structure, processes, culture and strategy.

As societal change encompasses multifaceted aspects of a social order (formal and informal, physical and behavioral, quality and quantity), I argue that all these types of change occur

simultaneously with different degrees in a society. They do not happen alternatively or one after the other. They can be visible or invisible. They can result from outbreak from a cumulative and/or compressed individual or group power or they can take place in piecemeal.

I acknowledge that it cannot be an easy walk to bring substantive results and societal changes in the ten years of the life of the DLDP, given the political unrest, unintended interruptions and reversion of plans caused because of mistrust and other factors. However, still if the roadmap we designed for the change was a sound one, if there was commitment, capacity and open mind to transform plans to reality this is not too short a period of time to observe the trends, sense and judge the track of the intervention and witness some results. By virtue of its location people from several districts pass through Dendi's capital Ghinchi, to connect to the center and the zone. This makes the district a relatively important hub, politically and culturally a melting pot. I try to summarize some country level achievements during the past few years as background to the discussion on the data obtained in the field.

The 2010 Human Development Index (HDI) puts Ethiopia among the *"top movers"*, ranking 11th out of the 135 countries which registered improvement in HDI. The assessment covers the years between 1970 and 2010. If we take data for the years between 2000 and 2010 separately, Ethiopia's status goes up to 2nd rank, while it is even more when we compute data for years between 2005 and 2010 which puts the country among the top achievers. This is data for the rate of "*top movers*" in development. On the other hand, Ethiopia's HDI value for 2011 is 0.363 which gives the country a rank of 174 out of 187 countries - in the low human development territory. The positive part still is that, between 2000 and 2011, Ethiopia's HDI value shows increment from 0.274 to 0.363, an increase of 32 per cent. The report indicates increase of Ethiopia's life expectancy at birth by 5 years (59.3), GNI per capita by 75 per cent, expected years of schooling by 4 years, while mean years of schooling remained the same between 2005 and 2010 (UNDP, 2011).

This is a very encouraging trend (if the net gains at the grassroots level justify these figures), but we could perform even better. Nevertheless, how can we make this visible at the grassroots level, where people are very willing for development if their interests are wisely met? This can be a question for discussion. People are utterly weary of poverty, underdevelopment and bare politics that have not been able to provide them with minimum basic needs during the last four decades. The point here is not to advocate a policy of "development first and rights (human and democratic rights) based issues later" nor to compromise liberty and democratic principles. Because, we all know that Iraq's real GDP was about forty billion USD in 1989 which dropped to less than ten billion USD in 1991, only within three years (World Bank, 2008). Libya was one of the leading economies in the continent, ranking in the top 100 for all economic results compared to all nations in the world. But rather to argue that we would be better off should we continue struggling for 'democracy' and development simultaneously one augmenting the other.

Most of our politicians at home and in the Diaspora (particular to Oromia) have this tendency of "freedom first - development after". I argue this is a harmful tendency that could worsen and deepen the political, social and economic agony of our people; the more we alienate ourselves the less significant is the effect we have on the situation.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals the country has achieved more than 11% average growth since 2003/2004; agriculture 10%, industry (construction and manufacturing) 10% and service sectors 13.2%. The population living below the poverty line has declined to 29%; and literacy has increased to 43% as of 2009. Notwithstanding some challenges and threats faced, a joint report by UNDP and MoFED (2010) shows significant strides and magnificent achievements in all the MDG goals.

Among the challenges reported, the major ones are: low levels of income, savings and productivity in the agricultural sector, limited implementation capacity, unemployment and a narrow modern industrial sector base. Besides these, the above report mentions the twin challenges of inflation and pressure on the balance of payments (BOP) as major threats faced during the year. Development finance which accounts for less than 50% of the foreign aid, the least in Sub-Saharan Africa, had also been reported as a critical constraint on implementation. Climatic problems and the slowdown of the global financial and economic situation were also singled out as threats to stability and sustainability. Against this background, achievements on the ground will now be discussed.

9.2. What Is There on the Ground?
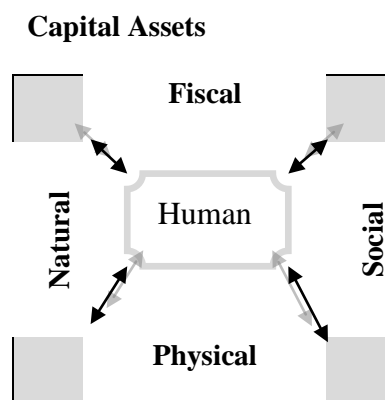
Figure 17: Livelihood Pentagon (Modified)

There are various kinds of explanations of resources/assets and capital (both passive and active), based on the professions of the authors and the scale of the resources to be defined. *Figure (17)* shows livelihood capital assets adapted from asset pentagon (DFID, 1995:5). Even though this explanation applies mostly to livelihood at household or community level, it can also be used at local level. In the following paragraphs I have attempted to give a contextual explanation of each of them.

Human capital is the cornerstone for development of all other assets. That is why it has been placed at the center in *Figure (17)*. The secret of most developed nations' lies in the capacity of human power that has evolved in their respective countries based on various factors: some nations revolutionized the sector, some persistently focused on the development of the sector and others through brain gain. There are also cases where returnees from developed countries or citizens living in foreign countries significantly (directly or indirectly) impacted changes in their native land (Liberia, Israel, etc.). When we talk about human capital it cannot be

limited to only the educated or those who have formal training. It includes indigenous wisdom and all who have been exposed to civilization or a better way of life.

Data obtained from the Dendi district administration archives show that after the decentralization health coverage in the district has grown from 24% to 70%. There are health posts in the 48 *ganda*s. There are also 4 drug stores for human health, 4 drug venders for animal health (for 1,195,237 animals), and 12 privately owned low level human medication clinics. Three health stations are under construction. This number cannot be undermined; however, what matters is the quality and even quantity (availability of medicine, equipments, qualified staff, etc…) of the services (Dendi, 2009).

Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to work and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives.
A great deal has been achieved in the education sector as well in the district, but less utilized. As mentioned elsewhere in this document, in 2005 there were only 24 degree holders in the district; out of which 23 were teachers and only one was working in administration. At present there are 112 first degree holders out of which 47 work in service delivery and administration, one masters, one doctor, 513 diploma and 490 certificate holders. In each *ganda* there are a minimum of ten teachers, a *ganda* manager (minimum with diploma) and about five development and health extension workers, in total about fifteen mid-level professionals.

The enrolment rate for school age children is estimated to be over 90% in the district. *Table (6)* shows student population from 2005-2009:

Dendi District Student Population 2005-2009									
	Grade 1-8			Grades 9-12			Total		
Year	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005	23,640	12,997	36,637	2,586	914	3,500	26,226	13,911	40,137
2006	16,061	13,192	29,253	2,963	1,188	4,144	19,024	14,380	33,404
2007	17,543	14,349	31,892	3,860	1,276	4,136	20,474	15,625	36,099
2008	17,094	14,478	31,572	2,931	1,521	4,452	20,025	15,999	36,024
2009	18,219	15,595	33,814	3,327	1,852	5,179	21,546	17,447	38,993

Table 8: Dendi Student Population

(District Education Office Archive, 2009)

The other potential for skilled human power in rural and urban areas of the district are returnees from outmigration who have returned with certain skills and experiences. Returnees in this area include: people who were discharged from army, school dropouts including high school and university, retired employees, petty traders, etc. In the past it was even very difficult to get a

secretary for the *ganda* administration. There were only one or two mobile case-writers in one *ganda* even for somebody who wanted to submit an application to government offices or courts or wanted a personal letter written to afar residing relative.

Out of 192,784 people in the district almost 20% attend school which is a noteworthy achievement. The number of schools has also reached 56 with more than 600 teachers, which includes the only secondary school in Ghinchi. It is a significant improvement when we see teacher/student ratio, which is 1:64. This ratio significantly fluctuates in some seasons, when students quit classes to support families in pick seasons. When schools begin in September, in most schools 100-120 students sit in a classroom; where the teacher hardly gets pass way to the blackboard (Dendi, 2009).

The increase in the number of schools is also on a very promising ground. From the above figure we see that there is at least one elementary school in every *ganda*. In some *ganda*s there are even two schools, where *ganda*s are very big resulting from merger of two or three *ganda*s, having a five to seven kilometers radius.

The Technical and Vocational Training Center under construction in Ghinchi is a great hope for the present and next generation. It is almost in its final stage and will create opportunities for the youth to participate in productive activities. Even though it is located at the edge of the district, the Olankomi secondary school is also making tremendous contribution by reducing the distance for students who come from that area (Olankomi is one of the municipal towns in Dendi district).

The problem in the education sector in the district is the shortage of secondary schools. Some students have to travel 59 kilometers to reach the secondary school in Ghinchi. To go to the school for the week they take public transport which intermittently comes, and travel 21 kilometers on a gravel road. The rest, they have to walk carrying their food for the week (they call it *half moon*) and their exercise books - boys on their shoulders and girls on their backs. They go home on Friday afternoons and return to school on Sunday afternoons. They call the bread '*half moon*', because when they fold big full bread (about 20-25 cm in radius) into two it makes the shape of a '*half moon*', and then it is easier to carry on their shoulders. They rent a room in Ghinchi in a group; take showers in the Awash River, go to the school library or classrooms to get a working desk, chair and light. This is how they complete secondary school, after which the academically successful few join universities. The dropouts either migrate or go home to their villages. The worst aspect of these returnees/dropouts is they go back with soft palms, white collars, unwilling to touch a plough shaft again because of flawed acculturation and unfulfilled expectations. Usually it takes them a while to again fit into the rural life. They become burdens on their families and at times demoralizing models to school children in their areas.

We can clearly see numerical increase of the human capital in each *ganda* and at district level. The problem is that this capital is not transformed into a more productive force. For example, if

we take the town *ganda*s all the part-time leaders come from government offices. Many government employees at district level also engage in one or more committee works in their neighborhood. But in the rural *ganda*s, teachers, development and extension agents and the *ganda* manager except that they sit as *ex-officio* in the *ganda* administrative councils they are not considered as regular inhabitants of the *ganda*. Their role in the *ganda* is limited only to their specific sector. The *ganda*s followed the same line when there were "farmers' associations" in the Dergue's era. But now these are government constitutional tiers. So, this relatively modest educated force could be utilized to transform the area, to assist farmers in administration and bring about change.

All these forces in the rural area sit the whole day idle (where there is no TV and even radio do not get good reception in some places) when they could contribute a lot in mobilizing and organizing the community, particularly in the area of environmental protection and bringing about change in the way of living. In each *ganda* there are some 500 – 1,000 students. I observed how children influence families, in getting families organized around home, in the use of sanitary facilities and the way of dressing. Equally it has been noted how responsive families are to the influences of their children.

Teachers and the director are the most listened to, by children and families and most respected persons in all *ganda*s. Health extension workers and health personnel work closely with women and girls in the *ganda* mainly in the area of primary health care, reproductive health, home economics) HIV/AIDS, sanitation and hygiene. This gives them access and power to influence important parts of the community. But all these forces are uncoordinated and underutilized.

One aspect of education that is a problem with far reaching implications on the future generation is its quality in meeting the goal of educating citizens and the way we understand it. As observed from various evaluation reports, the problem of quality of education is a national issue and of pervasive concern from primary to tertiary education. This is what is crucial and everyone in the leadership has accepted. *Afaan Oromo* has been a medium of instruction since 1992, but teaching aids and supplementary material such as books, magazines, newspapers, and other literatures have not yet reached library shelves, if there is a library at all. This is an area that should seriously concern elites in particular and the society at large. During the discussions of the focus group in Bodda Bosoqa it was mentioned that students finish schools without having read a single headline of any newspaper. These are students who go to university, graduate, and enter the workforce to supposedly induce transformation in the lives of the society they are part of. These are students who, if they get the chances to go abroad, sit in a classroom with students of other countries. This is a painful situation that not only damages the present but also affect the future.

If children are sent to primary or secondary school, it seems that they are totally exempt (with the exception of a few) from production work. Many feel that if they go to school then can leave their rural life behind. This is an area that needs serious attention for behavioral change. The

curriculum must include practical education. For example, students can take the responsibility of tree plantation, backyard horticulture development, keeping poultry or ruminant animals (sheep, goats…) as compulsory tasks. Students can be a role model to break some long held taboos. In this respect, schools and teachers can be instrumental. For example, in most areas in the district nobody tries to eat fish, nobody drinks sheep or goats milk and there are many edible plants which have never been tasted by the community while malnutrition is rampant. All the schools could have plantations where children are taught how to grow and nurture them and at the same time the schools generate income from them. What I observed is only a plantation of eucalyptus trees in a school compound while indigenous trees have all been denuded. There should be a curriculum that instills in school children the spirit of entrepreneurship, self reliance, innovation, productivity, creativity and sensitivity to such things as the environment, income saving practices, human rights, sanitation and hygiene, etc. at their formative years.

Social Capital is about networks, formal or informal, vertical or horizontal, written or unwritten, which are usually explained as commonly accepted norms, rules and sanctions. Aldridge, Halpern et al. (2002) identified the most common as being the distinction of *structural and cognitive*, and *bonding and bridging*. Bonding is horizontal, among equals within a community, whereas bridging is vertical between lower and higher echelons of the government structure.

Abbaa Gadaa

Picture 3: *Abbaa Gadaas* **Passing Law (Picture taken by the author)**

The existence of the elements of the *Gadaa* system and various commendable societal norms could be deep-rooted social capitals if they were properly put to use. *Picture (3)* shows *Abbaa Gadaa* passing law that prohibits abduction and gentile mutilation in Shashamanne area. Such enacting and promulgation of prescriptive or prohibitive law occurs not at a frequent interval, in order not to cheapen the system. Law framers come to this decision after many months of discussion and lobbing prior to the assembly. That is why I could not get picture from the research area. Community links based on ritual and secular traditional activities, such as the horse riding club, games and musicals played during annual festivities, traditional work and saving teams and units based on mutual support, are solid bonds that tie the community together, more than superimposed laws and rules.

Interviewee Dhangiya (on 05/04/2010) from Dendi Mummicha *ganda* said, "*we retained the traditional Oromo cultures* the remnants of the *Gadaa* (traditional government system), *Waaqeffannaa* (Oromo Religion), *Guddifachaa* (a system of adoption), *Moggasaa* (a system of assimilating a captive or whoever seeks refuge), *Irreecha* (Thanks Giving Day), etc. These practices were often ignored and there were even attempts to suppress them. However, they lay dormant when there are high pressures and get restored when favorable conditions prevail. As mentioned above they still survive without workshops, foreign aid, agitation through megaphones and even without any budget allocation, but they are still in the hearts of the people.

According to an informant at the district level, there have recently been attempts to use the best of these practices, using *Gadaa* leaders to condemn harmful traditional practices, denounce robbery and execution of other tasks through these institutions. This is a positive measure. It would be advisable if we open our minds and try to adopt some of the better social practices, without violating the secularity of the constitution and giving away legitimate control over the area. Almost all informants feel that their ritual and cultural ethos is being overridden and not given much attention. There is a path dependency syndrome of past regimes, a feeling like, '*this or that belief or tradition is modern and others are backward*'. As a matter of fact all beliefs originate from different sources and most of them for similar reasons. There are many cultural practices which are tolerated even in the countries known as democratic and civilized; practices such as bullfighting, boxing, fighting with chains, etc… It is not my intention to acclaim social practices with all their dividing, harmful and incompatible aspects. But it is to state that social practices need thorough study, the ones with positive attribute for social development should be nurtured and not be wiped out. Then based on this study, they could possibly be harmonized and integrated with the existing system and used as leverage for the enhancement of several governmental and social practices. We must recognize them first and then shape them in the direction we think is progressive. For example, a few years back there was a great problem every year in *Irrecha*[45] celebration in Bishoftu. Even the army was used to safeguard the security, but with advice from a think tank group the government took over and owned the ceremony. Now all hostilities and emotions have calmed down and *Irrecha* is enjoyed by everyone in relative peace. The Oromia Development Association (ODA) used it in the 2011 celebration to promote its mission and generate income. The more we suppress something the more rigid it becomes. Therefore, it would be good to think in a win-win direction.

The various traditional economic units, *iddir, jigi, debo, etc*… were briefly explained in Chapter VIII. These are traditional economic units, well established in the minds of people. Documents or memorandum of understandings were not used or were not crucial to sustain them. They are

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[45] *Irrecha*, a thanksgiving ceremony to *Waqa* (Supreme Being or Creator) for the end of the rainy season and the dawning of *Birra* (Spring). In Ethiopia the seasons are: Winter (*Ganna*) - June, July and August are the winter season with heavy rain falls; Spring (*Birra*) - September, October and November are the spring season sometime known as the harvest season; Summer (*Bona*) - December, January and February are the dry season with frost in morning especially in January; Autumn (*Arfasa*) - March, April and May are the autumn season with rain in some areas which is very essential for cattle and also 2nd term sowing. May is the hottest month in most parts of Ethiopia.

accepted by most community members. At least by only adopting their names we could organize and mobilize communities with lesser inputs under these well perceived and long lived social practices.

While the above explains the poor attention given to traditional social capital, those considered as contemporary are also not in any better shape. Associations of women, youth and farmers in the study *ganda*s and at district level, as usual, are very weak. They have neither offices nor concrete plans. If they do not work towards attaining their goals, it is not clear why so much time and resources are always spent organizing them. Either the model followed to organize them is wrong, or the interest to get them organized does not come from within. I suggest that they be linked with schools and focus on something that benefits them, something connected to their livelihoods. Otherwise, if we simply involve them without benefit, only to serve the 'revolution', this may not take us long. We need to prepare toolkits (may be very simple ones, but realistic) that go along with the strategic and annual plans and that link all development forces in the *gandas*.

As mentioned above, something promising I learned in the district is about the activities of the school clubs, environment club, HIV/AIDS protection club, mini-media in schools and other subject area based clubs. Some progressive trends are in the making in these areas that should be capitalized on for a greater good of the broader society. It may also contribute towards curbing the weaknesses of the associations mentioned. The clubs are well organized and duty bound, because they are supported by the school and educated persons in the school. This implies that if the school is involved in the overall community work, various programs, including the DLDP, could be successful and become more effective.

The roles and the significance of CSOs in the district were discussed in Chapter VIII. The number of CSOs based in the district, or others which render only financial support to the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the district are very limited in number. Even the few CSOs that work in the district are not well integrated into the system and the DLDP. There is no attempt to merge their programs, plans and achievements into the district planning and reporting documents. The district does not give enough attention to CSOs that operate in the district. Sense of differentiating important or trivial issues and mapping out strategic tasks are not yet well observed in the district. There must be a skill and practice to sort out tasks based on their significance compared to the overall responsibility. As mentioned in the implementation chapter, if an official responsible to the whole district spends half a day on a single person's case, disregarding a CSO that delivers important services to one or more *gandas* people; it is hard to make progress. The case at the *ganda* level and their feeling about the CSOs is better, because they are direct beneficiaries. That is what I observed in Bodda Bosoqa, Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha. People even wept when GTZ phased out its operations in the area. It is hard to know why the responsible district officials do not offer sufficient attention when the CSOs come with additional support for the needy communities and fill a portion of their development

financial gaps to implement meaningful projects. It needs dynamic capability and change in mindset.

Fiscal Capital denotes resources in the form of stock or regular inflows of money which includes public revenue (taxes, grants, loans…), expenditure (recurrent and capital) which comes in the form of annual budget, intergovernmental transfers (matching grants for merit goods, grants to ensure minimum service level and grant to correct externalities or benefit spillovers), and domestic loans (for stabilization, for long term capital project…).

There are several ways to generate money, like I mentioned above. Ghinchi is one of the biggest markets for livestock and grain. The "Ghinchi beeves" and "Ghinchi sheep" are names of an excellent brand in the Finfinne Market. "Dendi garlic" is a brand known even in international markets (though at small scale) particularly in Arabian countries. It would be a good opportunity, if the district had the capacity to promote and attract investors who could focus on these brands. I don't think the district administration realizes what a golden opportunity this could be, and attempted to craft mechanisms as to how to raise their revenue using these products.

The Chilimo forest, several natural and man-made caves which communities still use them as barns, the Dendi Lake, the source of River Awash, etc…could all be sources of income for the district and the *ganda*s as well, by attracting local and foreign tourists. This in turn could boost businesses in the towns. So much could be done in productive activities but so much of energy, time and the limited resources go into political and security works and redirected to unproductive purposes. The successful implementation of the DLDP needs to broaden horizons of our thinking and focus on result oriented activities.

In the area of small and micro-enterprises there is encouraging beginning. But while there are such large numbers of employees in other sectors, there are only two persons in charge of organizing and promoting this sector at district level. This could be a very important solution for job creation and facilitation of the dropout youth. Not for only dropouts, but there has also been a good strategy that has worked well in other parts of the state to inspire graduate youth themselves to create their own jobs, instead of always seeking employment in government organizations.

If these were followed up it could extend to the rural areas with micro irrigation schemes from streams, ponds, boreholes by gravity or using motor pumps. The semi highland areas are known for their cash crop products. For example, spice plants such as pepper (*barbarree*), onion (*shuinkurtii*), fenugreek (*abishii*), foeniculum vulgare (*insilaalee*) and coriander (*dimbilaala*) which are not even recognized as spice plants in the area, cardamom (*korarimaa*), ginger (*jinjibila*) and garlic (*qullubbii*), caraway (*azmudii adii*), prinoides *(gesho),* lippia (*kosarata*), basil (*bachobilaa*), and among the herbals artemisia rehan (*arritti*)[46], mirtus communis (*adasii*),

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[46] artemesia rehan (*arritti*). - is plant with pleasant odder, of special interest in cosmetology in the USA

cymbopogon citratus (xajjisaara), thyme (*xoosinyii*)…these are some of the common plants that one can even find wild which are most important in international market, but less taken advantage of. There are also other medicinal plants like Hagenia abyssinica (*heexoo*) and many others known only by local names (Dendi District, 2009). With little financial and extension inputs a lot could be done in this area. But is there a cost benefit analysis at all in the district? Have such opportunities been explored? Have priorities been thought of to spend the meager resource? Is there a market (local or international) analysis even at state level? All informants say that, people are very busy with other things like seminars, meetings and other security issues no one looks at this potential wealth of the district.

I have extensively explained how resources are transferred to the district. The budget the district receives cover little more than salary payments. The formula for the budget transfer from region to districts is very interesting and undisputable. The district also uses the same approach, if by chance there is a possibility to disburse beyond the district consumption. The only means the district has to increase its revenue is from local possibilities; by attracting and encouraging entrepreneurs, by supporting and expanding small and micro-enterprises and by trying to scale up community initiatives.

When I walked through the villages, I observed beautifully crafted doors and furniture in some houses, made by craftsmen who are totally alienated from the society. As the Oromo proverb goes, '*the bottom line is always blank; everybody is in the middle, while the top rim is occupied by God*'. It means every society, rich or poor, has its own group to undermine. Nobody accepts the bottom line. On the other side every layer also has their own superiors who undermine them. These craftsmen, artisans, carpenters and hide makers are people with unique wisdom and skills. Why people isolate these sections of the community is that, they are always doing something idiosyncratic, going beyond what is considered "right" by society. For example, in a *Gadaa* ceremony in which I participated, we had to slaughter and abandon three oxen. As a taboo, nobody eats animals which are abandoned in this way, but these people came with their polythene sacks and took everything home. It is such practices that caused their segregation. Realistically, in a community that only gets meat once or twice a year, or even if there is abundance, it is unwise to dump the meat of three oxen. They are right, but this is how the "*tyranny of societal norms*" force one to ignore personal feeling or what one individually thinks is "right" and forces to assimilate.

These people, if they were organized, trained and given access to finance to buy tools for their crafts, they could contribute to skills development in the area.   Particularly if they were attached to schools to demonstrate their skills, then children could benefit a lot to improve their fertile minds.

Physical Capital comprises the basic infrastructure and goods needed to support livelihoods, which includes: roads, market, shelter, potable water supply, schools, health establishments,

energy, communication facilities, etc… Most of these are explained above and I will try to touch up-on the rest. According to the district profile obtained from the district administration, the district has about 42 kilometers tarmac road, single black strip. The gravel roads are Ghinchi-Bodda 25 kilometers, Ghinchi- Galessa 27 kilometers and Ghinchi-Warqa Qore 19 kilometers, totally 71 kilometers to connect 192,784 people who reside on 1,078.75 square kilometers of land and other transits and to bring products to markets. Because of the landscape, it is very difficult to move even on foot from one *ganda* to another *ganda*. Particularly in the highland part, one finds many pockets of land within short distances. One has to go down deep slopes and then creep up a steep hill several times even in a distance of one kilometer, moving from one *ganda* to another. Because of the nature of the black cotton soil if there is a slight shower of rain driving becomes totally impossible in the lowlands. In the semi-highlands erosions have cut away the soil and as a result several gullies run down the hills which make travelling even worse. All these factors make mobility in the district very difficult, which discourages farmers to produce surplus for market.

Some eleven sites (around service cooperatives) in the district have solar powered wireless telephone connections. Because people are not used to it and the maintenance service is only in Finfinne, most of the time the solar power is problematic, with a very high downtime. Two small towns along the main road also have a land line telephone connection. From the rest *ganda*s, people have to walk or ride on a horse back to Ghinchi for several hours to find telephone services. The worst thing is that the network in Ghinchi itself is not reliable. As mentioned in Chapter VII, people say, the Ghinchi telephone network is, like a *hide and seek* children's game. When the network appears, everyone exchanges messages announcing that the net work is working, like saying "*hurrah, use it now*". This makes development service delivery and the business activities very difficult and costly. Informants voice their suspicions that the bad connection is a deliberately created constraint as a security strategy.

There are telephone services from mobile phones in most places, not planned for the area but as "*the gift of God*", and benefit from a network that crosses the area. But mobiles are very expensive. In some places there are sites on top of the hills which one has to struggle up the steep slopes to reach. These sites are discovered through intensive exploration by communities, for mobile connections. People usually call them "*Tele Centers*". In some places these are well established and because many service providers spend a long time on the site, even the sale of liquor has been established under the shade of a tree. There are procedures for the sale of the mobile services. If one wants to only make a "missed call" without receiving reply from the other end, it costs two Birr. If the caller wants to say, "Please call me back I am Mr. X", it costs three Birr. If the caller wants to talk, it costs four Birr for each minute. If callbacks come and are received, it costs one Birr for each minute. All messages are open, no privacy, at least the owner has to control to avoid manipulation. This is how people get telephone services in the Dedi Sulu and Dendi Mummicha *ganda*s. If anybody wants to use the postal service he or she has to go to Ghinchi, about 20 kilometers away on average.

With regard to power supplies, towns along the tarmac road, Ghinchi, Olankomi, Gaba Dilbata and Asgori; and the off-main-road small villages Bodda,Warqa Qore and Galessa get 24 hours service (though power break is common across the state). It goes without saying how much lack of availability of electricity affects sectors such as health, education and even agriculture. Perhaps it could be difficult for the developed world to imagine schools and clinical services without electricity from any source.

The 2009 Dendi district annual report indicates that 82,369 (42%) people in the district have potable water coverage. This figure appears to be exaggerated, because all the *ganda*s I crossed and where I collected data get water from unprotected springs, river, a pond or lake. The water supply in Bodda Bosoqa which was constructed with the donation obtained from the GTZ, has not been working since 2006. A survey report by ODA (2011) shows, that many of the water supply schemes are also already out of order because of technical problems and inefficient workmanship. This is also another major problem in program implementation and sustainability of projects in the area.

In Chapter V of this document I have discussed problems relating to offices and houses for employees, which to a great extent is a determining factor for qualified personnel to reside and work in the district. If a house is considered to be "an urban house" there is certain criteria that have to be fulfilled, for instance, the availability of lavatory without which one prefers living in the countryside, where there is no open sewage.

When I compare the current problem of the physical capital in Dendi with what urban planners in the developed world consider as problems, the gap appears very discouraging. The following has been quoted from my professor's presentation at a workshop, under a sub-title "*Urban Traditions in the Ruhr are Discontinuous and Interrupted by Fault Lines*" (Schmidt-Kallert, 2010):

> "The view from my office window: the church spires of medieval Dortmund, a last and solitary blast furnace, the soccer stadium and the University of Technology – a disconnected and fragmented cityscape".

So much to do; these are situations that make the results we proudly report equal to none. At least if we were able to set attainable goals for each area within a given period of time and if we were able to move in a positive direction, it would be very encouraging.

As districts are frontiers for development operations, these need to be given attention, because this is where the actual resources that make or break the nation come. At least the rural *ganda*s could build relatively better offices and residences for the employees assigned there, only if they were provided with industrial products for construction, as they are endowed with construction materials such as: wood, stone, gravels, sand and good soil for plastering. As explained above, in most *gandas* these offices and shelters prepared for the employees look like '*transitory*' quarters, as if they are meant to last only a month. They could at least take advantage of the long rainy

season and beautify the compounds of their working and living places, by planting hedges and different kinds of trees. On the other hand, some private homes, including the homes of *ganda* leaders' are very attractive and well hedged by trees and fenced with stone barriers. Such practices always force us to look critically into the problems with the development, management and sustainability of commonly shared properties for the collective good of a society.

Markets (See Picture 4): There are many markets in the district, gathering on different days of the week and mostly on the weekends. People do not work in the district on the farms at the weekends not because they are resting but because the Orthodox Church prohibits them from plowing or working on the farm at weekends. They were made to believe that if one works on these days "God will punish the entire community by failing the crops with hail or snowstorm". Therefore, nobody wants to be responsible should there be retribution, except the craftsmen mentioned above who always dare to break the norms. This is very risky even for them, because if by coincidence a snowstorm does hit the crops these craftsmen who plowed the land on the weekends become targets. According to one informant there have been incidents in the past where they were physically attacked.

Picture 4: Typical Ethiopian Market
Source: www.gebeya.net

I think what a market in the area means should also be explained. Ten or more *ganda*s, a population of about 40-50 thousand, have a market place that gradually emerged for different reasons in about a ten kilometer radius. Some are established after a purposeful discussion by communities, while in most cases they come to being by accident. For example, the Bodda and Kotoba market places in the district were created because these places were the seats of the governors of the sub-districts in Menelik II and Haileselassie's time.

There are markets offering different specialties and of different sizes in the district, some providing only fast utilized items. During the Dergue there were times when it was declared that markets should operate only at the weekends, Saturday and Sunday. It was not practical, because each market has its own unique character and dominant product that is sold or exchanged in each market. For example, people go to Bodda Market on Monday- to buy or sell wheat grain; to Asgori Market on Sunday- to buy or sell butter; to Kotoba Market on Saturday - to buy or sell sheep; to Ghinchi Market on Thursady- to mainly buy or sell oxen, but as a capital of the district, various items come from all *ganda*s for price and quality preferences. People also come to Ghinchi Market from all the *ganda*s to get better choices when they want to buy clothes for themselves and for their children, which happens perhaps once or twice a year or in two years. The existence of markets on different days gives people a chance to get essential fast utilized items that are available in all markets, items such as salt, kerosene (for light), coffee and other urgently needed items, when they are out of stock.

All markets have their own layout based on the availability of space and the goods they provide. The orders were not engineered by professionals but just emerged overtime. As we see in *Picture (4)* they are in open space, grains on one side, industrial products, spices and vegetables, house utilities like pottery on the other side and animals at the outer edge, some rows are circular while others are strait, with narrow foot paths for buyers and "window-shoppers". It is a very interesting interaction. They slightly look like the Sunday markets in Europe. There are to some extent divisions based on specialty, but I feel they could be better engineered to minimize time spent finding one or another item, and to allow better mobility and safety. They got a shape they had several decades ago, a lot more needs to be done.

One important factor that explains the economic and social status of the people in relation to market is why people of different age go to market places every week. A young person from the focus group discussants said the following[47]:

> "It is only on this day that we detach ourselves from the routines and see others. The unmarried youngsters look for fiancées; people interact and exchange ideas and challenges in life in most cases. We also look for new products that markets offer. We assess prices to buy and/or sell. Even if we don't have money we go to markets. For example mothers go to market to buy something with only ten Birr [*ten kilometers, 20 kilometers round trip walk for a purchase of half a Euro commodity*]".

Nobody trusts others on the quality and quantity money can buy, because there are no fixed prices or quality standards, so everybody goes to market to buy for him/herself. I am not trying to deny special cases where old people and some others get assistance by able ones.

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[47] Dendi Sulu G*anda* FGD on 26/03/2010

On the other hand, the market day is when young people, girls and boys groom themselves to show up for potential courtship. There are sites where young boys from different *gandas* stand in a group; with their sticks anchored under their pits and toothbrush (perfectly cut and maculated twig) in their mouth. Girls also hang around the sites to show off and capture boys' attention. That is how a partner selection takes place besides arranged marriage. This is still a very thriving tradition.
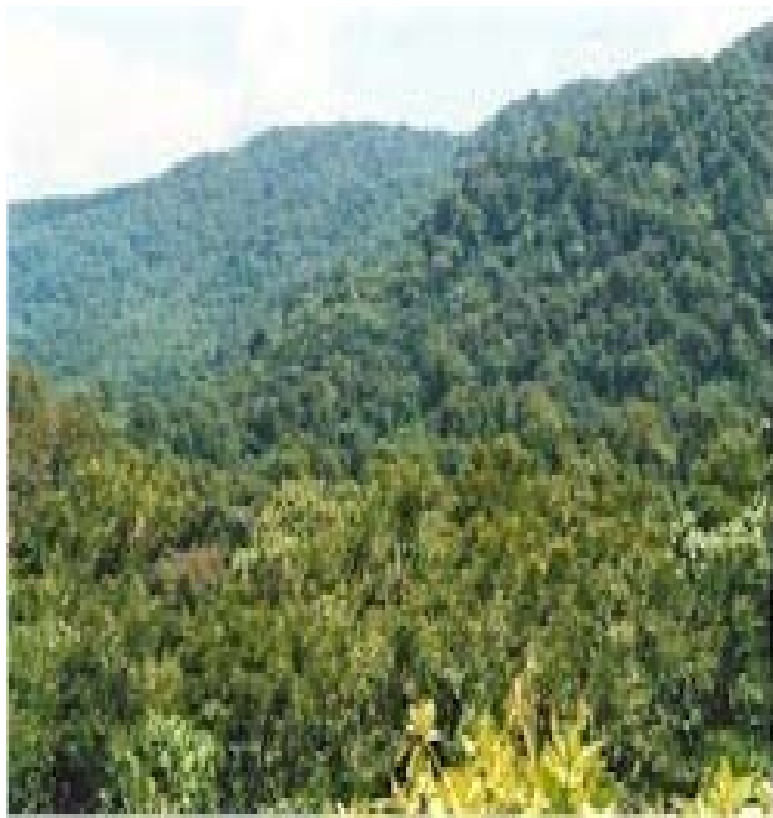
Picture 5: Chilimo Forest
(Bird Life International ETO 26)

Natural Capital is tangible and intangible assets, in liquid, gas and solid form and services derived from them. This includes land and what it holds; water, air, biodiversity, safety and protection schemes such as erosion protection, waste assimilation, storm protection… Among several factors that make this district better are the different agro-climatic altitudes, various kinds of top soil, relatively better coverage of vegetation, good weather for livestock breeding and closeness to the center. Of course with doubts if the latter mentioned factor is an advantages at all, because various researches show that areas very close to the capital, the peripheries of Addis Abbaba, such as Suluta, Burayou, Lagatafo, Akaki, Gelan, Furii, etc… are the most disadvantaged areas (OSHO, 2008).

Chilimo forest *(See Picture 5)* is located only five kilometers from Ghinchi town with its marvelous coniferous trees. It is a home to some 150 bird species, of which five are Ethiopian endemics. It is a significant attraction to many environmental scientists (Bird Life International ETO 26). Lake Dendi *(See Picture 6)*, various big and small rivers (among the big ones are: Awash, Dabbis, Jamjam, Hulluqaa, Qeransa) that flow into, out of or across the district without adding any value to the area. Though it has all these endowments little has been done to transform them to useable resources before and after the DLDP.

The fact about these assets is that their availability alone does not help. It cannot bring change, growth and development unless they are well utilized. They must be processed and transformed to valuable and useable assets without compromising the interests of the future generations.

Forest lands and meadows have all been turned into farmlands. The district was known as a "*milk bath of the region*", because traditionally one who at one time owned over 100 dairy cows bathed in milk. But now because of the ever increasing population all grazing lands have been turned into farmland (*Picture 6*), so only the most fortunately own more than two or three dairy cows at a time. Even cultural public spaces have not been spared and have all been turned into residential areas or farmland. The informants tell that the quality of cattle has also significantly deteriorated. This could be because of poor application of breeding technology and lack of enough fodder.

Picture 6: Dendi Lake (www.dendilake.com)

The district was also known for its excellent breed of horses, because of extensive meadows it had. But now because of the poor quality (size and strength) of the horses, people buy better ones from a place called Jidda (Salale).

Offices responsible for agricultural development, soil and water conservation and land use planning have operated in the district since the time of Haileselassie, let alone the 10 years DLDP. However, various research results, data gathered from informants and observations show negative growth in this regard.

Interviewee Makonnen (on 19/02/2010) said:

> "We ate all the indigenous trees. We drank up the springs. There were several perennial springs that come out of the mountains and ran down to the flat lands. 95% of them are dry now. There were many perennial streams all of which are dried out early because the flow from the source has decreased so much; they hardly flow up to October".

One can clearly see from *Picture (7)* [48] how steep the hill is (from the angle between the farmers and the surface) and how they have cleared the grasses that held the soil together. If there were no rivers that transported the soil away from the area and to neighboring countries the country would soon become a flat landscape with delta which could be formed from the silt.

Some four decades ago the area was very cold. They had long rainy season with abundant rain. Interviewee Fayyera (on 31/03/2010) from Dendi Sulu *ganda* said:

Picture 7: Mountain Encroaching

> "Every August for a month or fifteen days the Guracho Mountain (3, 267 meters above sea level) was fully covered by snow some forty years ago. The weather was very cold that we quilt all worn out clothes together and make blankets for protection from cold. The meadows stay swampy from April to October. We had to prepare huge quantity of fire woods as early as possible before the rainy season. The big rains start in April and continuously go until October, even November in some years. There were no crops like wheat in this area, but now they are competing with barley. All these changes happened because of the weather. And everybody tells us the weather changed because there are no forests. The increase in population which is evident from the increased number of houses in each village had no option, but to encroach onto the mountains and cut the trees for survival".

Still there is no positive trend in this particular area, in the Dendi Sulu and Dendi Mumicha, to curb this problem. Mountains and forests such as Gaji, which were known for their special kind of plantation and herbs and hosted many kinds of wild lives are now open fields and farm land.

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[48] Mountain encroaching: Welenkomi 35 years Later, this is a very informative document on the condition of environmental degradation in the area:
http://www.svt.ntnu.no/geo/Doklager/Acta/Serie_B_Welenkomi,%2035%20years%20later.pdf

One relatively encouraging positive practice in the district is the attention given to Chilimo forest[49]. Because higher institutions (that conduct research in natural resources) have special interest in this forest, relatively they are saved from rapid destruction. The attention it has attained from different quarters has to some extent saved the forest at least partially. People in the area are also organized in associations for its protection, development and proper utilization. This is a very encouraging practice. According to the expert interview, developing the forest does not still match with what is being taken out of it. Therefore, at the end of the day if utilization exceeds development, we will get the same kind of land seen in *Picture (7)*.

Even before the commencement of the DLDP there were many developmental policies, strategies and campaigns experienced by the district. Much had been said but little done. Appropriate technology transfer, use of manure and compost in replacing chemical fertilizers, efficient uses of energy…various models were proposed, but the foot prints have never witnessed their positive effects. Farmers use the same technology their ancestors had used for generations; the same ploughs, type of yoke, sickle, axes and hand ploughs. Though they mention that yield per farm has significantly increased, they still complain about the quality of products after they started using fertilizers.

There were some activities by NGOs such as: Community Development Promotion Organization (CDPO), HUNDE, The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and Forum for Environment-Ethiopia, Farm Africa, GTZ, AKAM, etc …in the area of agricultural development and environment. In some areas of intervention, we see that what they promoted is much more tangible than the government structure that lasted for several years, particularly in the area of natural resource management and environmental protection.

Most informants explain that the mismanagement of the land counts to the issue of ownership title on land and property right. The district has issued certificates to farmers but still the land tenure policy, which does not focus on individual property rights, is an issue that needs rethinking. This is reportedly one of the major factors why the farmers tend to mismanage the land and environment because it does not belong to them individually (Rahmato, 1994). For years, this issue has been contentious among politicians. Many of them do not support the privatization or at least the balance between government-public-individual ownership. The previous justifications for incompatibility of the privatization of land were: that privatization worsens the lives of poor farmers (they sell their land to rich farmers or the feudal), it makes investment impossible because private land owners escalate the prices of land, it hampers government's decisions on free use of land for the benefit of the greater population…and other explanations seem archaic and inharmonious when they are seen from various perspectives. I feel that there is no reason why decision makers cannot unpack all the implicit and explicit reasons and come up with sound win-win solution. If the central interest of these decision makers and the

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[49] Chilimo Forest, to know more about Chilimo forest and indigenous birds:

http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/userfiles/file/IBAs/AfricaCntryPDFs/Ethiopia.pdf

opposition is to bring about development (development of people) and about change, I see no reason to lift the red line and reevaluate the positive and negative sides of the policy. As the country's leadership is well experienced in preparing scenario planning and also known for its flexibility, I think it would be good to revisit the issue.

Livelihoods: The people in Dendi district depend on categorically narrow divisions of *livelihoods*. In the rural area, crop production and livestock farming are the main means of livelihood *(See Picture 8).* In towns, people mainly depend on small trades and services. Some people, besides their government work or small trades, practice farming (animal breeding or crop farming) in the peripheries of the towns.

Picture 8: Typical Farming Style – (Ethiopia)
(Picture taken by the author)

An insignificant number depend on fire wood selling, sand and stone production/collection for construction, horticulture production and working as laborers in the big investment firms. Some families also get income from the employment of their children in private houses and small firms (which can be considered as child slavery). Migration to some extent is also one way of securing livelihood (seasonal, permanent or return within the district or far beyond), particularly in the highlands. There are also people who are involved in the fattening of animals, poultry and apiculture which are emerging livelihood base practices that need support. Because they fatten animals by cut-feed systems without releasing animals for free grazing, which has various positive effects: the protection of environment, saving fodder from wastages and increasing household incomes.

The production of the crop producers vary based on their location. The highlanders mainly depend on *warqe* which is their staple food *(See Figure 18). Warqe* is a false banana; one of the three genera of the banana family, *musaceae*[50]. It is a stem crop, where the corm and the pseudo-

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[50] Wikipedia.org/wiki/ensete

stem are edible after several steps of processing. It takes months to make it edible as food: chopping, fermenting and squashing to dehydrate, so that it changes to powder.

The broad leafs are also used to cover unbaked *warqe* cake to cook properly. People also use it to serve food - using it as a plate, and to wrap food items (something like a takeaway), as an organic preservation - to keep moisture and protect the food against bacteria. In the time of drought it was also used as animal feed. It survives for several months even years without rain. Because of this, the highland area has never had to receive food aid. When droughts come highlanders eat bread from this plant with some vegetable and that help them survive.

In the lowlands and semi-highlands people depend on crops such as: *teff*, maize, wheat, barley and other stalk plants. The agricultural marketing system started by a local NGO called HUNDE (ajws.org), in various *ganda*s has tremendously helped farmers to save grain for seed (as a seed bank) and also to benefit from gains of prices. The farmers' main problems year in and year out are that of fertilizers, selected seed and pesticides. Interviewee Tasfaye (on 08/04/2010) from Dendi Mummicha *ganda* said, *"Even land has denied producing without bribes – it demands fertilizers"*. Getting the fertilizer on time with reasonable prices is a major problem. The other problem is, having been spoiled with subsidies in the past, farmers' reluctance to pay cash and purchase when the products are being supplied. According to the expert interview, many farmers also do not use sufficient quantity and the different varieties of fertilizers and other inputs (selected seed varieties, DAP and Urea fertilizers[51], pesticides and herbicides); such practices make the problem cyclical.

Figure 18: *Warqe* /False Banana
(Wikipedia)

Reportedly there are various problems in the area of livestock breeding. While the major problem is shortage of grazing, the conflict of interest between schooling and shepherding by children is also another problem. Every school age child goes to school and the adults go farming, so this makes taking care of the livestock problematic. This has forced each family to

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[51] Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and Urea are most commonly used types of fertilizers in Ethiopia.

change livelihood structures. The decrease in milk production because of shortage of fodder is also one factor that discourages the breeding activity.

According to Interviewee Eregegne (on 26/03/2012) from Dendi Mummicha ganda, they get only half *elemtu*[52]. They make butter and sell or directly consume the milk in the family. This informant said the following about the utilization:

> "We use the fourth byproduct of milk if our cow is giving milk. We keep some from the milk if there is a new born baby. My wife makes yogurt, then she extracts the butter from the yogurt, in ten or fifteen days. [*They have a local method of churning, shaking it almost half a day in clay jar*]. Before she was taking the butter to market, to sell and buy oil and save some money. But now the price of oil has exceeded the price of butter for a reason I don't know. So we use it at home. She uses it as ointment for herself and for children; I also put on my *sammu* [*center of a skull*] sometimes when there is a hangover from local liquors. She cooks the byproduct after the butter is already extracted, [*they call it arera, something like buttered milk*] to get the third class called *itto* (*something like cottage cheese*) and the fourth class *dhama* (*lemon color waterish stage, I don't know its nutritional composition – something like whey*). If you get this *dhama*, mild warm, a little salt in it, with *warqe* bread that is very delicious, he said. In the former times this fourth class was not mainly consumed by human, we used to give it to calves, as a supplementary fodder. But now the luckiest in the village gets it. We also provide for free, if somebody is sick from a neighborhood. If I have no milk and a new baby comes, I get a cup of milk every day from a neighborhood or a family- brother, brother-in-law, cousin, it may require me to walk a few kilometers…this is a norm that long lived in our community, he said".

This interview clearly tells us how people live, what they eat, what they use for their skin as a 'lotion'... the economic stress, the social interaction, the division of labor in the family and many other things.

It is usual that they put a fresh butter on their head when they feel like headache or fever, because analgesics are unthinkable in most rural areas. They put butter on their head and cover it with broad leaf from *dannisa* [a tree like Ficus sp.vl family]. If the leaf dried and the butter melted fast, with this they know the intensity of the fever. They also feed infants this fresh butter with fenugreek (*abishii*); they press the nostrils of a child and force it to swallow (this is labeled "harmful traditional practice" at present, but we all survived the hardship).

Typical internal design of most spherical rural houses as shown in *Figure (19)*, contains; 1) store for food items, and sometimes they use it as a kitchen; 2) where animal stay during the night; 3)

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[52] *Elemtu* - water-tight container of various sizes, but at average of two liters volume, made out of strong grass - *migira*)

for horse to be fed separately through a window from the green trough; 4) place for calves; 5) sheltered sleeping place with *gorro* (wooden partition) for the heads of the house; 6) *madabi,* fire side elevated places made of mud blocks, where guests seat (sometimes where children sleep and get warmth from the fireplace); 7) fireplace, for cooking, heating and at the same time light during the night (because they use the kerosene lamp only when food is served); 8) place for lambkin, cosset, kid, billy and conceived animals; 9) where food is served, to use the light that straight comes through the door; 10) living room and where the rest of the family and guests sleep. When guests stay overnight they use broad leafs from false banana in the highland areas as a mattress, sleeping on organic wet leaf. In each house the quality of the *madabi* and decoration of the walls with different color soil, and use of wooden materials made by local carpenters depends on the activity of members of the household, particularly the female. They have one door in most cases and sometimes they construct a small hole-like window to release smock and to get light.
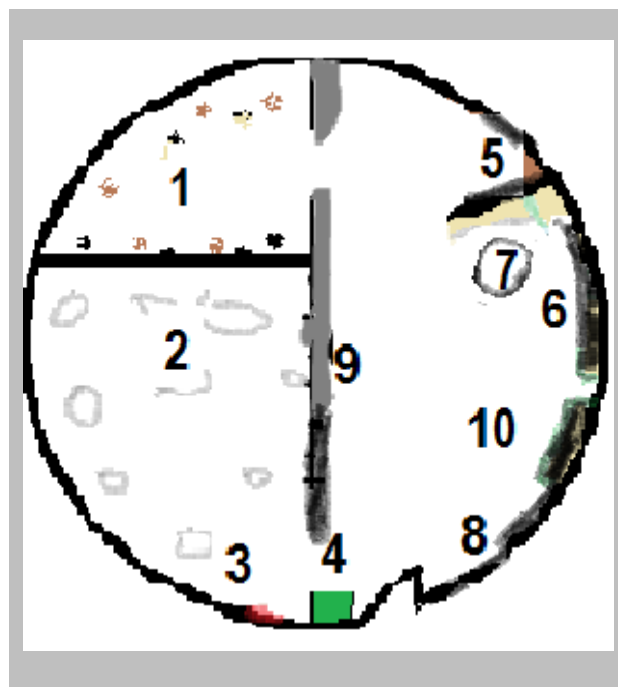
Figure 19: A Typical Rural House in Dendi
(Sketched from observation)

Most families sleep on treated hide. In some families now they have started to use mattress made from polyethylene fertilizer bags filled with grass. But this has disadvantages by hosting pests like bug and others. As pillows they always put smooth wood under the mattress or the hide and they fold some clothes (their coat or trousers) and cover the wood to comfort their necks. The wood must be smooth with no cracks to avoid pests host in the cracks. They make bed from eucalypti trunks or they make *madabi,* a stage like space elevated by mud blocks with 50 or 60 centimeters height from the surface. *Madabi* is advantageous because they plaster it with animal dung every other month or in three months to delouse/ debug from pests. Of course there are some families that use better facilities, like mattress from cotton, fiber from false banana or even in some households that have better income (remittances or other side works, like fattening, poultry, apiculture…), sponge mattresses manufactured in Ethiopia.

Let alone in ten years life of the DLDP, even in forty years, so much change is not observed in the living condition of the people particularly in the highland rural areas; it is "*life as usual*". I thought that the increase in the number of corrugated iron roofed houses was because of an increase in wealth. But the following were reasons given in one of the focus group discussion:

shortage of straws and its price which is almost equivalent to that of corrugated iron sheets, the labor intensiveness of grass thatched houses, durability and scarcity of resources to maintain them every other year. If these were not the case every family prefers a grass thatched house for its warmth and noise absorption. Even now most families live in their previous straw thatched houses, and receive guests in the corrugated iron sheet roofed houses.

Health extension agents, using women's groups as a focus, have tried to introduce practices of hygiene and sanitation in all the *ganda*s. These include: construction of hand dug pit latrines in each house (which is labor intensive and unsustainable), arrangement of hand washing facilities from plastic bottles, segregation of animal and human living rooms, solid and liquid waste management and many other components. But this didn't work much. People still go out for *bobba* [open air toilets]. The pollution is not very much exaggerated; perhaps it is because of the scattered nature of houses or may be because of the non-fatty food they eat.

Bathing and washing clothes is a very rare practice. Washing faces before coffee and gargling (cleansing mouth and throat) is habitual everywhere. I really wonder what will happen if the people in towns, anywhere in the world, stay without taking bath, brushing teeth and changing clothes for a month or two; but in the case of these rural people nobody notices that they didn't. While senior members of the community take 'baths' at home, all the able ones go to a nearby rivers or lakes monthly or in two months (based on the age, sex, awareness and wealth); wash their clothes, take bath, cut their nails and clean their whole body. In the former times in some places they were using *andode* [soapberry] to wash clothes, but now they use it only sometimes for washing night wears in some very poor families, as it is also rarely found as a result of deforestation. In between the washing, they always ventilate the used clothes by spreading outside the house and exposing it to the sun to remove moisture.

As household utensils, mostly in the highland areas they were using clay products in the past. But now most families use plastic materials, as plates, cups and serving dishes. Currently, as 'Made in China' plastic materials are cheaper than the clay products, which are heavier, fragile and difficult to clean, every household uses these plastics; though I personally feel and people also believe that the clay materials are more hygienic and suitable for longer food preservation.

One very significant achievement in each family is the habit of sending children to school, including girls. This has mainly come about due to lack of choices. As a result of high population increase there is no chance to get farmland in the area. Of course it is also a rule and a decision of every *ganda* council that every family has to send children of school age to school. Otherwise the *gare*s will report to the *ganda* and the *ganda* will interrogate the family, both the mother and father of a child who has not been sent to school. On the other hand the school in the area also carries out inspections to see who is hiding their children for herding or farming, and report the case to the *ganda*. The system is so strict and good to control those who are left behind.

The PTA as mentioned above are practices to be promoted to other sectors as well. Some initiatives started as alternate livelihood mechanisms, such as fattening, backyard plantation, tree plantation by some individuals, organization of credit and saving groups and petty trading are activities that need attention and support.

Other achievement observed in the area is the emergence of women's participation in some areas. The reproductive health activities, practices of facilitating credit for women, organizing saving groups that focus on local liquor production, backyard plantation activities and hygiene and sanitation activities even though they always suffer by 'on/off' syndrome, they are encouraging activities. In some families some improvements in their way of life have been observed because of these additional incomes. There have been some changes and improvements particularly when measured by a scale of social transformation, as social transformation is a time consuming gradual process. However, when we look at actual economic changes and transformation in the lives of people, none of the informants appreciated their current situation.

Chapter X: Condensing the Discussions and Concluding Remarks

10.1. Condensing the Discussions

RQ # 6: What can be cited as a good lesson in your area and what can be proposed as a solution to problems mentioned? This was a normative question prepared to sort lessons of good practices and hopes. It was aimed at seeking local solutions to enhance efficiency and make decentralization effective at grassroots level.

Descriptions that introduce the study country and lead to the particular study area have been given in brief. Literature where the variables of the study nest has been thoroughly reviewed and presented. Empirical works have been analyzed and discussed at length in different chapters. In the form of discussion, not in a form of question and answer, efforts were also made to measure and explain what the DLDP has produced.

In the following paragraphs I have attempted to condense the discussions and draw some concluding remarks.

A search for theoretical and conceptual foundation of each variable has led the study to diverse literature of different disciplines. As decentralization is a strategy to advance development, good governance and democracy, literature related to concepts of development, democracy, federalism, local governance, the global and continental experiences in decentralization required review.

A search for theories that best explain each variable was not an easy task. Exploring various theories in one single study made the work very extensive but each of them less detailed. However, since the variables are all interrelated, I was able to identify concurrently interlinked theories that can strike further reading.

As explained above, while democratic decentralization was a domain theory, in which the DLDP had entrenched, the equilibrium view, the congruence theory and the neo-patrimonial theory have been used to explain institutions and organizational performance. The sequential theory of decentralization has been used exclusively to explain the transfer of authority and resources.

Various theories and concepts of participation and change in relation to the topic and the sub-topics have been reviewed. Efforts have been made to secure consistency and relevance of literature, archival documents and the primary data.

The embedded single case study approach used for the study, and the data collection tools were proved relevant and appropriate by generating adequate and reliable information. Some adjustments were made in the field to enable the data collection tools to serve the purpose.

The proposition of the study which reads,

> "For the DLDP to attain its goals at an anticipated degree (qualitatively and quantitatively), within a planned timeframe and bring about rapid and substantive change there must be: enabling institutional setting, proper transfer and efficient utilization of resources and key decision making power, dynamic capability of implementers, meaningful participation of key stakeholders and focus on result oriented development activities play a determining role", have been taken along throughout the research process.

To address this proposition the study focused on institutional availability and strength, adequacy and extent of transfer of authority and resources and their utilization; efficiency, economy and effectiveness of the implementation process; perception and participation of stakeholders and extent of actual achievements on the ground. Based on research questions designed for the purpose, data have been collected and analyzed. Results indicate that the DLDP is still in the progress or in the making stage. There are some positive results achieved (physical and attitudinal). But most findings show weaknesses and deviation of the program from its set goal. It needs a great deal of work and reengineering of the program in various areas, at policy and implementation levels.

Much attention was given to narrow down the focus of the variables of the study to deeply explain specific areas/ sections. However, this task was not as easy as originally considered. Each variable deserves separate extensive and intensive studies. Notwithstanding these challenges the study has managed to come up with viable findings, analysis and conclusions. The findings have addressed the research questions and the proposition, even though in some cases they were deliberately embedded in, and insulated with theories and analyses in the discussions made in each chapter.

During the election campaign I had a chance to drive, ride and walk through a quarter of *gandas* in the district, about 15 of them. Except that a few of them that had better office settings and vegetation around them, most of them looked like abandoned houses. I had a chance to visit the furthermost *gandas* which are about 40-50 kilometers away from the district capital, where an NGO called AKAM works (Ula Dullo, Tiranghe Shube and Kotoba Dhalata *gandas*); all of them were similar in the setting of their working area. Hence, it is my strong belief that the similarity, typicality and convenience criteria applied to choose the *gandas* does not compromise validity of the data. All the analyses and explanations have solid data bases, which ensure reliability. Besides, some of the extracts and summaries from the case histories have been attached as annexes to this document to help readers understand the reality of the situation.

For all these findings rival explanations of various sorts that may emerge were proactively assessed. Some may say these weaknesses happened because of a specific problem in the district, which may also be deducted from my explanations that some neighboring districts have

performed better. When I mentioned other districts with better performance it was not to say they have done a perfect job, but it was just in a sense of choosing one from among the worst. Some may also say it is imprudent to anticipate miracle and judge results on the ground in ten years time, because the problems have grounded deep as a consequence of the past mal-administrations. However, my argument sticks to the trends. Are the communities, the land, the environment heading to growth and development with significant pace, quantity and quality? Can we not better utilize the existing resources? Can we not concert the efforts of stakeholders more than this? Can we not cut the path dependency and focus only on productive activities? Cannot we speed-up the growth pace? These are the issues for discussion and consideration.

In the following few paragraphs, I will try to reiterate and critically reflect problems discussed in all the chapters and flash some possible recommendations. These recommendations will be of concern to the policy makers at the center and the state level and to the implementers at local levels (the district and the *gandas*).

10.2. Critical Reflection and Recommendation

Institutionalization: Focus was given to structures, work environment and human power strength to find out how the DLDP has been institutionalized. I present the synopsis of major findings of the study and concurrently reflect on each item and try to cite some discerning conclusions:

1. Structures frequently change without proper evaluation, which in turn affects the stability and productivity of institutions. Altering structures alone cannot bring about change and development. If we frequently change structures before thoroughly examining their strengths and limitations, having institutions in a full sense would be very difficult. The study shows an increase in the frequency of structural changes since Haileselassie's reign. During the Dergue the district became *Awuraja* (a structure *de jury* equivalent to zone level). After the fall of Dergue it was downgraded to that of a district level. Following this, internal change of structures was unbelievably frequent. Hence, we need to stabilize the institutional setting until we observe differences and make conscious changes. Most structural changes in all districts take place, all over the state, at the same time. As many districts have conditions specific to their area, the structural changes need to be addressed individually.

2. There are no enabling facilities: office, furniture, etc…to discharge responsibilities. With the current trend of budget allocation, no district can have a better working environment. The state has to prioritize the needs or focuses and provide facilities in phases. To build on what had been attempted by the Dergue, standardizing the layout of offices and furniture for similar structures is a practice that we can take on. The district administration is using an office built for the district Workers Party of Ethiopia by the Dergue, including some furniture. The Dergue was building offices for districts and zones in phases: this year to district/zone (X), and next year to district/zone (Y). Even the districts chosen to have new buildings could schedule completing the whole layout in phases, this year one block next

year another block, and so on. In this way we can achieve something tangible in 20 years. I think it is good to build on this experience. The district can take a good area and beautifully landscape it with vegetation based on a master layout and do only parts every year. This will enable us to have a very good working environment within a few years.

Problems related to the working and living conditions of professionals also need solution. Building low-cost houses, leisure time arrangements (just to fence a wide space, to plant trees around and inside, to level the ground, to build some *tukuls*[53], to buy some indoor and outdoor play-game facilities), and instituting the process of having holidays and annual leave can increase the motivation and work ethic. These needed facilities can be fulfilled if the district is able to engage with the private sector as we see in other districts, by motivating and facilitating them with the provision of land and bank loans. This would enable them to establish kindergartens and better schools to satisfy those who want and can send their children to private establishments.

3. Structures are top-heavy with too many posts and too many staff (relating to 2 above). The structure at district level which was adopted following the DLDP is very big at the top. Enlarging the structure at the head and decreasing it at the lower tiers would make operations very difficult. It would also be difficult to discharge responsibilities and produce meaningful results. Above all, the limited budget will be eaten away by overhead expenses without producing any tangible result.

4. Posts are not task-oriented/task-driven. Some posts are setup just following the guidance from the state, but they need to be task driven. We must create the jobs/tasks before we create the boxes. If there is not enough work, or if there is not enough facility to exhaustively utilize the expertise or knowledge and skills of an employee, hiring only to fill the post is an extremely a harmful practice in many respects.

Transfer and utilization of decision making authority and resources: Focus has been given to the extent of the decision making authorities and resources transferred, and how well the district utilizes them.

1. Notwithstanding some interference in cases of intense security, there are no explicit restrictions on the authorities legally given to districts. Resources are also distributed from state level to districts through undisputable formulae. However the problem lies with the volume of resources that the state obtains. Distribution of this inadequate resource to more than 304 districts, which cannot produce any concrete results, is also another problem.
What is felt the best option for institutions would be, to prioritize the most productive districts and to focus the investment in limited areas. This type of *concentric model* has

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[53] Grass touched spherical or angular shape houses built for recreation

worked well in many places. For example, the Ziway Dugda district of Oromia received food aid for more than fifteen years, for its 120,000 people. The Oromo Self Help Organization (OSHO) worked tirelessly in the district for five years with significant investment and good results in return. At present this district is hiring labor from other areas. It has totally graduated from shortage of food and now the focus of the district has become environmental protection and development. Similarly, instead of disbursing this subsistence budget, it would be more productive if focus was made on selective districts for some years so that they could gradually improve. In this way self sufficient districts would be created and the replication effect would also be tremendous.

2. The second set of problem observed was inability to exhaustively utilize the resources and authority transferred to the district. We cannot use the same tactics used to demolish a system, to rebuild it, as demolishing required special people with special talents building also requires people with the capability of accomplishing tasks and looking forward to the future. We must respect professions and understand that each activity needs special skill and competitive knowledge. It would not be also good to give position he/she cannot run as a reward to somebody for his/her past contributions. The system needs to invest on trainings in economic and social management areas, political training alone may not help realization of the growth and transformation program.

Performance: Attempts were made to measure the performance of the district since the commencement of the DLDP.

1. Inappropriate planning was found to be the core problem of the district. If there were practices of realistic and result oriented planning, something tangible could be seen on the ground. All this lack of management and coordination would not happen if activities were well planned and coordinated. The district needs to prepare a realistic and achievable plan for itself within the frame of the state's strategic plan.

2. Staff cohesion has not yet been achieved. All the above elements contribute to staff cohesion. The recruitment policy and appointment of 28 officials, and about 50 other staff, without any competition and transparency, decreases the trust of all qualified staff. This needs to be corrected. It should satisfy the interest of politics if only two persons, the administrator and the deputy are appointed. If other staffs are recruited through internal or external transparent recruitment procedures it would significantly increase productivity, staff cohesion, motivation and a healthy sense of competition. Healthy competition is not a competition based on client/patron relation but is a competition based on performance.

3. There are many idle staffs in the structure. On the other hand there are some sections that lack enough staff, and are extremely overloaded. For example, posts like house speaker and his subordinates could be covered on ad hoc basis, because these staffs become busy only when there are district council assemblies. There are also other posts that are opened only for

formality. To make the relation between staff healthier, this needs correction. It is good to pay commensurate benefit and attract qualified staff than having a lot of staff that produces nothing.

4. A lot of educated people are underutilized in the district. There is a minimum of ten teachers on average in each *ganda*, but only the director participates in the *ganda* administration *ex-officio*. In the towns, most *ganda* leaders are teachers. The rural areas however are still influenced by the spirit of "farmers' associations" as in the time of Dergue. Now *ganda*s are government tiers. Teachers, extension agents and development workers live 'permanently' in the rural *ganda*s. There is no reason why they cannot fully participate in the *ganda* administrations, if we want to bring about well established systems.

   Teachers could, for example, run the environmental section using student forces. Health extension workers could run associations, particularly women and youth because they work closely with them. They could work in the section of hygiene, sanitation and primary health care. Development agents could concentrate exclusively on agricultural production. If all these forces are organized into a team, create a consortium and schools become a center of *ganda* development activities, tremendous results could be achieved in a short time. Above all, all aspects of society would engage in development efforts, and human capital would be properly utilized.

5. The district is too big to manage. This problem is reflected not only at district level but also at state level and even at country level. I think we need to standardize the formation of districts, zones and *ganda*s. Even at country level there is no reason why we should stick to the traditional demarcations of boundaries, as if they are boundaries between two different countries, and complicate service delivery so much. There is no reason why Oromia could not have four or five states. Similarly other big states like Amhara and SNNP could be divided into studied administrative states maintaining their cultural and linguistic criteria. Districts and *ganda*s need to be studied and criteria should be established following different landscapes, population and agro climatic conditions to reset the size and status of districts. This does not reflect the instability issue discussed above, where structural changes frequently and arbitrarily take place without thorough study only to serve desperate situations.

6. Another important strategy is linking the district to universities and research institutes. There are some activities of this type but they are initiatives on the part of institutions. The district must try to attract these institutions and involve them in various development efforts. There has been some good experience in some parts of the state in this aspect. Experience from developed countries also shows the full involvement of higher institutions and research centers in practical and productive activities. I noticed from the speech of the Mayor of Dortmund, on the occasion of the reception prepared for international students, how the

Technical University of Dortmund involves in the innovation and planning of the city (see back cover). Similarly, the Dendi district could link itself to Ambo University and Holeta Agricultural Research Center. Of course all these need strategic thinking, which the district lacks. It also requires the concern of the state.

Participation: In this study participation had been explained under political, development and participation in administration. It has covered the participation of the community at large, participation of the CSOs and the private sector at different levels, at district level and in the *ganda*s.

1. The political participation has been explained in reference to elections. Elections that take place every five years are unsettling for all families. A year, or at least six months prior to the elections all development activities stop and everyone focuses only on the elections, during which there is almost a war. The aftermath is even worse (the trauma it physically and psychologically creates), and will be turmoil for at least six months. The outcome of every election is always the same, in whatever way: forfeit or force, as reported by the so called observers. Every time after elections take place the election observers shout, oppositions protest, people cry, no attempts have been made to change the election models. People suffer, are hindered from productive work for something not properly understood and from which they get no or insignificant benefit. If it is said that people participate consciously, and cast their votes based on their own convictions, then, "*politics is sham*" as many people understand it in our country.

   Thus, we need to alter the model and base on genuine and objective thinking. Other countries have revised their election systems several times based on objective conditions in their countries. I consider a less costly and threat free model is the "*indirect election*" models. This has been practiced in many countries including Germany and the USA. Electoral Colleges are established at various levels and these Electoral Colleges elect efficient candidates for higher positions.

   This is a practice that can be traced back to the old Roman Republic, where by, the adult male citizens of Rome were divided, according to their wealth, into groups of 100 (called Centuries) and cast votes (http://uselectionatlas.org/). In our case the *ganda*s could elect somebody in their *ganda* they properly know as a member of the Electoral College at district level. This will minimize the chaos and the cost, and genuine candidates would come out of this system. All parties could compete to constitute the Electoral College at *ganda* level; and they can also present their candidates at district level for both the state and federal parliaments. This is a tentative reflection that needs to be studied and structured in a better way. It could be tried in some states or districts of the country and if it works well, it could be adopted.

2. There is a lack of perception in the roles of the CSOs and the private sector. Besides the fear of superficial rent seeker and client/patron campaigns there are weaknesses in the application of the policies provided. The administrators should have commitment and confidence to at least implement those provisions stipulated by law. There are some officials who exhaustively use available opportunities and work to bring about change. But what has been observed in the Dendi district is the rule of routines and trivial activities and much time spent on securing own position instead of focusing on such strategic works. But the district needs to upgrade its capability to thoroughly make use of the authorities entrusted to it. The *ganda*s have not yet developed to a meaningful tier of the government; it needs a change of approach if their role is still insignificant in various aspects (environmental protection, increase in productivity, appropriate utilization of available resources, social development…) after many years experience.

    Thus, the involvement of the private sector and CSOs should be taken and embraced in the district plan to achieve the goals set by the DLDP. Service delivery activities in particular should gradually go to the private sector and CSOs.

    We must also try to enhance the involvement of the private sector, through facilitation and inclusion. If we truly think of curbing corruption, firstly, tempting loopholes for so called rent seeking, client/patronage relations should be eliminated. What we also learn from other developed systems is that they try to narrow or totally close ambiguities that allow corruption, not just by frightening or intimidating citizens, but by establishing a tight system.

3. To increase the participation of people in development works all the consecutive systems always go about it incorrectly. Instead of building on the existing social capital the attempt by all governments has been to superimpose new community organizations. Many of these new committees, taskforces and cooperatives were formed under various new names but wasted away without leaving any positive results. Social networks of the community which have survived for many years still exist. These could be customized and used without changing their names. This is important to preserve traditions and customs and as they are not considered strange, it would be also easier to reorganize and develop them.

4. Another most important, of course serious, issue is that of giving space to the opposition. Political pluralism is a guarantee to secure peace, avoid civil unrest and corruption. I know that the country is surrounded by aggressive neighbors. It needs a very stable and strong defense, diplomatic and security systems which are not a matter of choice but of survival. Survival for the present and the future. These areas of government must go to strong competitive unflinching professional and intellectual systems, but the politics should be open for change and replacement. Otherwise, it leads to violent action which we are tired of. The system also becomes dull. Thus accommodation of political pluralism should be part of our

"democratic" commitment. There is no other option to refine the system, minimize hostility, violence nor corruption, and bring non violent transfer of power in the true sense.

Actual gains at grassroots levels. This has been measured based on livelihood gains and diversification. Most informants reacted, as the Oromo saying goes, *koo sanuma…* [Something like saying - life as usual]. Little change has been observed in the livelihoods/lifestyles of the people. The environment is deteriorating, which does not need a scientific study to explain; children cannot see wild animals in their vicinity as in the past – helping them to learn; population increase is on the rise – census not needed to witness; families eat less - qualitatively and quantitatively of what was eaten in the past; livestock owned by each household is decreasing because of lack of grazing land, etc…. Thus, gains on the ground do not justify what present and past governments have invested in development. Sufficient fruits (at least positive trends) have yet to be achieved at their final destination, the grassroots level. As I explained above, analysis in this part would be more appropriate and convincing, if it was possible to make at least a cluster household survey. But as the study focuses on analytical conclusion, I believe that the qualitative data collected can serve this purpose.

The following paragraphs try to reflect on some of the efforts currently underway and where they need adjustment.

1. Efforts to organize micro and small scale enterprises are very encouraging, but they are limited only to towns. There is great potential for micro irrigation in the rural areas. The youth in the *ganda*s would have great potential if they were organized in producers' cooperatives (on different specialties: horticulture, animal fattening, poultry, apiculture, etc.). I think many people regret the abolishment of the service cooperatives that could supply technology and loans to such producers' cooperatives. There are attempts to organize unions now. They need to be scaled up. This process needs financial and technical support. There are various entries and models to involve the rural poor and create jobs, but this needs focus and strategic thinking.

    In line with this, if craftsmen in the rural areas were given attention, and got organized, though small in number, the ripple effect would be tremendous. If they were introduced to micro-finance institutions and provided with loan facilities, these could easily grow to cottage industries.

2. At grassroots level, the main and often discussed problem is that of land tenure systems/property rights. Many professionals on this subject have recommended the three ownership systems: public, government and private. But this issue, the question of uncertainty on land ownership, has always been and still is a very sensitive issue even in discussion. But it is destroying the country, damaging the land and the minds of people. It needs a thorough study and bold decisions.

3. The coverage of education both for adults and children has significantly increased compared to the past. The disparity is with the quality of education, the behavioral change children exhibit after school and the role of education in development and environmental protection. This is an area that needs serious attention, particularly in developing curriculums that integrate these roles and improve the provision of information communication systems (newspapers, education through radio, magazines, books, etc…).

4. The knowledge gap between communities and experts, with lack of fervor to listen to and learn from one another needs a thorough study and preparation of appropriate extension and training toolkits.

10.3. The Research Findings' Implication to Planning

Primarily, responsibility for the failure of the above goes to poor planning. There have been attempts to exercise planning at district and at *ganda* levels. But at the end of the day these could not fulfill the requirements that guarantee achievement of the goals set.

All development plans must set out a strategic spatial framework – a clear view ahead in development terms – for the area the development plan covers. This spatial framework, while acknowledging wider social, economic and environmental trends, needs to focus on the goals to be attained at a given time. This plan must clearly frame how the development process in that area is to be structured in order to achieve the plan's objectives for the wider community. This is what the DLDP lacked.

From the start plans must determine that all the activities are directed to positive change. Risks and threats should be calculated (to the best of the planners' capacity) before commencing the operation. The concern of future generations should also be a priority for any development plan. Otherwise, if it is always a fire brigade process or if we invest more and harvest less, it would be difficult to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty and it would only serve temporary demands. Issues related to gender, environment, human rights, child welfare, etc…all societal issues should be well addressed using various planning tools.

Why has the district administration been there for the last number of years if results on the ground do not justify its existence? Why are the *ganda* councils there if the environment is deteriorating and if communities are not getting better services? Therefore, plans should incorporate what all these structures do within a given time frame and have to show tangible results.

10.4. Future Research Areas

Resource mapping and application of spatial planning: as the present scope of spatial planning includes all the methods used by the public sector to influence the distribution of people and activities in areas of various sizes, it plays a great role in the realization of the DLDP, transforming the area, taking future generations into consideration. Since the concept of spatial planning includes the planning of land use, urban setting, regional development, transport systems, environmental management, economic development and community wellbeing, etc. its application is vital.

The European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (often called the 'Torremolinos Charter'), adopted in 1983 by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) defines spatial planning as follows (Resolution No. 2**)**:

> "Regional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society. It is, at the same time, a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organization of space according to an overall strategy" (CEMAT, 1983).

Thus, to save the district from the damages that haste creates, it would be very important to plan all interconnected activities with thorough consideration of the future generation. This needs a planning model that takes into consideration: the people, land and flora and fauna, generally the whole environment, with due balance between the present and the future interest.

Election procedures: As explained above, elections in our country always bring pressure. Above all, incumbents need to be more accountable to their constituencies and the roles they play during their term should be looked into. To enhance a true participation of the communities, a study is needed on how to make the contribution of the incumbents livelier, the election process more peaceful and pragmatic and their accountability more realistic.

Concentric development models: Disbursing meager resources all over the state has not brought about change anywhere in the state. If the state were to give priority to high potential areas - whereby all development efforts could be concentrated on productive areas/high potential areas – these could be the source of surplus to other areas as well. This could, in a short time, upgrade some areas from poverty line, and the radius of this effect would increase gradually. The replication effect would be also very high. This may raise the issue of equity, but it is better to have something before thinking about its distribution. Actually this could also be done without downplaying the issue of equity. The elements of the *"trickledown effect and polarization effects"* and ideas of *uneven growth parable* which emphasized the concept of "*focus on lead sectors*" by Hirschman (1958) - cited in Ray (2010:46), that states — by virtue of their strong

linkages to many other sectors— the strong sectors would pull the rest of the economy through the development path, can be observed in relation to this. Hirschman's model also focuses on the *empowerment of surplus producing regions*, so as to ultimately enable them to trickle down the wealth by creating jobs, producing surplus and providing services, which could also result in specialization of products and services. The concentric model may also share ideas and take into account some elements of the *concentric zone theory* (Park, Burgess and McKenzie, 1925) which is applicable to urban development. It is a typology that illustrates an ideal construction of the tendencies of any city to expand radially from its central business district, forming units of towns that contain all services and goods at their newly formed centers (by cascading similar units). Similarly, Myrdal's (1957), *"the spread effects and the backwash effects"* also explains the essence and importance of this approach. Though, often criticized this approach can fit into planning for development under scarce resource.

Actually, this is a formula that had been attempted for several years in my country as well. During the Dergue 148 districts have been selected to concentrate on, so that they produce surplus that could feed the whole country. Prior to the third strategic plan, the Growth and Transformation Plan 2010 -2015, the country used to promote a program called Agricultural Development Led Industry (ADLI); while currently there is a slight shift giving significant emphasis to industry. Of course, strengthening capacities of leading institutions was also the 9th strategy of the DLDP.

The issues related to offices and office facilities can also go in line with this. Instead of distributing insignificant amounts of money to 304 districts for maintenance every year, it would be better to free three or ten districts from a dire need of offices and equipment and make them a model, based on standards established at state level. By so doing at least some difference should be seen in 20 years time. This is also an area that requires a thorough study.

Structures: The size and population ceiling for each district and *ganda* needs to be studied and standards established. The study of productivity, efficiency, economy and effectiveness of structures, which would be the concern of institutional economics, is vital. These frequent changes of structures occurred because they were not based on thorough study. These structures should not necessarily be the same in all districts, they must be task driven. This also needs a thorough district specific study.

Human power management: The district must reduce the positions filled by appointees. Some positions also need to be further studied so as to use human power in the district appropriately. Before employment is processed, facilities and budgets should be secured. Otherwise hiring employees just to get them on payrolls, does not contribute to the development aspired. Thus, human resource management, job analysis and reclassification of positions all need a thorough study.

Rural schools as a center of development: A thorough study is needed to properly utilize human resources in the *ganda*s. How to link the *ganda*s, the extension/ development agents, associations and school teachers needs an in-depth study, by setting out methods on how to involve them.

Utilizing the existing social capitals can ease mobilization: Instead of always attempting to superimpose new committees with different nametags, thorough studies need to be conducted how to customize and make the best use of the social capital structures that have already existed for several years. As these structures have withstood the test of time and survived, rather than undermining or trying to block them, it needs to design a technique to harmonize and integrate them.

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Annex I. 1: Sustainable Development Typology

What is to be sustained		What is to be developed
<u>What is to be sustained</u> • Nature • Earth • Biodiversity • Eco System	For how long? 25 years "Now and in the future" Forever	<u>What is to be developed</u> • People • Child survival • Life expectancy • Education • Equity • Equal opportunity
<u>Life support</u> • Ecosystem services • Resources • Environment		<u>Economy</u> • Wealth • Productive sectors • Consumption
<u>Community</u> • Cultures • Groups • Places	Linked by Only Mostly But And Or	<u>Society</u> • Institutions • Social capital • States
<u>Basic rights</u> • Human rights • Democracy		<u>Politics</u> • Pluralism • Fair and free election

SOURCE: U.S. National Research Council, Policy Division, Board on Sustainable Development, Our Common Journey: A Transition Toward Sustainability (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999 [with some addition]).

Annex I. 2: Federalism, Framework for Analysis

Five Criteria to Compare the Role and Character of [States] in Contemporary Federalism (Adapted from Bennett 1990, p61)

Legal power

The first criterion on the legal powers of regional governments is divided into five parts:

1. The extent to which regional governments have the power in a written constitution or on some other basis to establish and revise their own political structure and processes and to select their own leaders and officials
2. The way in which, and the degree to which, regional governments through their legislative body can make and revise their own laws, and the role of the courts (typically a supreme court of the central government) as the umpire in contested matters between the central and the regional governments.
3. The extent to which the legal process of the regional governments is independent of the central government for purposes of the operation of courts and the enforcement of the judicial decisions
4. The basis on which state boundaries are determined. For this criterion, our interest is in ascertaining whether the central government is able to change the boundaries of regional governments without their involvement in the decision to do so.
5. The role of regional governments in the executive and legislative processes of the central government; and in settling disputes between the central and regional governments.

Revenue powers

The second criterion, which deals with the revenue powers of regional governments, concerns the degree to which they are able to determine the type of revenue raised at regional levels, the amount of revenue raised, and the power of regional governments to influence the basis on which revenue sources are shared by the central and regional governments.

Functional – area authority and responsibilities

The authority of regional governments to control activities and programs in major functional areas of government (financing, policy making and administration), *where the functional areas for which regional governments have exclusive or predominant responsibility is being reflected.*

Role of the regional governments in the affairs of the central government

The way in which regional governments through special institutional mechanisms influence the actions or activities of the central government

Historical, social, and cultural identification

The extent to which regional governments have their own historical, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identification for their citizens

Power over local units

The authority regional governments have over local governments within their borders, their role in determining the boundaries, functions, finances, and land-use plans of local units within their borders.

Annex I. 3: Decentralization Concept Typology

Adapted from ARD Inc. (2009) Decentralization Strategic Assessment: Indonesia Washington, D.C. US Agency for International Development (with some additions and omissions)
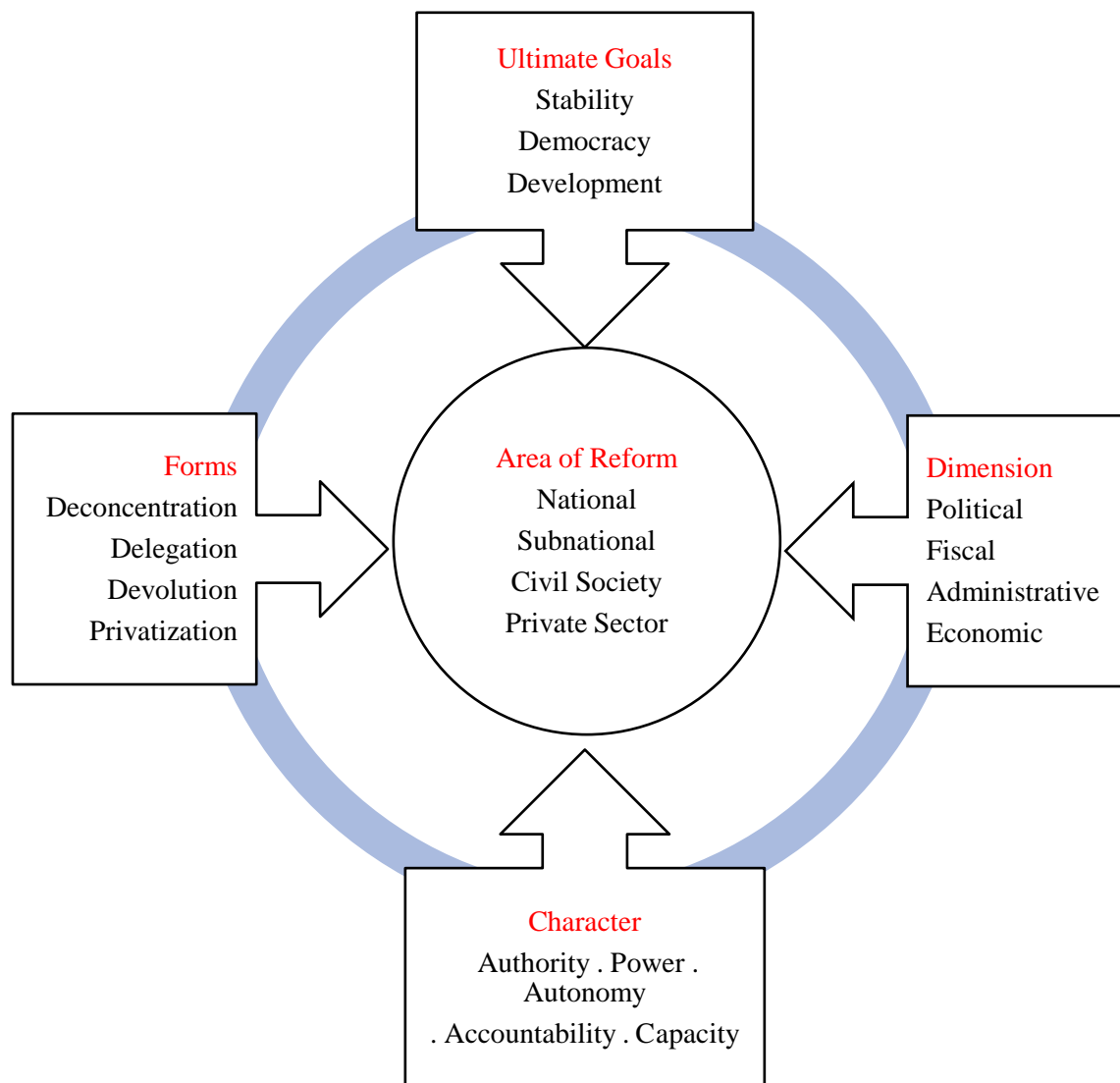
Annex I.4: Participation Typologies (Source: Journal of American Science, 2011; 7(2) http://www.americanscience.org)

	Brager & Specht 1965	Arnstein 1969	Hollnsteiner 1977	Koneya 1978	Wandersman 1979-1981	Johnston 1982	Oakley 1986-1989	UN 1981	Moser 1983
High	Community control	Citizen control	Community control	Citizens define the problem and decide the action	Self planning	Participating through creativity	Spontaneous participation -authentic participation	Spontaneous participation	Participation as an end
Continuum	Community has delegated authority	Delegated power	People's representation on decision making board	Presents problems and boundaries, but citizen decide		Participating by taking initiative			
			Consultation started with plan formulation	Presents problems, ask for ideas, then decide		Participating by giving suggestions and making criticisms aimed at improvement of an activity			
	Plans jointly	Partnership	Communities choice of final plan from among predetermined option	Present tentative decision, consult citizen, then decide	Choice		Induced participation (cooperative and manipulative of an activity)	Induced participation	
	Advices			Announce decision, permits questions		Voluntary participation prompted by awareness			
	Community consulted	Placation	Appointment of local leaders to position in government bureaucracy		Feedback				
	Community receive information	Consultation	Unofficial representation by 'solid citizen' group which endorses outside – planned program	"Sells" decision to citizens		Voluntary participation stimulated by a reward		Coerced participation	
		Informing		Decide, announces decision thru bulletin					
	Non participation	Therapy			No participation	Participation in response to an order or to force	Compulsory participation		
Low		Manipulation							Participation as a means

Αννεξ ΙΙ.1: Σεχτορσ ανδ Ηυμαν Ποωερ βψ Λεωελ οφ Εδυχατιον   (Σουρχε: Δενδι Διστριχτ Αρχηιωσε)

No	Σεχτορσ	$\leq$Γραδε 12			Χερτιφιχατε			Διπλομα			$1^{στ}$ Δεγρεε			Τοταλ		
		Φ	Μ	Τ	Φ	Μ	Τ	Φ	Μ	Τ	Φ	Μ	Τ	Φ	Μ	Τ
1.	Διστριχτ Αδμινιστρατιον	4	13	17	1	–	1	1	9	10	–	–	–	6	22	28
2.	Γηινχηι Τοων Αδμινιστρατιον	5	14	19	4	2	6	1	5	6	–	2	2	10	23	33
3.	Ολανκομι Τοων Αδμινιστρατιον	4	8	12	–	2	2	2	6	8	–	–	–	6	16	22
4.	Ηουσε Σπεακερ	1	1	2	–	2	2	–	4	4	–	–	–	1	7	8
5.	Πυβλιχ Ρελατιον	–	–	–	–	2	2	–	2	2	–	1	1	–	5	5
6.	Χαπαχιτψ Βυιλδινγ	2	2	4	1	3	4	3	9	12	–	1	1	6	15	21
7.	Οργανιζατιον ανδ Μοβιλιζατιον	–	2	2	–	–	–	2	3	5	–	1	1	2	6	8
8.	Ωομενεσ Αφφαιρ	1	–	1	2	–	2	1	1	2	1	–	1	5	1	6
9.	Χοοπερατιωεσ ανδ Ασσοχιατιονσ	–	1	1	1	2	3	1	7	8	–	1	1	2	11	13
10.	Αδμινιστρατιον ανδ θυστιχε	1	10	11	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	11	12
11.	Χουρτ	5	1	6	–	2	2	1	6	7	–	–	–	6	9	15
12.	Αττορνεψ	–	–	–	6	5	11	1	6	7	1	–	1	8	11	19
13.	Πολιχε	3	30	33	1	2	3	–	5	5	–	–	–	4	37	41
14.	Ψουτη ανδ Σπορτ	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	4	5	–	1	1	2	5	7
15.	Ρεωεννε	9	4	13	1	3	4	1	6	7	–	–	–	12	14	26
16.	Φινανχε ανδ Εχονομιχ Δεωελοπμεντ	2	10	12	2	4	6	6	10	16	1	5	6	11	29	40
17.	Τουρισμ ανδ Χυλτυρε	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	4	4
18.	Ωατερ Ρεσουρχεσ Δεωελοπμεντ	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	6	6	–	1	1	2	7	9
19.	Γηινχηι Ωατερ ανδ Σεωεραγε	5	8	13	–	1	1	–	2	2	–	–	–	5	11	16
20.	Ολανκομι Ωατερ ανδ Σεωεραγε	–	5	5	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	6	6
21.	Εδυχατιον	–	–	–	2	–	2	1	7	8	–	6	6	3	13	16
22.	Ηεαλτη	1	–	1	–	1	1	–	6	6				1	7	8
23.	Μινεσ ανδ Ενεργψ	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	1	1				1	2	3
24.	Τεχηνιχαλ ανδ ςοχατιοναλ Τραινινγ	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	–	–	1	1	2
25.	Τραδε ανδ Ινδυστρψ	–	1	1	–	–	–	1	2	3	–	–	–	3	1	4
26.	Αγριχυλτυρε ανδ Ρυραλ Δεωελοπμεντ	–	1	1	3	1	4	1	13	14	2	9	11	6	24	30
27.	Ρυραλ Ροαδ Δεωελοπμεντ	–	2	2	1	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	3	4
28.	ςετερinαρψ Δεωελοπμεντ ανδ Ηεαλτη	–	–	–	–	2	2	–	2	2	–	6	6	–	10	10
	Τοταλ διστριχτ λεωελ ωορκερσ	43	113	156	28	39	67	25	126	151	7	35	42	103	313	416
	Τοταλ ωορκερσ ιν τηε βρανχηεσ/γανδασ	26	25	51	212	211	423	114	248	362	14	57	71	366	542	908
	Γρανδ τοταλ διστριχτ ανδ βρανχηεσ/ γανδασ	69	138	207	240	250	490	139	374	513	21	92	113	469	856	1,324

Annex II.2: Formula for Budget Transfer

(Education sector taken as example)

(Source: Oromia State,2006)

1. Factors considered for the allocation

1.1. Elementary schools /1-8/
1.1.1. Establishment
1.1.2. Management
1.1.3. Textbooks printing and distribution
1.1.4. Supervision
1.1.5. Adult Education expansion
1.2. Secondary schools first cycle /9-10/
1.2.1. Establishment
1.2.2. Management

1.3. Primary boarding schools in pastoral areas
1.3.1. Establishment
1.3.2. Management

2. Identified indicators

2.1. School age population
2.2. Actual number of students enrolled
2.3. Expected number of students to be served
2.4. Actual number of teachers
2.5. Number of schools
2.6. Number of classrooms
2.7. Unit cost of construction
2.8. Actual financial expenditure for salary and operation for the previous year(s)

3. Indexes formulated based on factors indicators in 1& 2 above

3.1. Schools per 1000 School Age Pop
3.2. Classrooms per 1000 School Age Population
3.3. Inverted Per 1000 Infrastructure Sum
3.4. Per 1000 Infrastructure Index
3.5. SCR (Student Classroom Ratio)
3.6. SCR as compared to the standard
3.7. SCR Index
3.8. Construction Unit Cost
3.9. Construction Unit Cost from Average
3.10. Construction Unit Cost Index
3.11. Infrastructure Deficit Index for education

Based on these, the total budget allocated to the Oromia State, and which is allocated for the districts goes down to each district every year.

4. Formula notion for education index

$$EI_i = \frac{\left(\dfrac{\dfrac{Schools_i}{SAP_i} \times 1000 + \dfrac{Sections_i}{SAP_i} \times 1000}{\sum\limits_{i=1}^{104}\left(\dfrac{Schools_i}{SAP_i} \times 1000 + \dfrac{Sections_i}{SAP_i} \times 1000\right)} \right) + \dfrac{ESCUC_i}{\sum\limits_{i=1}^{104} ESCUC_i}}{2}$$

Where,

- EI = Education index

- SAP = School age population

- ESCUC = Elementary schools construction unit cost

Annex III.1: Case History, Extract with Focus on Livelihood

Eregegne Gammachu (Male), Age: 58, *Ganda*: Dendi Sulu

Eregegne was born and brought up in this *ganda*, except he had been briefly out of the area to slay wild buffalo. This practice was a necessity to be considered a hero in the community, and get priority to talk and sing in the past. He has 11 children from two wives. None of them went beyond grade six. Three of his daughters were married at teenage and he is a grandfather to seven children. He inherited the second wife from his brother, following his brother's death living behind four children. They live about five kilometers away from each other, in the same *ganda* but in different *gotes*. Eregegne makes several round trips between these houses daily. His both wives live in houses thatched with dry stalks of barley straw.

Eregegne has participated in the focus group discussion. He was also interviewed individually. Being attracted by his capacity to tell things from his memory, a case history that mainly focuses on his means of livelihood had been constructed. I spent several hours with Eregegne. I went to his home and observed where he sleeps, where he brought up all these children and where he lives, a 'three' room house, two quarters for human and the rest for animals and store. He is one among the richest in the *ganda*.

While his main livelihood comes from farming, he also generates money by chopping trees from top to bottom, in order not to damage other things around it if the tree is cut only from bottom. He earns "good money" for this expertise. His both wives also make local liquors for market. He was given a very small plot of land for farming and grazing, because of the population growth. He has one cow with a calf, a mare with a filly horse, about five sheep of different age, three beehives and *khat* plantation. *Khat* is a stimulant plant that is chewed raw. Its scientific name is *Catha edulis* a species in the family of *Celastraceae.* In 1980, the World Health Organization classified *khat* as a drug of abuse, but still it was 2nd or 3rd export item of the country for a couple of years. Current reports show that many farmers in many parts of the country are also swapping coffee for *khat,* for the fact that it generates better income. Eregegne grew it mainly for market. The family gets its staple food from a backyard plant called *warqe.*

Warqe is a false banana, one of the three genera of the banana family, *musaceae*. It is a stem crop, where the corm and the pseudo-stem are edible after several steps of processing. It takes months to make it ready as food stuff; chopping, fermenting and squashing to dehydrate, so that it changes to powder. The broad leafs are also used to bake bread, to serve food using it as a plate, and to wrap food items, as an organic preservation, to keep the moisture and protect them against bacteria. In the time of drought they are also used as animal feed. Eregenge has one ox that he matches with his cousin's ox to plough his piece of land. I didn't check what he has with the second wife. As a rule there must be equivalent property in both houses.

He was asked about his life and changes in his way of life in the past ten years. He said, I lived with three governments, all having their agents by different names, *atibia dagna*, *kebele* and *ganda* in our village. Their main task is to collect tax, fertilizer debts and take us to police when some "criminal acts" are suspected. They distribute and redistribute land. Sometimes they arbitrate neighborhood related disputes and boundary issues. Anyway, their main task is to maintain the security. They are more of security guards of government than delivering services. I eat what I have been eating several years ago. Meat staff, the whole family gets four or three times a year, or incase when an animal dies being pushed to a gorge by another animal, because of drought, or by none contagious disease or by grazing toxic grasses (*siddisa, sandaba*). In such circumstances we share the meat on credit, to pay when our crops are harvested. We do this not because we want the meat, but to help the person who lost his animal. So, this was how I lived and this is how I live.

Annex III.2:   Case History, Extract with Focus on Environment

Enate Hadha Manzir (Female), age 65, Bodda Bosoqa

Enate was born and grew in a place called Oddo Ware. She had church education. She used to read and write. As there are no any newspapers in the area it is common that everybody who was reported literate turns illiterate after some years.

She talked about the forest and the wild animal in the area. She said there were several springs that flow from the mountain. Now all of them are dry. We have to walk long distance to fetch water. Some years ago even my children knew who is who and who lived where in the neighborhood. There was an Oromo tradition whereby the family sits around the fireplace and counts houses, unique animal and each member of the family in the neighborhoods. Now that is impossible because of the high population increase.

This traditional system which was used to build memories of children is known as, "*ibbo – ibbakka*". It is like a game played in pairs. One says, *ibbo* and the other responds, *ibbaka*; then asks, a family that has two heifers (heifer stands for girls), three bulls (bull stands for boys), one ox and one cow (which stands for father and mother respectively) – which family is this? If the respondent misses he/she will be penalized by giving out a distant town or market place. By doing this also she/he learns the geography of the area. This was also how to stand up to the long night where there is no light, because this game needs only talk and listen (something like bedtime story).

She said the trees are all gone. Government must find something like gold in the ground now, because we have finished everything on the surface and the land does not produce much. It needs bribes like '*dagnas*'. Any government official is called *dagna* in the area (which contextually means –governor, it has a connotation of arbitrator, a person who can enforce decision or rules). She continued, now what you see is soil, farmland, people or houses. Only about forty years back you cannot cross this area because of the dense forest. With the forest, we lost the water, the grasses and even fire wood.

 Our family was getting income from animal products. Because of the shortage of land we have only a few now. Again because of the shortage of grazing land they produce a little. Because we live close to Bodda market, my daughters make *araqe* [local liquor – something like grappa]. With the income they get from this they buy products like kerosene, matchsticks, salt, sometimes sugar for coffee, coffee – which takes much of the money, clothes for holidays, soap, needle and thread to quilt our night and casual clothes and some house utensils from market. Clothes, if at all they buy new it happens one after the other, meaning when they are worn-out, when they get tired of stitching them together (actually this happens in poor families).

She said, compared to the past systems of government what we significantly achieved is the "right". Relatively there are no coercions by the *ganda* administrators now. The Haileselassie Regime was a feudal system where tenants were not considered as human beings; even the tenants had accepted the inequality, she said. That was broken by the military regime. In my case, my family had a small piece of land, but they were always quarreling over the land. So the land proclamation was a big achievement. Economically I don't see any positive change, if not negative.

She further noted, during the military regime everybody who is close to the *ganda* was a dictator, the youth association, the women's association, the cooperatives…now the coercion is avoided but life is deteriorating. What I observed is that she is still strong and healthy. Children (actually grand children) are also good looking except that their clothes are a blend of several pieces of clothes quilted together. All are barefoot, which is not of course an exception to this family. When I see how she climbs on a horseback and rides, how long she walks, at the age of sixty five compared to a metropolitan who lives luxury life and suffers with all kinds of food born diseases, obesity, hypertension, diabetic, cholesterol, heart attach… it is really very surprising.

Annex III.3:   Case History, Extract with Focus on Governance

Name: Aradda Nata'i (Male), Age: 70, *Ganda*: Dendi Mummicha

Aradda was born and grown to this age in this *ganda*. Aradda has basic education. He can write and read. He said that he is around 70, as there is no any birth certificate or any kind of registration at birth; one can hardly tell his/her exact age; let alone the date and the month. During the Mengistu's regime he had a role at district level. This case history focuses on governance structure in the *ganda*. Hence, in the conversation made with Aradda, focus was made on how he perceived the changes in the government structure and results gained.

He said, during the reign of Haileselassie there was *atibia dagna*, and *chika shums* under him. The *balabats* were passing on orders to their tenants and also they serve as advisory bodies to the *atibia dagna*. Under *chika shums* there were soldiers, who enforce orders. The Churches and the *qallus* played a very significant role, in persuading people to obey rules and respect the kingdom. The *atibia da*gna in our area was the head of the church. Priests go house to house to induct people to accept the truth of that time. For what some body does in the open, the *atibia danga* would take care of it. For things that happen hidden, where there are no witnesses, the churches and the *qallus* played great role. This system was a system of inequality; tenants were not treated as citizens and as human beings.

During the Mengistu regime, since the punishment was very shocking which could go up to capital sentence, people hardly dare to do crimes. Many people in the *ganda* were involved in the structure, the women's association, the youth association; the *ganda* itself had 15 executives. People participate not because they like the system, but to get security, by getting closer, [*Like the saying goes, get closer to a mortar to save yourself from the shells*]. There were militias, very tough ones, service and producers cooperatives who were party members. You don't know even if your wife had been a party member. People don't trust each other. All the social ties between people, *mahabar* (Orthodox Church faith based community grouping system), the *Gadaa* system (traditional institution of administration and arbitration), *atietie* (a ritual ceremony for safety of cattle), *adabinna* (youth, singing and dancing ceremony for about fifteen days at a chosen place after the rainy season)…all these were abandoned.

At present there are *ganda* leaders "elected" by the people. There are also associations. Militias are always there, I think if there is government militias are always there. Now there are other tough branches of the *ganda*. They are called *gares*. These are units where all able bodied people are grouped into 5-30 members based on the tasks they perform. Through this structure, everybody will be in the palms of a hand to control. Seemingly their official purpose is to develop the area, work ethic, learn from each other, and experiencing team work, but they go beyond that. Thy report everything you do in the *ganda*. They are elected from the village. They bring orders from above and they take everything that happened in the village to the top. Of course the coercion is not as severe as the time of Mengistu. The youth and the women groups also play not easy role. Being all of them party members, they have all the youth under their control, through different mechanisms. These days even we see that they are more heard than the *ganda*s. They have their own chain at district level.

Differences I observed in these three systems are the age of the *ganda* leaders, it decreased in each government. In Haileselassie's time the *atibia dagnas* and the *chiqa shums*, even the soldiers were minimum above forty. In Mengistu's time it has decreased somehow. Secretaries were all young, because it was difficult to find somebody who writes and reads in a *ganda* from the peasants, who have bigger age. There were times when one *ganda* was served by a secretary from another *ganda*. With regard to education, almost all the rulers in Haileselassie's time, except the *atibia dagna* who had church education, nobody writes and reads. At present most of the *ganda* leaders are mainly in the thirties and all of them have modern education, above grade 6. But most of them are too young to be heard by the community. In the Mengistu time if you are in power you will be heard because of the intimidation. This time with less exercise of your power, your knowledge must exceed than others, or you must have very strong informal fans, which can be based on the strength of your clan, social group, respect you have in the community.

He was asked about net gain from these three systems. He said, there are significant changes with regard to 'rights', particularly between the feudal system, the military and the current one. But, mostly between the military and the current system there are no substantive economic changes except words. Economically my family and I, we went down. I have sent my children and my grand children to school, none of them are successful.

Annex IV: Glossary (Repeatedly used non English words and expressions)

Abba Gadaa	a *Gadaa* leader, who got authority through election, a traditional leader in Oromo and other nations like Sidama
Af'yaa'ii	House Speaker
Afaan Oromoo :	The Oromo language is called "Afaan Oromoo"
Ana [aanaa]	*aanaa* is district, but I used 'district' in this document instead of *aanaa*
Andode [andoodee]	a plant [soapberry], people use it for washing clothes
Atibia dagna	Governor of a sub-district in Haileselassie's time
Bobba [bobbaa]	going for open toilet (in this case it is a polite way of telling that a person has gone to a toilet)
Chafe [Caffee]	House of People's Representatives at state level
Chiqa shum	Governor of a couple of *gandas* in Haileselssie's time
*Dabo [*daboo*]*	a temporary work team, for harvest before the rains come, or planting before the rain goes, to efficiently use the seasonal calendar, similar to *jigi* but comparatively the number is smaller
Dergue	the Military Government of Ethiopia (1974-1991)
Elemtu [elemtuu]	water-tight container of various sizes, but at average of two liters volume, made out of grass or gourd, used for milking.
*Geda [*Gadaa*]*	Traditional Oromo governance system (*see end note #3*)
Ganda	The lowest government tier
*Gare [*Garee*]*	Taskforces, with members 5-30 organized at zones in the *ganda* for different socio- economic and security purposes
Gorro	a partition in a house to divide the living, store and animal's place
*Goti [*Gooxii*]*	Sub-*ganda*
Jigi [Jigii]	temporary workforces like *Dabo* that involves large number of people, where participants come even from distant places
*Khat [*Jimaa*]*	a stimulant plant that is chewed raw. Its scientific name is *Catha edulis* a species in the family of *Celastraceae,* one of the main export items in Ethiopia
Madabi	a stage like space elevated by mud blocks especially around a fireplace, to use it as a 'sofa' or sleeping place
Megeleta	Oromia Constitution
Oda [Odaa]	known as Oromo Parliament, a big broad leaf tree [Ficus sp.vl family]
*Seli [*seelii*]*	primary party organization
Shani [Shanii]	a rotational farmers' work team something like *gare,* but this is voluntary and traditional, not imposed
*Warqe [*warqee*]*	a false banana, one of the three genera of the banana family, musaceae, a stable food in the highlands of Dendi district
Yaa'ii	Meeting, conference
Zone [Godina]	Government structure between district and state, *godina* is how a zone is called in Oromia

Annex V: Interview and Focus Group Discussion Guidelines

Category I: Institutionalization

1. What kind of institution had been arranged to carry and implement the tasks devolved? If there is a new institutional arrangement or if the previous one is restructured to realize the decentralization program, departmentalization, temporary committees…their interrelation, command lines… will be assessed:

2. Did complete documents related to the decentralization program reached this implementing body on time? Kind of materials distributed as a guide to implement the decentralization program, availability and knowledge of decentralization related policy, program, strategy, guideline… documents and other records.

3. How do you explain the existing structure… in relation to the tasks given to this body of government? Did the program involve deployment of different professionals? Can you explain the human power strength of this implementing body, necessary facilities you acquired and budget allocated for the implementation of the program? How do you explain the efficiency in budget transfer and approval of decisions? (…these involve inventory of: the structure, departmentalization, human power, adequacy of budget, materials, functional divisions, political structure, justice systems, functional committees and taskforces, systems of check and balance and internal control systems for accountability and transparency).

Category II: Devolution of Power

1. What are the powers and authorities clearly given to this body of government to realize the decentralization program?

2. How do you explain the practical release of power compared to the provisions in the documents?

3. Do you think the power legally/officially devolved has been properly/exhaustively used? Was there a capacity building measure?

4. What are the problems to exercise the power given to this body of government … If the power gravity is still heavily anchored at the center and controls over the *aanaa* and *gandas* with hidden hands from the remote (de facto mono-centric rule); or if power is practically devolved (polycentric governance created)

Category III: Implementation Capacity

1. What personages of your plans have been implemented and budget utilized during the past years? Are there ever been any public or higher body enquiries for the failures?

2. Who prepares budget and recruit staff for this body of government and how is it approved? How do you explain the disbursement and the gaps?

3. How do you explain the human resource strength in relation to the structure and tasks, in all sectors and in the coordinating body?

4. What are the problems encountered in the process to smoothly implement the program in a given time frame? Are they political, resource (human power, material and budget), or other?

5. Are there development projects in the area? How was the planning process?

6. From where do the budgets come? Do you generate income? What do you do with the revenue collected? What local resources are you entitled to utilize?

7. Do you regularly report the results to concerned bodies?

Category IV: Perception and Participation

1. Is there any formal arrangement to engage the stakeholders in the implementation of the decentralization program?

2. How do you explain the participation of the stakeholders in development, politics and social activities… the private sector, CSOs and the community at large?

3. How do you explain the past elections for the *ganda, aanaa*, region and the House of People's Representative?

4. Do the elects often report to their constituencies/electorates? How do you explain about the role they played in representing the interests of their constituencies?

5. What actions have been taken to build the capacity of the stakeholders and citizens at large…to get them on board?

6. Do you think the communities' participation is conscious and voluntary and resources spent to engage the people worthwhile? Are they aware of what their voices do against/for them? Is there training of electorates?

Category V: Achievements/ Gains

1. Do you think the decentralization program has met its objectives and communities got better services, power of decision making? If yes, how do you explain it?

2. Can you tell me tangible results in the livelihoods of the communities at large and the degree of people's satisfaction, effects on efficiency, effectiveness and economy?

3. Is there baseline survey before the commencement of the program and periodic evaluation report? What do the opponents claim with regard to this program?

4. Do you regularly report the results to concerned bodies? Copies will be checked and reviewed, if reporting (audit and periodic activity) to the public and other concerned bodies at lowest level are practiced.

Category VI: Cross-cutting Issues

1. Is there any tangible effect on environment, gender issue, physical capital, social capital…?
2. If the attempt to bring regional and local development through decentralization de facto positively running, service delivery/governance, capacity building measures are in a right track,
3. Community's way of life and behaviors/culture –with its impact on development/ history/religion/alcoholism/traditional values
4. Physical condition of the area, natural resource, livelihoods, livestock and production and other environment related issues – forest, water, grazing, wild life, soil fertility, source of household energy, rain…
5. Holidays and time budget and activity pattern on any normal working day and holidays, reasons for the habit
6. Interference of higher echelons on the local decision making powers, time, resources...
7. Peace and security, community cohesion, human rights issues, corruption…
8. Trends of migration, mobility and purposes of travel, off farm incomes…implication.

Category VII: Lessons learnt and Possible Solutions

1. What are good lessons learned and weaknesses observed in the process of the implementation of the program?
2. What are the current challenges that deterred the realization of development and democracy in general and the decentralization program in particular?

Annex VI: List of Informants

Interviewees (Int.), Case history (CH), focus group discussants (FGD), (*) Anonymous names

| No.	Name/ *Ganda*	Sex	Age	Role/Education	Date	Remarks
1.	Dendi Mummicha (FGD on 03/04/2010)					
1.1.	Fayyera Dawo Gammachu	M	56	Election Board Chair Person, member of ganda council, church education	03/04/10	FGD
1.2.	Milkesa Dhaba Gonfa (Bili)	M	42	*Ganda* secretary, 12th grade complete	07/04/10	FGD
1.3.	Marga Bayisa Dufe	M	38	Former *ganda* cabinet member, now militia, 5th grade	03/04/10	FGD
1.4.	Tasfaye Wadajo Tata'i	M	57	Rich farmer, 6th grade	08/04/10	Int.
1.5.	Dhangia Bayisa Angesa	M	59	*Abbaa Gadaa* (current leader), church education	05/04/10	FGD, CH & Int.
1.6.	Dirriba Qulche Bayyana	M	27	School director, 12+2, member of the *ganda* cabinet	06/04/10	Int.
1.7.	Ararsa Wadajo Nata'i	M	62	History teller, Community elder	03/04/10	FGD
1.8.	Aradda Nata'i (*)	M	70	Elder, church education	05/01/11	CH
2.	Dendi Sulu (FGD on 26/03/2010)					
2.1.	Gurmessa Aradda Gammachu	M	60	*Ganda* elder, illiterate	26/03/10	FGD
2.2.	Fayyera Sandaba Gujja	M	63	Former militia head, church education, now illiterate	31/03/10	FGD, CH & Int.
2.3.	Suyoume Milko Gurmu	M	52	Elder, illiterate	26/03/10	FGD
2.4.	Tammana Guddata Aradda	M	36	Militia head, former bandit, 8th grade	01/04/10	FGD & Int.
2.5.	Mulatu Qabata Tufa	M	22	Member of youth association 10th grade	26/03/10	FGD
2.6.	Eregegne Gammachu*	M	58	History recorder and teller, illiterate	26/03/10	FGD & CH
2.7.	Warku Gammachu Qamalitti	M	80	Elder, 5th grade	29/03/10	Int.
2.8.	Ayyele Borana Gurara	M	43	*Ganda* Administrator, 9th grade	30/03/10	Int.
3.	Bodda Bosoqa (FGD on 15/02/2010)					
3.1.	Kumsa Dibaba Guluma	M	41	*Ganda* Administrator, 9th grade, 19 years in *ganda*, 9 years as Administrator	20/02/10	FGD & Int.
3.2.	Mammitu Danbooba Fedhasa	F	41	House wife, 3rd grade, *ganda* committee member	21/02/10	FGD & Int.

3.3.	Kumsa Ginna Dalasa	M	65	Tailor & farmer, elder, 6th grade	15/02/10	FGD
3.4.	Corporal Dhuguma Gurara Dabale	M	83	Former Imperial Bodyguard, elder, regional history narrator	18/02/10	FGD, CH & Int.
3.5.	Qabban Baqala Garu	M	44	Farmer & active participant in *ganda* cabinet, 8th grade	15/02/10	FGD
3.6.	Eticha Kumala Dirriba	M	30	School Director, member of *ganda* cabinet for 3 years, BA degree	15/02/10	FGD
3.7.	Makonnen Wondimu Goda	M	61	Retired teacher, 12+2	19/02/10	Int.
3.8.	Enate Hadha Manzir (*)	F	65	Elder, she had church education, now illiterate	02/05/11	CH
4.	Ghinchi Town *Ganda* 02 (FGD 04/02/2010)					
4.1.	Guma Biqila (*)	M	44	District Auditor, BA degree		FGD
4.2.	Magarsa Saro (*)	M	34	District Education Office employee & *ganda* administrator, BA degree	08/02/10	FGD & Int.
4.3.	Abarra Dagafa Jawwi	M	60	Retired teacher & director, 12+2	09/02/10	FGD, CH & Int.
4.4.	Almaz Dhangiya Nagara	F	45	House wife, member in *ganda* women's asso. and credit committee, 8th grade	04/02/10	FGD
4.5.	Tigist Sintayyehu Meshesha	F	35	Member of *ganda* council, involved with NGOs, 9th grade	09/02/10	FGD & Int.
4.6.	Lieutenant Leggese Bedhadha Fufa	M	48	Merchant, member of *ganda* cabinet, former *ganda* administrator, 11th grade	04/02/10	FGD
4.7.	Major Arega Dabal Korjo	M	58	Elder	10/02/10	Int.
4.8.	Washatu Chunkursa (*)	F	50	History teller	03/05/11	CH
5.	District level/ Expert interview					
5.1.	Guddata Aradda (*)	M	56	Senior expert, BA degree	14/03/11	Int.
5.2.	Sandaba Gujja (*)	M	58	District official, BA degree	16/03/11	Int.

Back Cover

1. The "U" Tower or Dortmunder "U" is a former Brewery building in the city of Dortmund, Germany. Since 2010 it serves as a center for the arts and creativity, housing among other facilities the Museum Ostwall.

2. Mayor Ullrich Sierau of the Dortmund City, TU Rector Prof. Ursula Gather and other senior TU Dortmund Officials on the reception ceremony of International Students, 2011.

3. Campus Süd (South Campus) of the TU Dortmund, where the faculty of Spatial Planning is located and the Dortmund H-BAHN a very important inter campus transport

4. A bust of the late famous German Architect Guenther Beermann in Goudar, West Shoa Zone, in a school built for his memorial by his widow, Gabriella Diermann-Beermann. The school and the inbuilt health center serve 1,200 children (Garade 1-8), their families and the surrounding community (5,000 people).

5. Stfterverband- the Business Community's Innovation Agency for the German Science System

6. Campus Nord (North Campus) of the TU Dortmund, the Main Bibliothek, the Mensa, Studentenwerk, Sparkasse Bank

Neo - Patrimonialism

Democratic Decentralization

⇐**Congruence Theory**⇒
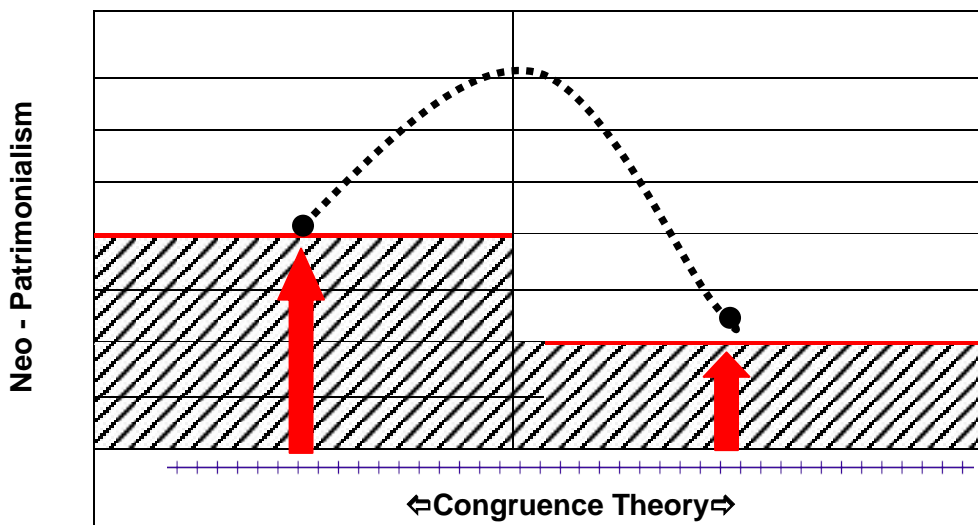
The more the thrust from the public sphere grows it demands for a congruent response which correspondingly reduces the practices of neopatrimonialism and increases the practices of democratic decentralization. If there is no thrust from the public side it worsens the practices of neopatrimonialism and diminishes democracy like we see in the diagram. They all have back and forth effects; the development of democracy enhances the degree of congruence and diminishes the practices of neopatrimonialism and vice versa.