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Preface

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is a German political foundation committed to the values of social democracy. It runs various projects in more than 100 countries. The foundation promotes dialogue on democracy and development broadly- contributing to peace and security and the preservation of solidarity in a globalized world.

FES Addis Ababa is a part of a close network of FES offices in Eastern Africa. It works closely with other colleagues in Nairobi, Kampala, Dar Es Salam and Khartoum. Within this network of Eastern African Offices, FES Addis is specializing in Security Policy issues. In fact, it is the regional competency centre on Security policy for FES eastern African regional work.

This publication is the fourth volume organized due to the result of support and cooperation between the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the Institute of peace and Security Studies of Addis Ababa University. For the last couple of years, FES Addis Ababa has focused on challenges in conflict resolution, human rights, democracy and sustainable development. To that end, it has supported research projects which center on issues of peace and security; it has organized several series of experts meeting on security issues and published research findings. Accordingly, this publication is part of the attempt of the foundation to contribute towards information dissemination and the enactment of responsive policies. This publication comprises of five thesis submitted to the Institute of peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of Addis Ababa University, towards the fulfillment of the requirements to complete Graduate Studies at the aforementioned Institute. The five theses are chosen by going through rigorous assessments and published after some editing process in undertaken.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung would like to extend its appreciation for its partnering organization- Institute for Peace and Security Studies and its staff members, and the staff of FES. Without their

meticulous teamwork this would not have been possible.

It is my sincere wish and belief that you find this book revealing and useful.

Arne Schildberg
FES

Resident Representative

Introduction

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies of Addis Ababa University endeavors to fulfill its mission of promoting peace and security through education, research and outreach activities, both at the National and Continental levels. As part of its mission it trains young and upcoming professionals with theories and practical knowledge in the area of Peace and Security. This anthology is part of the series of annual compilation of selected MA students' thesis that aims to disseminate the findings to all relevant stakeholders as well as open up opportunities to publish the works of the students which will in turn encourage them to contribute more both in quantity and quality.

This is the fourth volume to be published.

Five theses selected from 17 submitted theses constitute this anthology. Although the review and editorial process has improved the presentability of the theses, the findings and arguments in the thesis are of the writers, not of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies.

The first paper in this anthology is by Anteneh Alemu, under the title "The practice on inter-ethnic conflict transformation in Ethiopia: The case of Amhara-Afar conflict in Kewot and Semurobi-GelaAloworeda". The paper focuses on the Amhara-Afar conflict in Kewot and Semurobi-gela'alo woreda as one of the various conflicts in Ethiopia which can be described along ethnic lines. This study describes and analyses the process of transforming the conflict in the area. Cognizant of the need to identify the causes of the conflict as a priori orderliness in conflict transformation, the structural, proximate and triggering causes of the conflict are spelled out. Contingents up on that the nature of the conflict and the dynamics involved in there are explained. The study also dwells on the activities being carried out in pursuit of the transformative objectives alongside the roles and impacts of the actors. Explaining

the attempts of transforming the conflict dynamics into constructive imperatives and identifying the challenges in the process are also among the objectives of the paper.

The second paper by Amare Kenaw, "Inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the post 1991 Ethnic federalism: Experiences from Asossa woreda in Benishanguel-Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia" aimed at investigating inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the post 1991 Ethiopian ethnic federalism in light of experiences in Asossa woreda, Benishanglu-Gumuz Regional State (BGRS) vis-à-vis to elucidate the relevance of inter-ethnic conflict transformation theory for internal harmony among people with different ethnic, linguistic or religious divisions thereby to sustain peace and order along unity through diversity.

Eneyew Abera Gebremenfas wrote the third paper on "The political economy of small arms and light weapons (SALW) among pastoralist communities: The case of Borena , Ethiopia". In this study the proliferation of illicit arms among Borena society are described and analyzed. The long practice of Gadaa system, the limited presence of the state as well as the mobile nature of pastoralist livelihood have resulted in the militarization of the youth, and the expansion of the 'gun culture' in Borena. The diffusion of such weapons feeds cycles of insecurity, undermines livelihood strategies, and imperils development opportunities and intensified cattle-rustling practices. Fear for life and physical well-being, as well as fear to freely exercise religious, cultural, political and economic rights and entitlements fundamentally arise out of this environment-where small arms are relatively easy to procure and controls are extremely lax.

Fourthly, Eskinder Teferi's "The role of gender equity in promoting peace and development: The case of Awra Amba community Fogera Woreda of Amhara National Regional State"investigated the manner through which gender equality contributes to the peace and development efforts in the Awra-Amba community

in the light of the conceptual and theoretical framework within which the discussions concerning the linkages between and among 'gender equality' 'peace' and development have been casted and proceeded. In a bid to this, the study pointed out the rather distinct political and socio-economic organizations and institutional fabrics that distinguish the study community, the factors that contributed to the existing gender relations in the study area; and the dominant and central features that characterized such relationships there in Besides, the study looked other major variables that have significant bearings upon the peace and development processes in the Awra Amba community. Research outcomes identified the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community as a one hundred eighty degree tack against the prevailing wind in the country that makes the study community, candidly, versatile in various activities in general and in the peace and development processes in particular.

The fifth paper by Worku Tariku "The status of gender equality and its implications for peace: The case of Berek Woreda of Oromia Regional state"aimed at analyzing the status of rural women in access to and control over household resources, and their decision making power in Berek Woreda of Oromia Regional State as compared to the legal instruments adopted to minimize gender disparities. The study considered both national and international policy framework. The normative framework constitutes the FDRE constitution, the 1993 national policy on Ethiopian women, as well as the UN convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The study mainly focused on households' Attitude towards gender roles, access to and control over household resources, decision making at the household level, participation of households in community affairs and decision making at community level, and how the gender inequalities negatively affect peace in the study area.

We hope that this anthology will provide a resource to people involved in the areas of peace, security and conflict studies, policy

makers and scholars.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the assessors, content editors and all involved who have generously given up their valuable time. The success of this anthology depends upon their contribution.

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SECTION 1

Inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the post-1991 ethnic federalism:
Experiences from Asossa *Woreda* in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia

Amare Kenaw

Abstract

The question of ethnic equality has been a common term for years, since the formation of the modern Ethiopian state. For more than a century, during which time the country was haunted by warlords, the era of the princes and later by the military dictator, Dergue, the question of ethnic equality had never been answered even though it was the apex of all questions which needed to be addressed. In fact, the struggle to bring ethnic equality consumed the adorning and precious human life. This major and long lived historical issue was assessed following the downfall of the Dergue through the bitter military struggle of a number of national liberation movements. In 1991, in order to address historical question of ethnic equality, an ethnic form of federal formula was adopted in Ethiopia. Meanwhile, inter-ethnic conflict is still a major point of discussion in the country. To abate and bring conflicts into constructive outcomes, various inter-ethnic conflict transformative mechanisms were used.

The main objective of this study is to investigate inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the post 1991 Ethiopian ethnic federalism. This is done in light of experiences in Asossa woreda, Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State (BGRS) in order to elucidate the relevance of inter-ethnic conflict transformation theory for internal harmony among people with different ethnic, linguistic or religious divisions thereby sustaining peace and order along unity through diversity. Cognizant of this, the study fully employed qualitative research approach. Relevant and reliable data were gathered through in-depth informant interview, focus group discussion, non-participant observation and documentary analyses. The data were analyzed through systematic interpretation and triangulation of various sources.

The finding revealed that both formal and non-formal conflict transformative mechanisms were used through identification of the structural conditions, actors, issues and the general context of framing the conflict. Various intervention mechanisms were proved successful in light of the theory of conflict transformation and brought constructive

outcomes, but still there are areas exhibited where the process failed to address and need to be further transformed. The processes brought the conflict into the level of non-violent and mend the peoples' attitude to address their problems through peaceful means by themselves. There are clear manifestations of better inter-ethnic integration and cohesion than before such as growing inter-ethnic marriage between the Bertha and settlers, participation in wedding and mourning ceremonies, etc. The institutional set up of BGRS took the credit for empowering the non-formal or indigenous conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms and giving due emphasis in the process than the formal and bureaucratic ones.

Key Words: Ethnic Conflict, Conflict Transformation and Ethnic Federalism

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BGPDU	Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples Democratic Unity Front
BGRS	Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State
BPLM	Bertha Peoples Liberation Movement
CP	Conflict Prevention
CPR	Conflict Prevention and Resolution
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CT	Conflict Transformation
EBPDO	Ethiopian Bertha Peoples Democratic Organization
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
EPLF	Eritrean People Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HoF	House of Federation
HSR	Human Security Report
KI	Key Informant
MoFA	Ministry of Federal Affairs
NEBE	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
SNNPRS	Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Regional State
TPLF	Tigrean People's Liberation Front

CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Background of the Study

The modern era is characterized by the emergence of numerous polities that could best be defined as ethnic constitutional orders, regimes committed to the promotion of the interests of a single ethnic or national group within their own borders. In societies that are deeply divided along ethnic lines, the commitment of regimes to establish, perpetuate and even deepen the specific ethnic character of the polity could prove problematical in terms of both the long-term stability of the polity and the genuinely democratic nature of its institutions (Thompson, 2004: 8).

Among the strategies aimed at preventing, managing, and settling internal conflicts in divided societies, territorial approaches have traditionally been associated in particular with self-determination conflicts, or more precisely with conflicts in which territorially concentrated identity groups demand to exercise their right to self-determination (Wolff, 2011: 2). On the other hand, others prefer to use an ethnic form of federalism to abate conflicts between and among ethnic groups and the need for self-determination. The 1994 Federal Constitution of Ethiopia declared rights for the establishment of self-determination up to secession (FDRE, 1991 article 47 (1) for regional polities' in line with ethnic divisions. Following this, nine regional states and two city administrations have been established as the basic constituent units, which together makeup the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE).

The Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State (BGRS) is one among those constitutionally established regional governments. The region is multi-ethnic in which various ethnic groups live together in tolerance and integration. But this does not guarantee the absence of inter-ethnic conflicts in the region. According to Alemayehu

(2008: 58) and MoFA (2006: 32), since the establishment of ethnic federalism, there have been numerous inter-ethnic conflicts particularly between those who have been identified as "host" and "settler" communities. In effect, the region had drawn various mechanisms to transform conflicts into constructive outcomes. This study is, therefore, designed to investigate inter-ethnic conflict transformation in Benishangul-Gumuz Regional state (BGRS) with particular emphasis on Asossa *Woreda* which consist of the largest number of "host" and "settler" communities (CSA, 2007: 75).

One of the recent Human Security Report (HSR, 2005) demonstrated that over the past twenty years, the number of armed conflicts and direct violence has declined sharply and that the global security climate has actually changed positively. But this doesn't necessarily mean that conflict of interests among the human societies in diverse multi-cultural setting is totally eliminated. Conflict is in the nature of human kind (Lederach, 1996). It is neither avoidable nor perishable; instead it is a social fact which should properly managed (Jürgen et.al, 2006).

In discussing the commonalities of the Enron case, bidding on eBay, the civil rights movement, and the U. S. invasion of Iraq, Dahrendorf et al argued that, "they are all forms of conflict with various levels of intensity and violence. We may only think of war or arguments as conflict, but what the theorists in this first place want to point out is that society is rife with conflict, conflict is a general social form that isn't limited to just overtly violent situations. More than that, conflict doesn't necessarily split society apart. In fact, it might be one of the most important ways that society holds itself together" (Dahrendorf et al, 2006). Conflict theory has a long history in sociology. Without question, Karl Marx's work in the early to mid-1800s formed the initial statements of this perspective. As we know, Marx was centrally concerned with class and the dialectics of capitalism. He argued that capitalism would produce its own gravediggers by creating the conditions under which class consciousness and a failing economy would

come into existence. At this juncture between structure and class-based group experience, the working class revolution would take place (*ibid*).

Considering the works of various scholars, the causes and consequences of conflicts are different and vary from place to place and from time to time. For instance, the conflict that has taken place in Wales and Scotland in England is more economical whereas the Basque in Spain looks like more of a cultural conflict; the Tiv-Jukin conflict in Nigeria is one rooted in ethnic hatred from the colonial era (Aluigba, 2009). In Ethiopia too, where in many inter-ethnic conflicts are prevalent, the history of inter-ethnic conflict goes back to the period of the establishment of centralized system of administration and is by no means an exception. Levin (1974) explained it well, in which he described the formation of modern Ethiopian state as Amhara thesis, Oromo anti-thesis and Ethiopian synthesis.

There are numerous well tried mechanisms of conflict management, resolution and transformation strategies to bring conflicts into constructive outcomes. One way of resolving ethnic conflicts in states that have diverse setting with democracy as normative and institutional framework is designing an ethnic form of federalism (Turton, 2006), granting self-determination in which those ethnically diverse nations, nationalities and peoples can form their own system of governance and together come up to form the federal government. The federal government, therefore is the highest supreme organ over other constituting organs and is responsible to oversee the healthy functioning and relations of the constituting organs under the protection of the federal constitution (FDRE, 1995: Article, 9). But the occurrence of violent conflicts among the constituent organ is less frequent and worse compared to inter-ethnic conflicts that happened within a single regional government (Jürgen et.al, 2006).

The case that make an inter-ethnic conflict worse is where the conflicts are either deliberately supported by the regional authorities themselves or where sometimes there may not be sufficient access to the regional governments to address the root-causes of conflicts before they produce another further consequences (MoFA, 2006). Such conflicts had taken place in Ethiopia after the establishment of ethnic form of federalism in various regional states between the ethnic groups that have been recognized as "indigenous/native" peoples of the region and those labeled as "others" but who have constitutional right to live and work there. For instance, the Guji- Gedeo (Asnake, 2004), the Borana-Gerri (ibid), the Afar-Issa (Tadesse & Yonas, 2005), the Kara-Nyangatom (Grik: 2008)as quoted in Wondirad (2010), the Arebore–Borana conflict (Ayalew, 2004) as quoted in Wondirad (2010), the 1991 Gambela conflict between natives and settlers (Dereje, 2006) and in Benishangul-Gumuz national regional state too, are examples of inter-ethnic conflicts between the host and settler communities.

There have been various attempts to study inter-ethnic integration and minority rights in Benishangul-Gumuz regional State either in Asossa or in any other of the three zones and *woredas*. But there is insignificant attempt in the areas of inter-ethnic conflict transformation. Likewise, Osman Hassen (2006) attached the Settler communities' ethnic dilemmas as the most contributing challenge in the process of social integration in Asossa *woreda*. He further described that the settler communities specifically after the establishment of ethnic form of federalism have been secluded in enjoying rights as equal to the rights of the host communities of the region. This, therefore, resulted in resentments among the settler communities and led to the outbreaks of inter-ethnic conflicts in matters of interests between the Berta and the Settler communities (Berhanu, 2007). Local and personal conflicts soon get wider attention and escalate into an all-out conflict in line with ethnic groupings. However, all these studies did not come up with what major factors contributed to the problem and what transformation mechanism helped to transform the conflicts into

constructive outcomes. They just concentrated on the prevalence of the problem.

In a similar fashion, a report produced under the MoFA; research conducted on conflict and conflict mapping in and around Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, revealed that one of the chief sources of conflict between Bertha and the Settlers in the region is 'land issue' which was triggered by local and personal conflicts and later escalated in to community level conflicts (MoFA, 2006). The study further concluded that, the likelihood of future conflict in this area depends largely on the quality of leadership of the local government and that there is a high risk of renewed violence (ibid). However, the report did not clearly indicate factors, actors and dynamics of the conflict as well as the transformation mechanisms employed to address the problem. By considering this research gap, studying the overall nature of inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the multi-ethnic Asossa *woreda* is crucial because the area hosts different ethnic groups and recorded various levels of conflicts.

1.2 Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

The literature review of this study revolves around the following issues: ethnicity, ethnic group, inter-ethnic conflicts, and conflict transformation mechanisms and other related variables which affect stability and sustainable development in multi-ethnic society. The purpose of reviewing scholarly studies is to show the link between the dynamics of inter-ethnic conflict and transforming mechanisms. Over the last century, many scholars have dealt with the above issues from different perspectives. However, there has never been a consensus on the definition, causes, manifestations, and effects of inter-ethnic conflicts and conflict transformation. Indeed, the concepts of ethnicity, ethnic group and ethnic conflicts as used in contemporary studies are elusive and often enigmatic.

The following analysis aims to provide some direction through the jungle of conceptual and definitional imprecision that is prevalent in the fields of inter-ethnic conflict transformation. At best the description suggests one possible; and hence tentative interpretations of what may be regarded inter-ethnic conflict transformation, and the operational definitions of key terms used in this study as well.

1.2.1 Conceptual Issues

1.2.1.1 Defining Ethnicity and Ethnic Group

Ethnicity is a word derived from the Latin 'ethos' which literally means a "tribe" or a "nation." The terms "ethnicity" and "ethnic group" are controversial concepts among scholars. To some, "ethnicity" is "objective" or primordial in defining ethnic group as a "category of human population that shares attributes such as common origin, history and culture, language and territory" (Barth, 1969). For them, the core of "ethnicity" resides in the myths, memories, values, symbols and the characteristic styles of particular historic configurations (Smith, 1999). In the same vein, Geertz (1996) defined, "ethnicity" as shaving innate and biological characteristics, an external world with distinct categories existing independent of interpretation, with an absurd identity based on blood, language, religion, territory and common understanding about the criteria of membership. Greetz (1996) presumed that an ethnic community shares empirically verifiable similarities among themselves and differences with 'others'. Hence, "ethnicity" and "ethnic group" are fixed at birth and are not subject to any alteration. Whereas to others it is *subjective* and *situational* in which "ethnicity" and "ethnic group" are socially constructed with changing phenomenon and are flexible (Isajiw, 1994). Unlike the objectivist, subjectivist and situational thinking focuses more on nation and nationality than on ethnicity. Therefore, the term "ethnicity" is fluid and subjective. Similarly, there are some who

conceive ethnicity as a matter of *individual choice* in which an individual can choose to be or not to be a member of an ethnic group and has the right to choose his ethnic identity based on his own criteria with no biological or societal demarcation to ethnic identity (ibid).

Whereas "Ethnic group is a group of people whose members believe that they are of a common descent but not unilateral" (Jenkins 1997). It is not enough for a group to have certain common features because it is the interaction of various ethnic groups which according to Erikson (1995) creates ethnicity. Ethnic groups are not isolated. To clearly describe the concept of ethnic group (Erickson, 1995) used the following illustrative example:

> …..Ethnic groups can only know of their existence by being in contact with others. The reaction of the onlooker becomes one of shock and sorrow. There would be a different reaction if it were a dog lying dead in the street. The reason for the onlooker's reaction is that he identifies with the dead person as another human being. He sees his image in the body of that dead person and imagines that the same thing could happen to him. The reality of his dependence on others' existence and being in contact with them strikes his mind. Similarly, as much as ethnic groups are different, they need others so that they could have their own identity.

For these reasons, the terms ethnicity and ethnic group are controversial and sometimes misleading because there are no standard criteria to label ethnicity and ethnic group. People often link ethnic identity to national, linguistic, religious and racial identity though not in a very consistent manner. Hence there are some controversies among scholars in labelling of "ethnicity" and "ethnic group" as one of sectarian division in the society. For a better insight into the different controversies of ethnicity and ethnic

group we shall see the theoretical consideration and approaches used by scholars in a broader manner.

1.2.1.2 Inter- Ethnic Conflict

The above description regarding the conceptual approaches to ethnicity, though problematical and enigmatic, gives some deeper insights about it and leads us to be cautious. The controversy of ethnicity and ethnic group is not limited to the concept of ethnicity alone; it further extends to inter-ethnic conflict, since there are no standard parameters or clearly defined demarcations in identifying one ethnic group from the other. It is obvious that when two or more ethnic groups have close settlements and share similar resources, conflict is an unavoidable phenomenon. Inter-ethnic conflict is, therefore, conflicts which take place between two or more politically identified ethnic groups because of various antecedent factors at different places. For Shale (2004), for example, a conflict caused over resources, identity, and borders or against aggression between two or more ethnic group is referred to as an ethnic conflict. By conflict we mean the pursuit of incompatible goals by different groups (Ramsbotham et.al, 2005). This suggests a broader span of time and a wider class of struggle than armed conflict.

In contrast, according to Markakis (1994), inter-ethnic conflict involves, nations, religious, ethnic groups, clans and lineages and is fought between and within states, religious or ethnic groups. As commonly defined "ethnicity" is a factor in the conflict, since in nearly all the cases the opposing parties belong to groups with different ethnic and clan identities. For him, whether such differences are sufficient for conflict is debatable and to define the conflict a 'priory' as ethnic is questionable (ibid). According to McOnyango (1995), quoted in Kundu (1997), African inter-ethnic conflicts are not as a result of the mere fact that the continent and national boundaries are brackets enclosing multi-ethnic groups, instead the question of ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflicts are issues

of ethnic grudges. He asserted that the past inter-ethnic conflict management strategies in Africa have tended to concentrate on symptoms of the effects rather than on the root causes. He further postulated that there are numerous socio-economic and political grudges between or within the numerous ethnic communities in African states.

Based on the assumption of the above analyses given by Kundu, (1997), the majority of inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa are attributed to the colonial legacy which is in fact historical but with large ramifications in the post-colonial era. In a similar fashion, Barth (1969) claimed that, due to the contact of ethnic groups, the characteristics of interaction may change through time. The political movements that dichotomize and articulate groups may change the pattern of inter-ethnic interaction. The interaction will result either as a strong sense of integration or a source of conflict.

1.2.1.3 Conflict Transformation

History enlightened us, that conflict is the nature of humankind; and various resolution and management mechanisms were used in different circumstances to abate violent conflicts. In fact, there was confusion in scholastic literature to use the words "conflict resolution", "management", "settlement", "prevention", and "transformation" as a single process. There is no actual distinction on the usage of the terms. Before venturing any further in the task of conflict transformation, it is necessary to make some introductory remarks in regard to conflict transformation and what distinguishes it from other conflict management mechanisms.

In most of the academic literature, the terms "conflict management", "conflict resolution" and "conflict transformations" are often used loosely and interchangeably, in many cases referring to the same strategies. Similarly, one may also come across with the term mediation to cover all different forms of third-party intervention in dealing with conflict (Reimann, 2007). In short, non-uniform

terminology is now more the norm than the exception in the overall field; this definitional imprecision of core concepts continually increases as more actors become involved in the conflict.

The idea of "conflict transformation", over the past years emerged in the search for an adequate language to describe the peace-making process. Transformation provides a more holistic understanding, which can be fleshed out at several levels. Unlike resolution and management, the idea of transformation does not suggest that we simply eliminate or control, rather it points descriptively toward its inherent dialectic nature. Conflict transformation refers to the transformation of attitudes, behaviors and contradictions to positive relationship. It is an outcome, process and structure oriented long term peace building aimed at truly overcome direct and structural violence (Lederach, 1996). According to some scholars, there is a recent trend some coined it a shift, in the conflict resolution field that attached growing attention to "transformational" conflict resolution approaches. It promises better results in preventing enduring rivalries and protracted conflicts than approaches based on positional negotiating and old paradigms whereby violence, war, propaganda, victory and elites are at the crux of the matter. That approach implies moving beyond symptomatic treatment of the issues to analyzing and considering the underlying root causes and patterns of relations that drive the conflicts so that change is also transformational (Yuksel, 2006). Hence, conflict transformation is unlike resolution and prevention; not a single time operation, rather it needs further understanding of the attitudes, behaviors and expectations of the conflicting parties involved in the conflict as well as building further trust relationships.

Where there is 'structural violence' and 'latent conflict', the task is to bring the conflict into the open and engage with it, in ways that are themselves transformative, in order to make 'peace by peaceful means'. Where a conflict has already become violent and destructive, it will be necessary first to transform the conflict itself (Francis, 2009). She further explains that, in complex social

and political situations, transformative efforts will be needed at every level and in every aspect of society, involving the many and not just the few. But in practice, when latent conflict has been taken seriously it has tended to be seen as the task of the global establishment, the international community, to intervene, and not for local populations to take action. Latent conflict is regarded by the dominant international powers primarily as a threat to stability, something to be addressed in order to prevent undue disturbance to the status quo (ibid). Hence the transformative approach to the conflict is not only applied to manifest or violent conflicts but it is also useful for the latent conflict which will cause manifest or violent conflicts.

Conflict transformation moves beyond the aims of both the previous approaches of conflict resolution, while at the same time taking up many of the ideas of conflict resolution; and particularly of John Burton's (1990) notion of conflict prevention, which refers to deducing from an adequate explanation of the phenomenon of conflict, including its human dimensions, not merely the conditions that create an environment of conflict and the structural changes required to remove it, but more importantly, the promotion of conditions that create cooperative relationships. Likewise, Riemann, (2007) the conflict resolution approach missed an important opportunity to further develop and build vertical relationships that develop dialogue and cooperation between actors of unequal status. This opportunity has now been taken up by the conflict transformation approach.

Conflict transformation, hence, is an unlimited long-term, multi-track and dynamic process, which significantly widens the scope of actors involved, integrates track I, II and III tasks and various actors involved in the process. It includes all matters regarding conflict, such as, the general context framing of the situation, the contending parties, the issues at stake, the processes and predicaments or structures affecting any of the aforementioned process (Galtung, 2004). Generally, it is a sustainable multi-dimensional task of

bottom up and holistic peace building approach that aims at truly achieving positive peace. It not only aims to end violence and change negative relationships between the conflicting parties but also to change the political, social or economic structures that cause such negative relationships and empowering people to become involved in non-violent change processes themselves, and to help build sustainable conditions for peace and justice (Lederach, 1996).

1.3. Theoretical Considerations on Ethnicity and Ethnic group

The various definition of ethnicity we have seen above emerges out of the specific anthropological and sociological theories and approaches. The anthropological views of ethnicity can be grouped into three main divisions. These are the primordial, instrumentalist and constructivist approaches. All of these three approaches have their own outlooks to the constituent elements of ethnicity which are slightly different from each other. These theories broadly reflect changes of approach in anthropology in the past, i.e., the shift from cultural evolution theories, to structural-functional theories, to conflict theories, and finally to postmodern theories. These changes (Wan & Vanderwerf 2009) are related to the twin forces of modernity and globalization. Let's have a snap look on each of them.

1.3.1 The Primordial Approach

The primordial approach is the oldest in sociological and anthropological literature. It argues that ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent. This approach can be called the 'objectivist' or the 'essentialist paradigm' in the theory of ethnicity which argues that ultimately there are some tangible and real foundations for

ethnic identification (Wan. and Vanderwerf. 2009). According to this perspective, there are two crucial and highlighted points to be considered regarding ethnicity and ethnic identification. These are: a) one's ethnicity is ascribed at birth; and b) one's ethnicity is more or less fixed and permanent. For objectivists, ethnicity is a conglomeration of distinct social groups. At birth, one becomes a member of a particular group and will never be a member of another group. Ethnicity is then a fixed and an unchangeable part of one's identity established by kinship and descent.

On the other hand, contemporary primordialists view ethnicity along two different approaches: those who see the primordial ties into group biological phenomenon and those who attach to it through cultural, historical, foundational myths, symbols and social phenomenon. Nonetheless the most significant attribute that they still share is that ethnicity is fixed at birth and subjected to no changing circumstances. The most prolific writer in the fields of ethnicity and nationality Anthony D. Smith as quoted in Wan and Vanderwerf (2009) clarifies those points described above.

Smith tries to distinguish the concept of ethnic communities and ethnic categorization to clearly understand the meaning behind ethnicity, and how this has developed in an elusive nature from the longer past. Accordingly ethnic categories are "those people identified by outsiders as possessing the attributes of a common name or emblem a shared cultural element (usually language or religion) and a link with particular territory" (Smith, 1999). On the other hand, ethnic communities refers to "human population distinguished by both members themselves and outsiders as possessing the attributes of: An identifying name or emblem, a myth or common ancestry, shared historical traditions and memories, one or more elements of common culture, a link with an historic territory or homeland, and a measure of solidarity at least among the elite" (ibid). Smith (1999) attached the concept of "ethnicity" and its attributes as biological and unchangeable by any social, cultural or political phenomenon. Hence the concept

of "ethnicity" is fixed at birth and not subjected to any other circumstances. Smith's synthesis of ethnicity has got support from Barth (1996), who asserted that "ethnicity" is a "population which is biologically perpetuating, shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms, makes up a field of communication and interaction and has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order".

Barth's description is consistent with most anthropological terms which recognize the fact that ethnic categories take cultural differences. Nonetheless, we still do not assume one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and or differences. The features that are taken into account are not the sum of 'objective' differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant. Not only do ecologic variations mark and exaggerate differences; some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some relationships radical differences are played down and denied. The interaction itself highlights differences between the groups and these cultural differences result in the formation of boundaries distinguishing "us" from "them" (Barth, 1996)." Generally, the primordial approach of ethnicity deeply relies on one's biological heredity (independent variable) and attachment which is fixed at birth and always remains the most significant determinant of one's identity throughout the life time and cannot be subject to any alteration.

1.3.2. Instrumentalist Approach

Unlike the objectivist or the primordialist approach, proponents of instrumentalism view ethnicity as something that can be changed, constructed or even be manipulated by specific political and economic ends. According to this theory, the elites in the modern state use and manipulate perceptions of ethnic

identity to further their own ends and stay in power. For them, "Ethnicity" is created in the dynamics of elite competition within the boundaries determined by political and economic realities; and ethnic groups are to be seen as a product of political myths, created and manipulated by cultural elites in their pursuit of advantages and power (Jonas, 1997). Instrumentalism, hence, conceives ethnicity as a *dependent variable*, externally controlled according to its strategic utility for achieving more secular goods. It is artificially created human sectarian which is shaped, flexible, changeable and manipulated or framed based on the advantages of the elite, (formally in the name of the group, in fact solely to the elites' advantage). The instrumentalists coined those elite who manipulate and create a new societal section ethnicity as "Social Engineers" and who try to single out the manufacturers of nations among those social groups that have most to gain from it (ibid).

1.3.3 Constructivist Approach

The constructivist approach theoretically lay between the construction of metaphor practice and the basic factors shaping the structure of all social phenomena. The basic notion in this approach is that ethnicity is something 'negotiated' and 'constructed' in everyday living and continues to unfold. Ethnic identity is not something people "possess" but something they "construct" in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests (Isajiw, 1993). They focus more on nation and nationality than on ethnicity. It is therefore fluid and subjective. Even though these are some of the major worldwide approaches to ethnicity, doesn't mean more than this.

1.4 Theoretical Considerations on Conflict Transformation

There was an academic debate among scholars with regard to the distinction between "conflict management", which mostly focused on regulating and containing conflicts but not necessarily to end it, and "conflict resolution" which aims at resolving the issue or incompatibility that divides the parties. "Conflict transformation" goes further in aiming for a change in the fundamental relationships, social structures and contextual conditions that gave rise to the conflict in the first place (Mail, 2007). Even though sharp distinctions between these concepts are difficult to find, all draw on a common set of concepts in conflict theory and conflict analysis. All three terms can be used in a normative and descriptive sense (Mail, 2004).

The theory of "conflict transformation" is distinguished from theories of "conflict management" and conflict resolution by its emphasis on the need for systemic change in order to alter the social structures, conflicting parties and institutions within which conflicts are embedded (Mail, 2007). Since all conflicts are situated within a social context, which often shapes and may engender the conflict formation, transformation of conflicts often requires change in the conflict's context. This suggests that conflict transformation theory needs to extend beyond the immediate site of conflict to become a theory of conflict-in-context (Mail, 2004). A distinctive theory of "conflict transformation" is indeed evolving. Nevertheless, this new theory draws on many of the familiar concepts of 'conflict management' and 'conflict resolution', and that it also rests on the same tradition of theorizing about conflict. It is best viewed not as a wholly new approach, but rather as a re-conceptualization of the field in order to make it more relevant to address contemporary conflicts.

Theorists further argued that, it is a re-conceptualization because most of the contemporary conflicts are products of systemic, deep-rooted and structural power and status relations that require more than the reframing of positions and the identification of win-win outcomes. The very structure of parties and relationships may be embedded in a pattern of conflictual relationships that extend

beyond the particular site of conflict. Conflict transformation theories are, therefore, tools that help in the process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses, and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict. Vayrynen (1991) one of conflict transformation author, argues for a conflict theory based on the idea of transformation, stressing that it is important to understand how conflicts are transformed in dynamic terms. He then proposed context, actors, issues and structural transformations as basic tools for conflict transformations to effectively and efficiently work in any conflict regardless of intensity.

1.5 Review of Related Empirical Studies in Ethiopia

Historically, Ethnic federalism has a mixed track record with regard to conflict regulation in multi-ethnic societies. Examples like Belgium or Canada show how the territorial devolution of power on the basis of ethnicity can provide inter-ethnic peace. On the other hand, the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia are two examples where the state's ethno- federal structure did not prove to be stable but possibly conflict fueling and eventually leading to secession and complete state breakup (Deiwiks, 2010). In fact, there are divergent arguments regarding the adoption of ethnic federalism in the post-1991 Ethiopia. Since its introduction, ethnic federalism and its impact on the country have become a point of discussion and a source of highly intense debate (Wondwosen, 2008). Both advocates and critiques of ethnic federalism have their own justification as to whether ethnic federalism serves as a panacea or as a fuel to the long lived ethnic problems.

1.5.1 Inter-Ethnic Conflict in Ethiopia

Though Ethiopia is a country with no colonial history, inter-ethnic conflicts are still intense and problematic. Inter-ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia dates back to the formation of the modern Ethiopian state at the turn of the 19th century, incorporating different ethnic groups found at various levels of social and economic development through the use of both forceful subjugation and peaceful persuasion (Markakis, 2003, Merera, 2011). Those newly incorporated ethnic groups in the Ethiopian state were forced to abandon their former identities and entered the process of assimilation into the dominant culture and society by land measures. In the *Dergue* period where Socialism was the main philosophy of the state, ethnic conflict was intensified and ethnic based liberation groups formed and began bitter struggle to demolish the *Dergue* (Markakis, 2003).

According to Merera (2011: 1), three main ethno-nationalist perspectives on Ethiopian history may be distinguished, the nation building, the national oppression and the colonization perspective, based on the interpretation they gave to the historical events that gave birth to the modern Ethiopian state. Following the downfall of the *Dergue*, the liberation groups formed transitional government, having an interim constitutional charter. To address the long lived ethnic conflict and accommodate diversity, an ethnic form of federalism, and a new political paradigm introduced into the political scene of the country, specifically after the promulgation of the FDRE Constitution in August, 1995 (Assefa, 2006). By making this a historical land mark, Ethiopia witnessed transition from 'ethnic dominating' to 'ethnic egalitarian' system and the emergence of new ethnically based partisan groups. As a result of this, formerly anguished ethnic minorities in different parts of the country began to emerge in the country's politics. However, there have been various inter-ethnic skirmishes and clashes here and there; when the former minorities trying to exercise their democratic rights and those, who enjoyed earlier, trying to uphold the status quo. In some instances, the FDRE constitution, established under ethnic federal formula came up with new minority-majority relations.

In contrast to the proponents of ethnic federalism, there are some who critique the favor of ethnic federalism in accommodating diversity as only short term solution to rectify the long lived historical question of Ethiopian peoples. They further argue that ethnic federalism escalates inter-ethnic conflict instead of transforming it into a constructive outcome (Assefa, 2006). The justification given is every ethnic group is not found inhabiting a territorially defined geographical area. A significant number of Ethiopians do not live where the majority of its members or ethnic groups are to be found. They have moved, either voluntarily, in search of better opportunities, or forcefully during *Dergue's* resettlement program. Hence, it is impossible to adopt ethnic federalism unless there is a territorially defined diversity. The post 1991 political changes witnessed inter-ethnic conflicts over grazing land, water and other resources (*ibid*). Many prior research outcomes related to Ethiopian ethnic federalism in respect to inter-ethnic conflict shows contradictory perspectives.

Now-a-day's inter-ethnic conflicts are common in Ethiopia. Pertinent to a case at hand, the case of Berta and Settlers in Asossa *woreda*, a survey made by the Ministry of Federal Affairs (MoFA), Conflict and Conflict Mapping in and around Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State revealed the prevalence of series of inter-ethnic conflicts (MoFA, 2006). The assessment concluded that the stability of the area depends on the quality of governance and local administration because the conflicts are not yet resolved (*ibid*). On the other hand, in the study conducted by Wondewosen (2008), the second facet of autonomy conflict in Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State has been the change in the relationships between the host ethnic groups and the numerically strong settler communities. The formation of the new region not only transformed the settler communities into new minorities but also impelled confrontation between them and the new political class of the host ethnic groups. All these studies tried to find out the prevalence of inter-ethnic conflict between the Bertha and Settler communities in Benishangul-Gumuz Regional state. However

neither of these studies comes up with the major sources of the conflict and the transformative mechanisms used to bring better social integration between the Bertha and Settler communities in the region. This current study is, therefore, designed to investigate the transformation of inter-ethnic conflict with specific reference to the experiences of Asossa *Woreda* in Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia. The four theoretical consideration of conflict transformation (context, actors, structures and issues) basically are the most significant theoretical apparatus that help describe the empirical data.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Geography of the Region and Administrative Set Ups

Benishangu-lGumuz Regional State (BGRS) was established in 1993, with the establishment of 14 regional administrations by proclamation no. 7/1992 by merging parts of the former Asossa and Metekel Administrative regions (Asnake, 2011). The conflict that emerged in the western Ethiopia between the EPRDF and OLF delayed the inauguration of the BGRS for about a year (*ibid*). Later, the new Constitution of Ethiopia, which created a federal system of governance in 1995 declared it as one of the founding members of FDRE (*ibid*). Previously, the southern part of BGRS belonged to Wollega sub-province centered from 'Nakampte' while the area above the Blue Nile was part of Gojjam sub-province. BGRS is located in the western part of Ethiopia, stretching along the Sudanese frontier, bordering the Amhara National Regional State in the north, Oromia National Regional State in the east, Gambella Peoples Regional States in the south and the international border with the Republic of Sudan in the west. Its territory stretches from the area along the Sudanese border between 9035' to 110 39' N and 340 20' to 360 30' E.

The total area of the region is estimated to be 50,380 km2. The Region is divided into two roughly equal parts by the Blue Nile: Metekel Zone and Pawe Special *Woreda* in the North; and Assosa Zone, Kemashi Zone and Mao-Komo Special *Woreda* in the South. Throughout the three administrative zones and special *Woredas* in BGRS, there are a total of 20 *woredas* and 474 *kebeles*. Its capital city is Assosa. As per the 2007 population and housing census result (CSA,2007), the total population of the region is estimated to be 670, 847 of which 86.7% is living in rural areas and the rest 13.3%

is living in urban areas. Asossa *Woreda*, which is the largest of all *woredas* in terms of population extent, is the central focus of this study.

Asossa *woreda* is one of the seven *woreda* Administrative units in Asossa Zone. Asossa town, which is 665 km far from the federal capital (Addis Ababa), is the capital for both Asossa *Woreda* and Asossa Zonal administration as well as the capital for the government of Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Asossa *Woreda* comprises a total area of 2,317km2, having an altitude of 450-1000mm above sea level and its temperature ranges from 16-350c (Bulletin, 2011). Until January 2010, Asossa *woreda* consists of 78 *kebele* administrations in which 4 of them are urban *kebeles* and the rest 74 *kebeles* are rural *kebeles*. Later in January 2010, a new *woreda* administrative set up has been running and because of this Asossa *woreda* is supposed to extend its administrative responsibilities only to those rural *kebeles* which consist of a total of 74 *kebeles* found surrounding Asossa town. Among these, 36 of them are inhabited by the Bertha, while 38 of them are inhabited by settlers whereas the remaining 4 urban *kebeles* are under the administrative authority of Asossa municipality.

2.2 Demography and Ethnic Composition

Benishangul-Gumuz region in general and Asossa *woreda* in particular is renowned for its diversity, rich with unique features. The indigenous population of BGRS is composed of five ethnic groups: Gumuz, Berta, Shinasha, Mao and Komo. But this does not necessarily mean that these are the only people living in the region. There are a number of other ethnic groups living in the region. The five ethnic groups are constitutionally identified 'host ethnic' groups to the region (BGRS Constitution, 2002). Of these, the Bertha is the single most dominant host ethnic group in Asossa *Woreda*. According to the 2007 CSA census result, Asossa *Woreda*

has a total population of 87,366. Of which 22,725 (26%) live in urban while the rest 64,641 (74%) live in rural areas (CSA, 2007). To ut it more aptly, the majority of the *woredas*' population live in rural areas.

Asossa *Woreda* accommodates a number of peoples from different ethnic groups, such as the Berthas from host and the Amhara, Oromo, Tigre, Silte, Hadiya, Guraghe and a number of others, which are the best examples of settler communities. But most of them with the notable exception of the Bertha from the host and the Amharas from settlers, are concentrated in the town. These two ethnic groups i.e. the Bertha and Amhara, are not only in Asossa *woreda* but they also make up the lion share of the regions' total population accounting almost 50% (CSA, 2007: 83). The majority of the *woreda's* population speak 'Ruthana' and 'Amharic' languages. Amharic is both the working language of the *woreda* and the regional government (BGRS Constitution, 2002). Since the focal points of this study are the Bertha and the Settlers, for further insights and understanding let's outline their history briefly.

2.3 A Brief Historical Survey of the Bertha and Settler in Asossa *Woreda*

2.3.1 The Berthas: Historical Overview

The early history of the Berthas is unknown. According to Ateib Ahmad (1973), the term Bela-shangul (Bela- Bertha word for rock) is used to refer to the present day areas of Manghe, Asossa, Bambashi, Khomosha, Shurkole, Ya'a and Hoppa. The region and its people have always been referred to and labeled differently by several authorities and peoples throughout history. There have been different pejorative terms used to label the Bertha people in the past. The Berthas are the largest established groups of the region. Their kindred are still living in the old Funji provinces of

the Sudan, Fazogili and Keili. Scholars divided the Bertha into the Easterners who live in Ethiopia and Westerners who live in the Sudan. The Ethiopian Berthas inhabit the area south of the Blue Nile River on both sides of the Ethio-Sudanese boarder. Their territory loosely extends from the region south of Rosaries in the north to the Fadashi (Bambasi) town in the south-east and the Yabus River in the south. It is bounded by the Gumuz people to the north east who live beyond the Yabus River. In the west the Ethiopian Berthas with the Uduk, the Ignessana, and the Burun ethnic groups of the Sudan. The Eastern Berthas are distinguished by having migrated into the highlands and hill regions of Ethiopia (Truilzi, 1976).

Historical and Anthropological studies asserted that, the people of Bertha in the ancient times lived along the mountainous areas of Geri, which stretched from the central Sudan Keili to the present day areas of western Ethiopia, following both sides of the Nile valley areas (Truilzi, 1976).The Berthas are one of the Western Nilotic speaking nations and nationalities. They speak various dialects spoken by the Berthas in Sudan and many are quiet clearly an Islamized section of the Bertha. Both the Berthas in Sudan and Ethiopia for years in the past lived as a confederation of mixed blood and regard themselves as belonging to the same stock (Ateib, 1973). According to oral tradition the people of Bertha led their economic activities as nomads and traders for longer periods of time. However, later, the Berthas adopted sedentary agriculture parallel to raising flocks of cattle.

Moreover, the Bertha people are preeminently known in searching and washing of alluvial gold from river valleys and digging out gold host areas near water bodies and swampy gorges (*ibid*). Before their incorporation into the Ethiopian empire in the 1890s, the Berthas lived in their current habitant of western Ethiopia organized into three identified sheikhdoms (Ateib, 1982). These were the sheikdoms of Asossa (Agoldi), Khomosha and Belashangule (*ibid*). Later in 1897, all of the three Bertha sheikdoms

fell into the hands of the Ethiopian state under a military expedition led by Ras Mekonnen. Sheik Khojjale Hassan, the then ruler of sheikdom of Asossa was recognized by Emperor Menelik II, as the sole ruler of all the former three sheikdoms of Bertha land. Others, the sheikdom of Belashangul and Khomosha were made vassals to him. Following this all the Bertha land and the people became one of the tributaries of the Ethiopian empire under King Menelik II (Bahru, 2002).

2.3.2 The Settlers: A Historical Overview

Historically the term "resettlement" covers such a wide-range of issues, approaches, and experiences that can be understood as a catch-all terms of descriptive rather than analytical value. It has been used mainly to convey the idea of people returning to the area they had or supposed to have lived in previously (Pankhurst, 1992). On the other hand, according to Chamber, resettlement is characterized by two most important considerate features. These are: movement of people and an element of planning and controlling (Chamber, 1969). The notion of movement may serve to differentiate resettlement from two other policies. Villagization where the basic notion is regroupment of people which may or may not involve moving people for significant distances, and sedentrization which aims to settle pastoralists, a process which need not involve the moving away of people from the area in which the people were living. However, 'migration' needs to be qualified by the second arguably more central notion that is the movement of people organized by the state (Pankhurst, 1992). In this sense, resettlement may be distinguished from spontaneous migration initiated and undertaken by the peoples themselves and it should also be distinguished from exodus of refugees' fleeing from one state to another.

In recent times, taking the above normative meaning "resettlement" has been used to address problems caused by natural and human-made disasters such as famine, flood, hurricanes, chemical or nuclear accidents and warfare. On the other hand resettlement has also been used to develop large scale projects like factories, dams and national parks and to promote long-termed development strategies to alter the ratio between population and land. In Ethiopia, resettlement, in the restricted sense of state organized schemes, is of a recent phenomenon. Before the 1974 revolution, there was an expansion of the imperial state and a development of garrison towns and permanent settlement of highlanders, in the south, south west and western Ethiopia into the areas incorporated by the expanding imperial army. This considerable and spontaneous migration occurred in response to push factors from the north and pull factors from the general south.

Back to history, there have been a number of seasons recorded as "bad days" which caused drought and starvations, which accounted for death, migration and dislocation of people from their homelands. To the 1890s Great Famine also called the "*KefuQen*" meaning 'Mean or Evil Days" in which tens of thousands of life were lost due to shortages of rain-fall that resulted in an ecological imbalance for a successive number of years, specifically in northern Ethiopia. Further losses were the 1960s famine, which was revealed by BBC World journal reporter, and later the 1984/5 drought which took place when the country was haunted by revolutionary moves (Pankhurst, 1992). Prior to 1974, resettlement was not a major government concern. However, after 1974 it became an issue of government agenda and the pace of settlement increased dramatically. In 1974, when the Provisional Military Administration (*Dergue*) seized power, the first swift measure in reaction to the drought affected areas was the introduction of "resettlement" into the areas rich in natural resources that had had sparse population density. One of the areas selected for the resettlement and villegization scheme was the present day Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, the then Wollega sub-province, Asossa *Awraja* (Pankhurst, 1992).

The advent of the highlanders into the areas of the Bertha land started, following its incorporation into the Ethiopian state. But

the massive migration and influx of the highlanders into the Bertha land was begun in the1980s, when the first forced villagization and resettlement recruits reached into the area (Laqech, 1983). Later, following the 1984/5 famine, people from different areas of the country were deported to settle in the Bertha land in general and Asossa *woreda* in particular and the major changes in resettlement patterns took place during the first post-revolutionary period when famine victims become the dominant components (Pankhurst, 1992). The advent of Settlers into this area is therefore related to this historical process or trend.

3   CHAPTER THREE

3.1   The Nature of Relationship between Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *Woreda*

This chapter mainly emphasizes the analyses of the nature of relationships, structural conditions and proximate causes, the dynamics of inter-ethnic conflict, actors and the process of inter-ethnic conflict transformation between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda*. Undertaking this study, primary sources are the prim face inputs but when necessary secondary sources are also used wherever there is acute shortage of primary sources to indicate the situation more clearly.

The Bertha and Settler Amharas have had a long history of relationship marked by cordial coexistence and serious conflicts. There have been paradoxical histories of animosity, friendship, hostile relations and sometimes violent conflicts between these two ethnic groups. The historical contacts between the Bertha and the highlanders as noted earlier in the third chapters dated back to the 1890s, tiring the Ethiopian state explain when the military expedition under Ras Mekonnen forced the Bertha land to be incorporated into the Ethiopian empire (Bahru, 2002). Since then the three Sheikdoms of Bertha land became the tributaries of the Ethiopian state under King Menelik II (Truilzi, 1986). Marking this as the first historical landmark in the relationship between the Bertha and the highlanders, several people from different parts of the country moved into the area in search of better opportunities such as markets (local and caravan trade). Particularly, Fadashi (Bambashi) and Asossa were served as the main trading posts for local and long distance caravan trade. This also helped to intensify the influx of the highlanders into the area which boosted

the 'Bertha-highlanders' relations. The highlanders who were traders in local and long-distance trade and officials from central government began to establish temporary settlements, permanent settlements and garrison towns (ibid).

The second and the more complicated land-mark in the history of Bertha-highlander relations came in the period after the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution. One of Bertha informants asserted that, when the *Dergue* seized power and declared the down fall of the imperial regime, there was not any Bertha who never rejoiced like a newly born calf longing for better future such as equality, freedom and rights, but later on, one of the decrees the *Dergue* adopted after some time has changed the whole scene. He further described the situation in the following manner:

> The Dergue, in order to react to the drought and famine happening in the northern part of the country, forced the Bertha people to leave their home and properties, who lived sparsely for years into conscripted villegization. Beyond this, the Dergue forced the Berthas to construct homes for those people who have been severely affected by the then drought, starvation and famine due to ecological imbalances in the northern part of the country. Therefore, our relation with the settler Amharas specifically in rural areas dated back to the 1980s, when the first forced villegization and resettlement program gusts landed into the area. Since then we are in constant contact and living together in tolerance and mutual respect. (KI-2, 19th Nov, 2011: Abramo).

The informant is further claiming that, though the *Dergue* forcefully declared villegization and resettlement program without the consent of the Bertha, they accepted and helped the Amhara settlers into the area by constructing houses and providing the necessary materials for survival for their guests as much as possible.

Accordingly, over the years, settlers and their host continued to live through natural interdependence and peaceful co-existence even after the fall of the *Dergue*. The relationship, according to both Bertha and Settlers Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Participants has a mixed truck record (FGD-1,19th Nov, Abramo, & FGD-4, 17th Nov, Amba 13: 2011). There are times in which the two communities experienced cordial and conflictual relations. An informant from Amhara Settlers put this reality

> Since our arrival in Asossa because of the ecological imbalance that resulted in drought and famine in our home land, the Bertha accommodated us in everything we need. We used to work in their field to get wage in our par times since we were working in cooperative working unions organized by the Dergue. We were supposed to work eight hours a day in cooperative working unions and received 20kg of maize per month. In order to survive and get the means for living we had to work par times with the Bertha fields. Such events marked the then cordial relations between us (KI-5, 15th Nov, 2011: Megele 34).

Throughout the *Dergue* period, the relationship between the Bertha and Settler Amharas was dominantly initiated by the two communities themselves. There were no formal governmental institutions established to run and govern the existing Bertha–Settler relations. Moreover, some basic social institutions such as educational and health services were opened around the resettlement areas without considering the needs of the Bertha community. The *Dergue*, according to some informants, tried to place vertical or asymmetric relations between the two ethnic groups by organizing the Settlers at the expense of the Bertha. All the development policies and strategies adopted were designed and worked out based on the needs and interests of the Settlers. Consequently, the Berthas were secluded from enjoying the fruits of governmental development policies and basic social services

(KI-9, 17th Nov, 2011: Gambela). Later after the downfall of the *Dergue*, this legacy paved the way for the emergence of tense conflictual relations between the Bertha and Settlers.

3.2 Causes of the Conflict

Conflict is a very complex social process involving several antecedents and factors. It is elusive to find a single cause accounted for every conflict. A number of interwoven and intercepted causes contribute to conflict in one way or the other. Scholars tried to divide the causes of into structural, proximate and immediate causes. Structural causes are those factors which create the material condition for a conflict in a dynamic process. Such conflicts are long existing antecedents in a society and were not formally resolved in a social process (Azar, 1986, Miese, 2003). Structural conditions will exist latent in a social process where there are no proximate conditions which help to manifest the stage (Nathan, 2001); long standing and pervasive antecedents which implies skewed if not preferential economic, political and societal policies and strategies of the state that remains unsolved. Unless and otherwise the state addressed these issues in one way or the other these basic and underlying causes will result in violent conflicts.

Proximate causes, on the other hand, are those factors contributing to a climate conducive to violent conflict or its further escalation, sometimes symptomatic of a deeper problem triggers, single key acts, events, or their anticipation that will set off or escalate a violent conflict (ICCR, 2008). Proximate causes are, therefore, those conditions resulting in behavioral changes for conflict and causes that may trigger the latent structural problems of the society. These two causes or conditions are the most important points to deal with the issue at hand; inter-ethnic conflict transformation between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda*. Because, first, the principal causes of the conflicts seem to emanate from both structural and proximate conditions prevalent in the BGRS. Second, one may

raise the question what are those conditions about and thirdly, the subsequent discussion will eliminate the problem.

3.2.1 Structural Conditions

3.2.1.1 Inappropriate Development Policies: Pre-1991

Development policies and strategies are those policies and strategies designed to bring sustainable growth and advancing the living standards of the people. Where there were policies and strategies designed unilaterally for development in favor of a single either ethnic or religious groups, they can stir up conflicts that may serve as structural conditions to further prolong conflict within the society. More specifically, there were two contradictory perspectives with regard to the *Dergue's* villagization and resettlement program. The first perception was that it is better to help those drought affected areas in the place where they are living through short term rehabilitation strategy till the ecological imbalance is recovered. The second perspective was to look for new uninhabited and resourceful area for sustainable villagization and resettlement. So as to help the drought affected people to produce for themselves and thereby changing the forest land into a new production center. The *Dergue*, then, decided to use the second option and restructured villagization and resettlement program (Getachew, 2009). Critiques however accuse the *Dergue* that it has used the scheme more to address its own pressing political problems than humanitarian crises.

The *Dergue's* villagization and resettlement program later brought immense problems on behalf of the host Bertha population. The *Dergue,*in order to convince and capture the attention of the Settlers designed unilateral policies and built the basic social institutions nearer to the resettlement villages at the expense of the Bertha. The Bertha then perceived such policies as an intentional

move to exclude them from social and welfare services, while systematically favoring the settler communities (KI-18, 25th Nov, 2011: Asossa). Later, following the downfall of the *Dergue*, the Berthas tried or sought to reverse this situation by advancing their own ethnic interests at the expense of the Settlers. This situation turned the Berthas into a new majority, who took advanatage by marginalizing the Settlers who are now reduced into a new minority (Asnake, 2011).

3.2.1.2 Economic Factors

3.2.1.2.1 Land Grabbing

Economic factors which cause an inter-ethnic conflict between the Bertha and settlers in Asossa *woreda* are those factors directly or indirectly related to the economic activities and livelihoods of the two ethnic groups. As described in the preceding chapter, both the Bertha and settlers led their economic activities and earn their means for living through agricultural activities. They are agrarian people whose economic activity dominantly depended on farming. In effect, most of their cordial and conflictual relationship revolved around land. In the 1980s, when land was owned cooperatively, the *Dergue* private wealth and the properties of the Bertha people who abducted their ownership to the newly Settler highlanders. Accordingly, the Berthas have been conceived as 'second class' citizen and segregated from all basic social institutions, which they themselves installed, because of the advent of the Settlers. Bertha elders in one of the FGD vividly explained this reality as the following

> In those days of the Dergue, we were treated as secondary to the Settlers and told to leave our properties and houses in which we lived since our genesis for the newly coming settlers. We were told by the Dergue Cadres to construct houses for the

settlers who suffered a lot from natural hazards, and we could also be beneficiary from the basic social institutions such as educational, health and others. In contrast to this, Dergue later marginalized and made us minority in our place of origin. Hence, some of us begun to perceive the Settlers as part of the Dergue. Following the downfall of the Dergue and federal restructuring the constitution allowed us to establish a government of our own; we began to look for our lost properties and forcefully confiscated land by the Dergue in times of resettlement. Because the situation had made us landless, we have no land for agricultural production. This brought the first conflictual relation between us and settlers in the area (FGD-2, 23rd Nov, 2011: Gambela).

On the other extreme, the Settlers believe that in the times of the *Dergue* every one (either Settler or the Bertha) had been given all the means for living proportionally. For example, the Berthas were allocated enough land for their agricultural production, grazing and irrigation in a clearly defined boundary from that of the Settlers while the Settlers were also confined to their own shares too. The conflictual relationship occurred after the down fall of the *Dergue* when the Berthas began to forcefully seize the land which was formerly given to and held by the Settlers for explicit purpose of agricultural production, irrigation and grazing (KI-10, 17th Nov, 2011: Amba 13). Beyond the responses of the participants of the study, the area in which the Bertha and Settlers live in Asossa *woreda* shows that, these two ethnic groups live in uneven distribution. The structure, in which the villages of these two ethnic groups live in the outskirts of Asossa town, is susceptible to conflict, because there are no clearly defined boundaries for agricultural and grazing lands among them. When the Settlers brought their cattle into the area where there is pasture, the Berthas came out and accused the shepherd and held the cattle in their boundary as collateral until the Settlers came out and paid some amount of money as reparation.

One of the informants from Settlers explained the situation.

> When we drove our cattle into the area which was ours in the earlier times and demarcated for grazing, the Berthas came out and beat the shepherd,held the cattle and ask a huge amounts of money for reparation in which we cannot have the capacity to pay to release the cattle. Even though community elders from the two ethnic groups took part to resolve such conflict, the role of the Settler community elder is nominal while elders of the Bertha dictated over deciding amount of reparation. The participation of the settler community elders and is just limited to accept the dictates of the Bertha community elders to release the cattle and the shepherds (KI-4, 15th Nov, 2011: Megele 34)

FGD participants (FGD-2, 23rd Nov, Gambela, & FGD-3, 15th Nov, Megele 34: 2011), and other informants underscore that conflict is recurring not only over grazing lands but also in the agricultural production areas and arable lands. The main cause that stir the conflict between the Bertha and Settlers after the 1991 federal restructuring was according to an informant from Asossa *woreda* official (KI-19, 23rd Nov, 2011:Asossa), that the existing land is unable to feed the arithmetically growing population on both sides. For example, during the *Dergue* period, every settler village has been given 500 hectares of land in a formal boundary distinguished from the other village (Asnake, 2011). Later when the *Dergue* was overthrown, the collectively owned land was equally divided among the settlers. However, in due course a single village, that hosted 500 people in its initial spot, saw drastic expansion due to population growth and migration from other areas in search of better opportunities (KI-19, 23rd Nov,2011:Asossa).

In 1991, when the land was redistributed by federal restructuring, in most settlers' village, each household's private land was reduced to a mere 0.5 hectare. Consequently, the livelihood of the settlers was limited to this small plot of land (KI-19, 23rd Nov, 2011: Asossa). In some others where there is lesser population growth and migration, the size of the land allocated for each household was nearly one hectare. By contrast in the Bertha villages, noted as a sparse settlement, a single individual can hold a far bigger per land pilot and he has also the right to prevent settlers encroachments into his plot to get grass for house roof cover and cattle (KI-18, 25th Nov, 2011:Asossa). This brought about intense conflicts between the Settlers and Bertha community in Asossa *woreda*.

Secondly, in addition to the population growth, the need to get additional agricultural lands, and the loss of biodiversity of the soil also induced repeated conflicts between Settlers and the Bertha in the *woreda*. According to informants from Asossa *woreda* (KI-18, 25th Nov, 2011: Asossa), when the people from both sides ploughed the land repeatedly through traditional methods its biodiversity and fertility becomes reduced thereby deteriorating its farm productivity. In order to keep the biodiversity of the soil, the Berthas deferred the production land to be reserved for several years similar to the practice of shifting cultivation, presumably to recover the fertility and productivity of the land. Under such circumstances, when the formerly cultivable land remained uncultivated, it will soon be covered by grasses and become forested. The Settlers then tend to bring their cattle for grazing, and when the Bertha tried to stop them from grazing it, conflict erupts. The Berthas can let the production land rest for several years because they have enough land for cultivation, whereas the Settlers whose life activity is limited to that smaller land plots, cannot enhance its fertility by letting it rest for a year due to a lack of other alternatives of livelihood. In some instances the federal restructuring had made them new minorities in the region as well in as in the *woreda* (ibid).

3.2.1.2.2 Resource as a Source of Conflict

Another source of inter-ethnic conflict between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda* is the issue of access to different resources. The area is endowed with diverse resources such as forest trees and indigenous gold mines. Concerning forest trees, the area is very rich in the production of natural Bamboo trees that serves for different purposes. Both the Berthas and Settlers use the Bamboo for various purposes such as to construct houses, to build granaries for keeping their produces, to construct fence, for fire wood consumption, to construct beehives and sometimes to bring it to the market for sale. In principle the forest that hosts various species of trees in general and the multi-purpose Bamboo tree in particular was commonly owned by the people of the entire *woreda*. But according to FGD participants in Bertha *kebele*, these resources still became a source of conflict between the two ethnic groups.

> Even though we collectively own and use the forest resources, the indiscriminate and continuous cutting of the Bamboo by the Settlers for construction and market as well as for different purposes had reduced the size of the forest and if we continue like this, they will cause an ecological imbalance like they did earlier in their homeland. For this fact, we tried to talk with them to keep and preserve our environment as much as possible, but they refused to give us their ears and continued cutting the forest indiscriminately. Hence, the solution we took was to formally prevent them from crossing our village to cut trees (FGD-2, 23rd Nov, 2011: Gambela).

On the other hand the FGD participants, from the Settlers' asserted that, in the previous times they used to get the natural resources for daily purposes from the forest together with the Berthas without any clash, but later, especially after the federal restructuring,

they began to conceive themselves as the new land owners and began to impose a new lord-tenant relationship on them in every affairs. The Bertha perceived themselves as the sole owners of the land and its resources. They tried to stop Settlers from using the forest resources, which they use for daily purposes. Settlers then applied to the concerned body to solve the problems, at least to give them their share with a clearly defined territory, but it was such a futile attempt that nobody answered their question. The only solution they took was sending some community elders from their community to negotiate with them. The elders came up with a consensus and now the settlers are using the forest together to a limited extent (FGD-3, 15th Nov, 2011: Megele 34).

Other resources such as gold mining also caused conflicts between the settler and host communities. One of the livelihoods of the Berthas in Asossa *woreda* was searching and digging gold from river valleys and from the ground by traditional means. There is no specific area identified for this purpose. Rather the Berthas perceived most of the river valleys, swampy areas and gorges everywhere as gold host areas. The Berthas used to dig deeper holes everywhere in search of gold. These areas that have been mined in search of the gold would be covered by grass during the summer season which tends incidentally to harm both the cattle and people. Hence, when the Settlers tried to stop the Berthas from digging holes to overcome risks, conflict break out in the area (KI-5, 15th Nov, 2011: Megele 34). When settlers restricted them at midday, the Berthas began to come at nights in groups and this installed the feelings of insecurity among Settlers. Indeed, during field observation the writer also recognized that, like land, resources like land cause serious conflicts between the Settlers and the Bertha in Asossa *woreda*.

3.2.1.3 Political Factors

The political dimension of the conflict between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda* started in the 2000 Regional substitutive

election when the Bertha political officials prevented the Settlers and their representatives from taking part in official election (KI-22, 28th Nov, 2011: Asossa). Even though the official language of the region is "Amharic" Bertha officials sought that the Settlers who are not able to speak one of the languages of the five "host" ethnic groups did not have a democratic right to be represented in the regional assembly. They requested the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), to cancel Settler candidates from taking part in the regional election. It is only the Bertha political officials, among others, who refused Settlers representation in the regional politics (ibid). Following this incident, a rift occurred between the Bertha and settler political activists in Asossa. This restriction which happened at the higher political level, accentuated the already strained relationship between the Settler and the Berthas in rural areas. The new political rift which started from above served as a fuel for the minor clashes taking place due to land, resources and cattle rustling among the rural people in the *woreda*.

Settlers then made series of discussions within their own *Kebeles* and together with other *Kebeles* about the loss of their constitutional democratic rights- 'the right to elect and to be elected' (FDRE, 1995: Art 38) in the area where they comprised nearly 50% of the total population of the *woreda*, according to the 1994 census, results for Benishangul-Gumuz Region (CSA, 1994: 43). The settlers then made a swift decision to elect some people to further study the issue and lodge their complaints through petition both to the regional and federal government for a quick political action (KI-6, 22nd Nov,2011: Megele 34.). The elected representatives finally came up with five major issues which they believe need further decision by the concerned body (ibid). The issues were

- The right to elect and to be elected.
- Substitutive land for settlers whose lands were taken away by urban expansion.
- Appropriate land policy and ownership rights.
- Bringing corrupt officials to court.
- The need for grazing land and forest usage.

With the notable exception of the first issue (the right to elect and to be elected), all other questions were answered by the regional government. With regard to the issue of equal representation and securing the constitutional right "to elect and to be elected", which requires further constitutional interpretation, the region could not answer it definitely and Settlers asked to get permission from regional government to provide their question to the House of the Federation, the body that has a constitutional right and legal protection to see and interpret constitutional matters under article 62 & 84 (FDRE, 1995). Having this issue at hand, some representatives went to the House of the Federation, Addis Ababa, accusing the NEBE, for cancelling their representatives from directly participating in the regional politics and reducing the whole Settlers constitutional rights to elect and be elected to half way (i.e. they can elect Bertha representatives to represent them in the regional assembly, but could not have a Settler representatives in the regional assembly simply because they are not "host" to the region).

The House of the Federation considered the issue of Settlers and decided the question to be seen first by the 'Council of Constitutional Inquiry' so as to reach the final decision. The Council of Constitutional Inquiry has the right to investigate the question which needs further constitutional interpretation and pass its decision to the House of the Federation. The latter has legal authority and responsibility to interpret constitutional matters under the FDRE Constitution (Article 62 (1/2) & 84) when conflicts arise between two or more regional states or ethnic groups. The council then primarily identified two major issues based on the question of the Settlers in order to comment on whether the issue needs further constitutional interpretation or not. These are

- Investigating whether the Electoral Law Proclamation no. 111/87 article 38 (1) B, that helped the NEBE in canceling candidates from Settler community to participate in the election because of the inability to speak one of the five host ethnic

language contradict with the Federal Constitution Article 38 or not.

- Whether knowing the national language (where the working language is "Amharic") in which the candidate is competing for candidacy to hold public office is taken as a prerequisite or not.

The Council of Constitutional Inquiry believe that these two most significant issues are the first indicators which help the House to decide on the issue provided by the Settlers of Asossa and to determine whether their democratic rights have been violated or not. The Council of Constitutional Inquiry convened on June 8, 2000, to respond to the request of the House of the Federation. It took into account the above two most important questions and laid its own opinions to help the House of the Federation to lay the final decision. The Council revealed that, the Ethiopian Electoral law Proclamation no. 111/87, article 38 (1) B, which made knowing the national language of the region in which the candidate is competing as a prerequisite, contradicts with the FDRE Constitution (Article 38), and the decision of the NEBE in canceling Settler candidates in the regional council of BGRS was found unconstitutional (Addis Zemen, Megabit 5:1995). The House of the Federation, having heard the comment and decision of the Council of Constitutional Inquiry, in 2000 in its 1st official working year, 1st regular meeting, decided to hear additional professionals' comments and opinions on the issue before making the final decision (Ibid).

The House of the Federation, having heard the comments of the Council and professionals' opinions in the field as well as going thorough revision of various related constitutional provisions in the FDRE Constitution, on March 15, 2003, on the 3rd official working year, 2nd regular meeting, decided that applicants' right to elect and to be elected should be respected as their main constitutional right like any other Ethiopian does. The decision taken by the NEBE in canceling their candidates is found unconstitutional, undemocratic and it contradicts with FDRE Constitution (Article 38).

One of the informants (KI-6, 22nd Nov, 2011: Megele 34), who went to Addis Ababa as representative of Settlers to present the question to the House of the Federation, stated that, when they were discussing about the rejection of their rights as being the representatives of the people, they just had elevated the question to the level of having a special *woreda*, like those of Pawe and Mao-Komo. Pawe and Mao-Komo *woreda*s at the time were special *woreda's,* which can participate in regional matters bypassing the zonal administration. One of the two, Pawe special *woreda* is established by Settlers in Kemashi Zone (Birhanu, 2006). Settlers' representatives then pressurized the House to grant them a status of special *woreda* if their question is not addressed. But, due to geographical make up and population settlement, it is very difficult to have special *woreda* since the settlement structure of the Bertha and settlers villages in Asossa was mixed with no definite boundaries (KI-6, 22nd Nov, 2011:Megele 34).

Following the decision of the House of the Federation, Settlers' asked for proportional representation in the regional assembly. Despite their population extent, Settlers of Asossa *woreda* were given a single seat in the regional assembly. This representation was also again canceled in the 2005 national election (ibid). Beginning from the 2005-to-2010 national election, the seat was taken by someone whom the Settlers did not elect to represent them in the regional assembly by dismissing the one who was nominated by the Settlers. Before the 2005 election, in a bid to freeze the political question of the Settlers, some young people were detained suspected of being instigators behind Settlers' political question in Asossa *Woreda*. (KI-18, 25th Nov, 2011: Asossa).

In order to further limit Settler's political participation, the number of people who shall be participated as representatives of Settlers in the *woreda* council and *woreda* executive has been intentionally reduced. One of the informants from Settlers', and now member of the *woreda* council stated that when both the Settlers and the Berthas in the earlier periods formed the *woreda* council in Asossa

woreda, the number of people that could be elected from each *kebele* has been decided to be three, which make up a total of 222 members (there are 74 *kebeles* in the *woreda*, from these 36 are Bertha *kebeles* and the rest 38 are Settler *kebeles*). Therefore, with the intention of reducing Settlers political influence in the *woreda*, and contrary to the 2002 revised regional constitution article 86 (1), which states that ''members of the *woreda* council should be directly elected by the people residing in the *kebeles* under it'', the BGRS decided to reduce the number of representatives elected to the *woreda* council from Settler kebels to two, while that of the Bertha *kebeles* remained to be three (KI-6, 22nd Nov, 2011: Megele 34).

This helped the Bertha to decide on every affair through the majority vote by disregarding settlers' interest. The reduction of representatives from Settler *Kebeles* did not consider the population size as a parameter. If it does, Settlers would have got better representations than before over the Berthas. Reduction in the number of representatives is not only limited in the *woreda* council, but had also taken place within the *woreda* executive. Primarily, among fifteen members, Settlers were given seven seats in the *woreda* executive, whereas later it was reduced to be four and now it is only two (KI-19, 23rd Nov, 2011: Asossa). All these imbalances, on the issue of equal or proportional political representation both within the *woreda* and regional assembly as well as executives between these ethnic groups in the *woreda*, have caused series of conflicts since the federal restructuring. When the House of the Federation decided for equal representation both in the regional and *woreda* affairs, for both Settlers and Berthas, in Asossa, the regional government maintained its position and gave a nominal representation to Settlers as well as in the *woreda* council too. Beyond the response of the participants, the researcher's filed observation showed us that there is still an internal motion in the attitudes of the people with regard to equal political representation in various governmental institutions which need to be transformed before they trigger further inter-ethnic conflict.

3.2.2 Proximate Causes

3.2.2.1 Political/Ideological Differences

Political or ideological differences can exist anywhere and this is one of the characteristics features of modern societies in producing mixed track results. In the most developed world, where democracy served as normative and institutional framework for every affair, political or ideological differences produce positive results. Whereas in states, that are still haunted by authoritarian regimes and in some where awareness about the ideological or political differences in multi-ethnic nation is lacking, it served as source of conflicts. In the case of Asossa *woreda*, according to an informant from Settler village, the ideological difference and conflicts particularly heightened at times of national elections.

For example, following the 2005 national election, there was a conference organized by the Federal government to discuss on the issues of "Peace, Development and Democratic unity in Ethiopia". Students from higher institution and various civil servants from different institutions were invited to take part and the conference was held in major regional towns. In BGRS, because of different regional matters the conference was held in 2006 summer season in the region's capital. The region then invited all higher institution students and Bertha students from high schools. According to the informant, in one of the sessions, one of the Bertha students from high school asked a question to organizers of the discussion. His question reads as "In 2005 national election, Settler Amharas who are "Alien" to the Bertha land elected the opposition parties. Therefore, what measure the government is preparing to impose on them?" In addition to this the informant affirmed that, some *woreda* officials themselves, when Settlers request *woreda* officials to settle some of their problems, become reluctant and even say "let the opposition parties come and solve your problems" (KI-4, 15th Nov,2011:.Megele 34).

On the other hand, the Bertha informant (KI-8, 23rd Nov, 2011: Gambela) stated that, "It is the Settlers themselves who just accused the Bertha and attached every social and economic problem with the election. All the Berthas know that, it is not only the Settlers who elect the opposition party, but there are also people among the Berthas who may have elected the opposition. It is their constitutional right; it has nothing to do with the situation". The Bertha FGD participants further explained the situation:

In one of the Settlers' village in which we had warm relation for years, we found that the situation was changed after the election. We were worried about it, because these people had helped us a lot when we return back to our home, when the Oromo Liberation Force (OLF) before their withdrawal from the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE), forced us to leave our place because of a military strategic importance of the area. We lost all what we had and flee to some far area. After the demise of OLF by EPDRF forces, we returned back home. At this time, the Settlers came and asked us for our whereabouts and brought their oxen to plough our land as well as brought crop for daily family home consumption. We then recovered from our crises. After the election, when this lovely relationship was lost, we sent some community elders to ask them to address the newly advancing conflictual relationship and convince them to return back to those old-days. They replied that, the situation that changed our relationship was because you, the Berthas, elected the governing party, against our political interests and we do not see good prospects to restore the old relations (FGD-2, 20th Nov, 2011: Gambela).

From this explanation, we can understand that, the cordial relation that existed between the Berthas and Settlers in Asossa for generations has been strained because of current political or ideological fault-lines. This suggests poor societal awareness of political or ideological differences. The Settlers resent that every issue, either locally or regionally decided from a narrow regional perspective in which the Berthas also seem to settle every

matter based on their own interest at the expense of Settlers. The researcher's own field observation, confirms that political and ideological differences have polarized the Bertha and settler communities.

3.2.2.2 Affirmative Action

Affirmative action is a political measure by the government and other concerned bodies in order to boost the active participation of formerly disadvantaged people or groups of people in various socio-economic and political affairs in order to rectify previous social and political inequalities. By considering the historical injustices, imbalances, inequality and purposeful marginalization of specified group by the government or dominant power, in the past, the FDRE Constitution declared some special rights to four peripheral regional governments as an affirmative action. The action includes special developmental assistances to those marginalized groups in the past (FDRE, 1995: Art. 89 (4)). The BGRS is one of those four nationally and constitutionally identified regions, nominated for affirmative action. To effectively address and meet the national developmental assistance in those regions, the regional governments are supposed to design specific parameters. The BGRS is using those ethnic groups specified as "owner nationalities" or "host ethnic group" to be benefited from this policy. The owner nationality in Asossa *woreda*, therefore, is the Bertha ethnic group. In effect, in order to boost peoples participation in the affairs of the area there is a priority given to the Bertha as a host ethnic group in various social affairs such as job opportunity, and lower entrance points to higher institutions.

However, the FGD (FGD-4,17th Nov, Gambela, & FGD-3, 15th Nov, Megele 34: 2011) made in the Settler *Kebeles* underlined that, the policy of the regional government's deliberate design in a bid to limit the participation of Settlers into different social services, and this discriminatory policy stood as one of the manifestation of

Settlers' "second class citizenry" treatment. According to them, it is not less than a generation since their arrival; their children were born, grew up, and were educated there, they shall enjoy the rights as the Bertha offspring. They belong to the same generation, went to the same school, played in the same ground, and grew up together on the same field. There is nothing earlier special privileges that separate them, since they share the same social condition and environment. But the ideological bar applied to settler children simply due to language and ethnic difference is one of those unacceptable situations that cause conflicts (FGD-3, 15th Nov,Megele 34 &FGD-4,17th Nov,2011: Amba 13). Beyond the application of the affirmative action, there is an exaggerated move on the part of the Berthas to use this special right in the areas which did not require its application. Settlers then feel segregated and intentionally reduced to be secondary status to the Berthas. In the statement of one of the informants from Settlers' *kebele*, "the youth after they graduated from various colleges and universities came back to their home region, but they cannot compete as equal as that of the host. They are allowed to compete to various posts only after the host ethnic groups get all the chances. If all the vacancies were taken by youth of the host, the only option left to that of settlers youth was either migration to the neighboring region or to a neighboring country, crossing the international boundary through Sudan "(KI-12, 17th Nov, 2011:Amba 13).

From this, we can understand that, there is an awareness problem on the concept and practice of affirmative action from both sides. Even though the settler themselves were victims of dislocation caused by the natural catastrophes and socio-economic crises of the 1984/85; they also deserve to benefit from affirmative action. When priorities were given to those constitutionally identified groups, discriminately to other groups, the others feel that they are disadvantaged and perceive themselves as second class to the region. Results from both FGD participants (FGD-2, 23rd Nov, Gambela, & FGD-3, 15th Nov, Megele 34: 2011) show that, there is an inappropriate application of the term "affirmative action"

and its products. On the side of the advantaged group, as an owner nationality they feels proud of affirmative action and are attempting to extend its application, disregarding and disrespecting the Settlers' who in turn felt discriminated for good. The Settlers further conceive the idea and application of the affirmative action as a design to reduce their participation in the affairs of the BGRS.

3.2.2.3 Spoilers

The major spoilers to inter-ethnic conflict between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda* are the political activists or commonly called "political/ethnic entrepreneurs" who come as usual from both sides (KI-22, 28th Nov, 2011:Asossa). According to one of the BGRS top regional official, a serious conflict between the Bertha and settlers broke out when the top political officials of Bertha People Liberation Movement (BPLM), and later by the newly organized Ethiopian Bertha People Democratic Organization (EBPDO), which is one of the EPRDF's affiliated political organization in Benishangul-Gumuze People Democratic Union Front (BGPDUF), were compelled to resign from the regional politics. Following this, there was a popular tension and violent reaction between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa (KI-22, 28th Nov, 2011: Asossa also cited in Asnake, 2011). This happened not because of the two ethnic groups and people at the grass-roots level, but it is because the dissatisfied political entrepreneurs from both sides who made the peoples at the grass-roots level and prepared them for violent conflicts against each other. In a number of places, minor clashes had taken place due to the political agitation from the top political activists. The top political activists used this opportunity to advance their own hidden agendas when the Bertha political officials were asking for regional presidency while Settlers' political activists were equally seeking for proportional representation in the regional politics (KI-22, 28th Nov, 2011:Asossa).This served as a pretext for violent clashes between the Bertha and Settlers in the *woreda*. This consists with the instrumentalist view of ethnicity and ethnic group in which "ethnicity" is something that can be changed, constructed

or even be manipulated in the context of elite competition within the boundaries determined by political and economic realities. The instrumentalists coined those elites who manipulate and create a new societal section as "social engineers" and who try to single out the manufacturers of nations among those social groups that have most to gain from it (Cohen 1974).

3.3 The Transformation of Bertha-Settler Conflict in Asossa

The concept of "inter-ethnic conflict transformation" entails more than the reframing of positions and the identification of win-win results. It is the process of engaging with transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and if necessary the very structure of constitutions of society that supports the protection of violent conflict (Mail, 2003). It assumes that the very structure of groups and relationships may be embedded in a pattern of conflictual relationships that extend beyond the particular size of conflict (ibid). Hence, inter-ethnic conflict transformation could not only apply in the areas where there is violent conflict. Instead it assumes that there are different sections of society along ethnic or religious lines sharing the same resources and live in a specified area which should undergo in transformative process for better integration and communication to yield sustainable peace and security in the region.

With regard to the case at hand, an inter-ethnic conflict transformation between the Berthas and Settlers in Asossa *woreda*, has taken place in post 1991 Ethiopia. There have been a number of inter-ethnic conflicts caused by various antecedents such as autonomy, resource and representation issues. The peoples and the region had also used various transformative (formal and non-formal) mechanisms to settle the conflict and restore peace and security into the area. The informal transformative mechanisms

include, those indigenous actions employed by the peoples themselves to rectify the deep-rooted causes of the conflict, and sustain peace and development in the area. The formal transformative mechanisms include, those actions taken by the governmental institutions at different levels ranging from the federal to regional, as well as *kebele* levels involving empowered and professional actors.

According to the findings of the study, in most cases, the informal transformative mechanisms used by the people themselves who know the situation better than those of the formal transformative mechanisms and actors, play a more significant role in transforming the conflict. Because, according to an informant from BGRS, regional administrative, peace and security coordinating center officer, the informal transformative mechanism always relies on the consent of the conflicting parties themselves and stand high chances for win-win strategy (KI-24, 22nd Nov, 2011:Asossa). In similar context, one of the five main ingredients of traditional conflict transformation according to Boege, 2006, and Francis, 2009, is the wider participation of local actors in the process. Due to this fact, the region's administrative, peace and security office institutional set up at local level assumes that more than 90% of the conflicts can be settled and transformed there in the context area, through the use of local level conflict preventive, resolution and transformative mechanisms (KI-24, 22nd Nov, 2011:Asossa). To this end, various local level stakeholders have been set up and are working effectively at the grass-roots level.

3.3.1 Actors in the Process of Inter-Ethnic Conflict Transformation

Actors are the most significant role players in the process of inter-ethnic conflict transformation. Both local and professional level actors can intervene in the process of inter-ethnic conflict transformation. According to Reimann (2007, Mail, 2007), the

transformative mechanism of inter-ethnic conflict involves the participation of several actors at different levels. The wider participation of local and professional actors proves successful conflict transformation. In the context of BGRS, inter-ethnic conflict transformation between the Berthas and Settlers in Asossa *woreda* had involved various actors at different times since the introduction of ethnic federalism in 1991. The actors can be classified as formal and non-formal actors depending up on the intensity of engagement and organization. Let us see the contribution of each of these actors in transforming Bertha-Settlers conflict in the specified area.

3.3.1.1 National Actors

The mandate of national actors intervention in regional matters and transforming inter-ethnic conflict is minimal; but still they have the right to interfere in regional matters in some grave circumstances; this is the case when the issue at hand is beyond the regional and local actors and when the regional and local actors are unable to solve or address the problem on the one hand, and where serious human rights violations have occurred within regional governments on the other. The FDRE Constitution has declared the intervention of the national (Federal in this case) actors to protect (Article, 62(9) the constitution, if there are conditions which endanger the constitutional order and violation of human rights. Beyond this, the federal government is also responsible to see the healthy relationship between the various ethnic groups living in the country. When there are outstanding questions which require federal government intervention, the intervention of the federal actors is also inevitable.

The federal government of Ethiopia had intervened in regional matters of BGRS in 2000, when the Settlers asked to exercise their political right, article 38, 'the right to elect and to be elected' was endangered by regional actors. The House of the Federation which is responsible to see constitutional and nationalities issues in order to promote the equality of the Peoples of Ethiopia enshrined in the Constitution promote and consolidate their unity based on their mutual consent. Under article 62(4), it shall order Federal intervention if any State, in violation of this Constitution, endangers the constitutional order (8). In the case of BGRS, to transform inter-ethnic conflicts on March 15, 2003, on the 3rd official working year, 2nd regular meeting, the House of the Federation decided that the applicants' right to elect and to be elected should be respected as their main constitutional right like any other Ethiopians, and any of the concerned federal and regional actors were instructed to execute the decision of the House. Following this, A single seat was given for Settlers in Asossa *woreda* to be represented in the regional politics, though their population size accounted nearly 50% of the *woreda*, and 22% from the total population of the BGRS region (CSA: 2007), whereas the Berthas accounted 50% of the *woreda*, and 28.7% of the total, have 40 representatives in the regional politics, (Asnake, 2011) which is not fair representation.

3.3.1.2 Regional Actors

Unlike the Federal actors, the regional actors can actively take part in inter-ethnic conflict transformation in a full-fledged and formal manner. The region, in order to maintain peace and order, and sustain harmonious relationship between various nations, nationalities and peoples residing in it, designed a number of institutions that can effectively run this major objective. The BGRS Administrative, peace and security coordinating center is one of the major institutions that organize the region's peace and security architecture at different administrative levels. According to BGRS Administrative, Peace and Security, officer, the region's peace and security institutional set up was designed to address inter-ethnic conflicts in the region. To this end, more than 90% of the conflicts evolving in the region were assumed to be resolved and transformed there at the grass-roots level. The only function of the

office at the regional level, therefore, is limited to the establishment of institutions at various administrative levels such as Zonal, *Woreda* and *Kebele* levels too, thereby coordinating and inspecting as well as providing trainings to various actors in the process of conflict transformation (KI-24, 22nd Nov, 2011:Asossa). To this end reports show that, inter-ethnic conflicts are dwindling from time to time through effective transformative mechanisms (ibid). (For better understanding and insight to BGRS, Administrative, Peace and Security Coordinating office, institutional architecture and how it integrates the formal and informal conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms to maintain peace and security and handling conflicts before they further produce undesirable outcomes see figure 4.1 below).

Figure 4.1 BGRS Administrative, Peace and Security Architecture
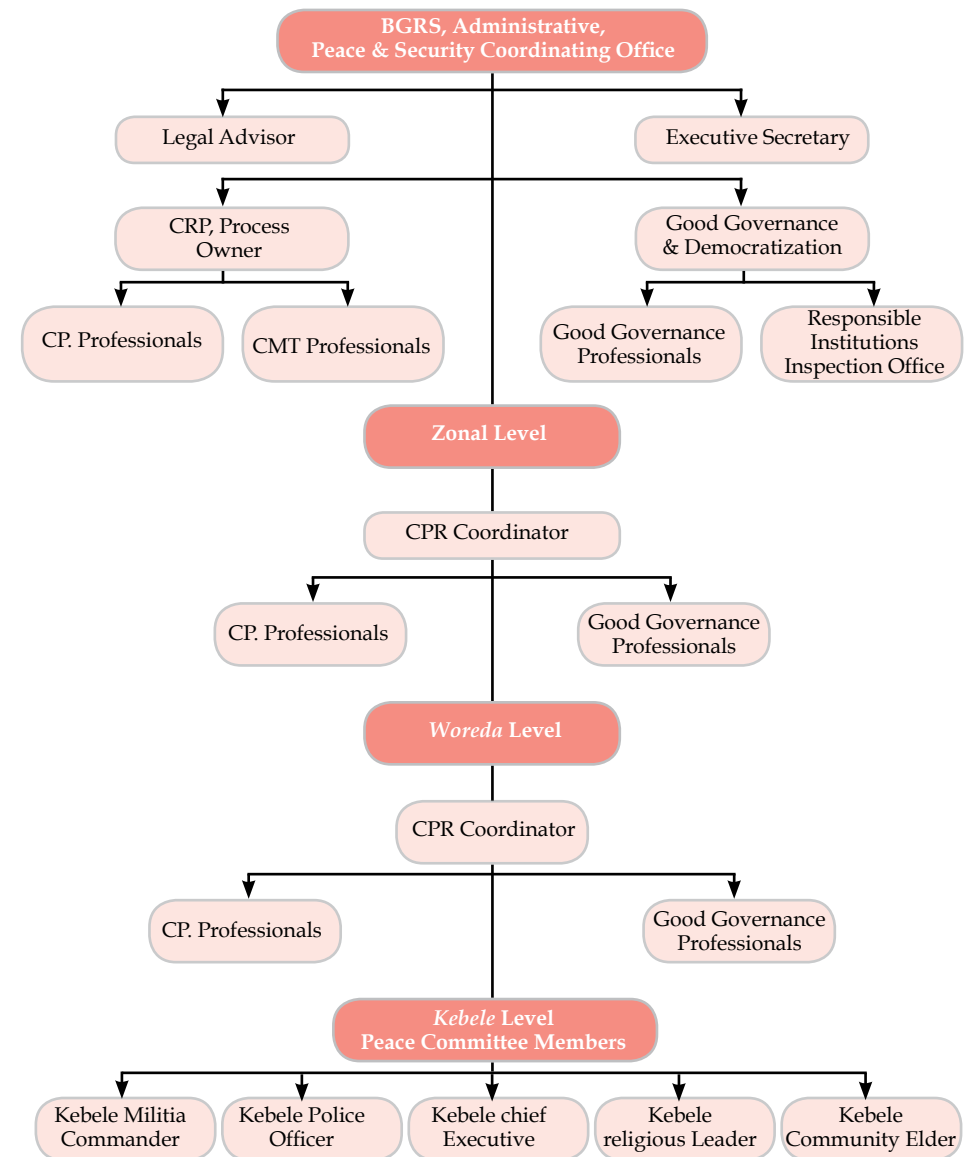
Adapted from the Office of Administrative, Peace and Security Coordinating Center

3.3.1.3 *Woreda* Level

3.3.1.3.1 *Woreda* Administrative and Security Office

One of the institutional set ups of the regions administrative, peace and security coordinating center was the establishment of Administrative and Security Office at *Woreda* level. The main task of Asossa *woreda* administrative and security office was making preliminary assessments on the areas which are prone to conflicts, investigating factors causing the conflict and addressing the conflicts as much as possible with full understanding and engagement of the actors and sources of the conflict. According to the interview with the *woreda* Administrative and Security Officer (KI-21, 8th Nov, 2011: Asossa), when conflicts broke out in the specified parts of the *woreda* between the Berthas and Settles, the office in collaboration with other sector divisions, such as the police, militia and *woreda* conflict prevention and resolution professionals, intervene to resolve and to build trust relationship with the conflicting parties.

The resolution and transformation of the conflict into a constructive outcome is the one that, the institution gave due emphasis. This process is not only achieved by imposing decisions on the parties' involved in the conflict, rather it requires the wider participation of the conflicting parties themselves in the transformation process. The transformation process the *woreda* used has produced positive results. The conflicting parties, before they came to the *woreda*, have to try to resolve and transform conflicts by themselves via indigenous mechanisms at home and if either of the party did not agree on the terms of the community elders as well as *kebele* peace committee in transforming the conflict, they have the right to come to the *woreda*. It is only in under such situation that the *woreda* administrative and security office together with those various sectors described above can intervene and see the situation. In most of the cases, conflicts are resolved by the peoples themselves.

3.3.1.3.2 Conflict Prevention and Resolution Coordinating Centre (CPR)

In Asossa *woreda* conflict prevention and resolution coordinating center, there are professionals in the field that jointly work with *woreda* Administrative and Security Office, in identifying and investigating the deep-rooted causes of conflicts occurring in the *woreda* and actively taking on an active part in resolving and transforming any conflict within the *woreda*. Beyond this, the office tries to speculate inter-ethnic conflicts by making preliminary assessments. In this regard, the office is also working efficiently to address and meet its objectives.

3.3.1.4 Local/Kebele Level

3.3.1.4.1 Peace Committee

The members of *Kebele* peace committee include the *kebele* chief executive, *kebele* militia commander, leader of *kebele* community elders, *kebele* religious leader and *kebele* police officer. The main task of *kebele* peace committee in Asossa *woreda* is assessing and investigating conflicts occurring between peoples residing in the area. In most of the cases, conflicts happen between the Berthas and Settlers due to minor issues (as discussed earlier in this chapter) such as land disputes over grazing and farming as well as irrigation, and access to resources. The *kebele* peace committee, therefore, overlooks, assesses and investigates, as well as resolves the conflicts occurring between the two ethnic groups. When conflicts breaks out, member of the *kebele* peace committee, from disputant *kebeles* meet and establish a joint or coalition peace committee. The joint peace committee could not dissolve until the root-causes of the conflict had been properly healed and trust relation among the conflicting parties restored. When the resolutions process is over, the joint committee still overlooks the transformative process as to whether the process had brought

positive outcomes from the conflict. If they think the process was failed in bringing the desired outcomes, the joint peace committee meets again and tries to heal the process. The joint committee then identifies the deep-rooted and triggering factors of the conflict and finally reports to the concerned body. In order to have a sufficient understanding of resolution and transformation of conflicts in a constructive manner, the *kebele* peace committee members receives trainings from *woreda* conflict prevention and resolution office through formal workshops and public discussions (KI-21, 8th Nov2011:Asossa).

3.3.1.4.2 Community Policing

Community policing in essence, is a system of collaboration between the police and the community in identifying and solving community security problems. With the police no longer the sole guardians of law and order, all members of the community become active allies in the effort to enhance the safety and quality of neighborhoods. It has far-reaching implications, having expanded the outlook on crime control and prevention, and emphasis on making community members active participants in the process of problem solving (Monograph, 1994). The structure of community policing in BGRS was established in 2010 newly advancing institution to sustain peace and development through wide spread participation of the local people at the grass-roots level.

According to the BGRS community policing regional inspection and coordinating center, during its inception in 2010 some selected *kebeles* have been identified as models and later all *kebeles* in the region have been organized under *kebele* community policing. The institution reduced more than 30% of conflict and crime reports (KI-25, 28th Nov, 2011: Asossa). The main tasks of community policing at *kebele* level is to:

- Identify conflicts occurring within and between other *kebeles*

- Lay the ground on how to prevent, resolve and transform conflicts
- Organize and command *kebele* militias
- Control and command *kebele* private militias

Create awareness forums on how to handle and conflicts peacefully (KI-25, 28th Nov, 2011:Asossa)

3.3.1.5 Community Level Actors

Community elders and religious leaders are the first local actors in the process of inter-ethnic conflict resolution and transformation. Since these people are in constant contact beginning from the 1980s, they had developed community based conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms. The community elders and religious leaders are responsible for restoring the shattered relationship between the Bertha and Settlers in the area after the conflict is over and build peaceful relationships. They earned trust from the society and are enthusiastically working for the benefit of the people. The community elders and religious leaders are in better position to resolve and transform inter-ethnic conflicts as compared to the formal government organs.

But this does not necessarily mean that all the conflicts could be solved and transformed into win-win results. In some cases Settler informants complain, the Bertha community elders and religious leaders impose huge amounts of reparation on Settlers, specifically when they raid cattle that they have found in the areas of grazing lands, which still are a bone of contention, where there is no clear demarcation (KI-4, 15th Nov, Megele 34, KI-13, 17th Nov, 2011: Amba 13). On the other hand, according to informants (KI-2, 19th Nov, Abramo, KI-7, 23rd Nov, 2011: Gambela) and FGD participants' (FGD-2,23rd Nov, Gambela, FGD-1, 19th Nov, 2011: Abramo) from Bertha prefer to abide by indigenous conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms, the Bertha cultural and spiritual traits. Among the indigenous values developed

in the Bertha culture that are useful for conflict resolution and transformation, FGD participants stressed the following (FGD-2,23rd Nov, Gambela, and FGD-1,19th Nov, 2011: Abramo).

- All the Berthas are followers of Islam and believe that all people regardless of any condition are equal and all the evils done by the people shall be governed by the supreme God or Allah. Hence, they prefer to leave all the evils done by the people to the judgment of God or Allah
- Bertha tradition respects the decision made by elders in order to restore better relationships and communication with the people within or outside the Bertha community.

Thus the Bertha FGD participants affirm that even though they are in a constant conflict the settler communities, the always tend to think that everyone and the whole world are created by "God" or "Allah" and leave the catastrophe made by others and seat for discussion with the help of community elders and religious leaders for *Mallesh*, means "let give mercy for those who betrayed us as we look mercy from "Allah and others".

3.4 Intervention Mechanisms used to Transform Inter-Ethnic Conflict

Since the introduction of ethnic federalism in 1991, and the promulgation of the 2002 revised constitution of BGRS, conflicts recurred in the region caused by a number of interrelated and interwoven factors. The region in general and the *woreda* in particular has established various intervention mechanisms to resolve, prevent and further transform inter-ethnic conflicts in to constructive outcomes along shorter and long term approaches. The following are some of the intervention mechanisms used in the area under study that would possibly help us to gain deeper insights.

3.4.1 Appropriate Development Policies

One of the main conjunctures in Berthas-Settlers conflict was the legacy of the past, in which the military regime established basic social institutions such as education, health and agricultural infrastructures to be found only near to the Settlers' villages at the expense of the Berthas. Therefore, after the downfall of the *Dergue*, basic social institutions were evenly distributed and made to equally serve both ethnic groups. Both the Berthas and the Settlers became beneficiaries from the fruits of development equally regardless of diversities in language, ethnicity or any other parameters. In this case, some Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are also playing significant role in the areas of establishment of basic social institutions, in collaboration with the region, thereby minimizing the likelihood of occurrence of conflicts. (KI-19, 29th Nov, 2011: Asossa).

3.4.2 Economic Policies

The issue of land and getting the means for living was a frequently cited as a major source of conflict between the Berthas and Settlers in Asossa *woreda* since agriculture is the mainstay for both ethnic groups. Hence conflict is inevitable, in so long as these people are living within the same geographical setting, and sharing the same finite resources. Indeed in the year 2000, when Settlers raised five major questions to the regional government, all except one, were directly or indirectly related to land issues. In response to the Settlers' question and to avoid further ethnic conflicts precipitated by land issues, the region proposed some measures. The economic policies were designed to draw symmetric relations among the conflicting parties and thereby to boost effective societal communication in the *woreda* between the Bertha and Settlers in every affair.

3.4.2.1 New Resettlement and Villagization Program

There was land shortage and loss of biodiversity due to the rapid growth of population, migration and untraced farming. This, therefore, resulted in competition between the residents of the *woreda*. The unhealthy competition between the Berthas and Settlers resulted in conflicts in a number of places. Beside this, the expansion of Asossa town, which is the region's capital was also incorporated and some land formerly belongs the Settler. Cognizant of this fact, the region proposed a new voluntary resettlement program targeting settlers on the one hand and the regional government on the other (KI-18, 25th Nov, 2011: Asossa). To this end, the region made a comprehensive assessment first and found an area suitable for settlement. Priority was given to those Settlers whose land was taken away by urban expansion and those who run short of land and prone to serious conflicts with the Berthas (KI-19, 23rd Nov, 2011:Asossa). Settlers were given an area which is found in Bambasi *woreda*, commonly called as "MutsaMado" and "Keshimando" around 50 kilometers from their former settlement. Social institutions were opened before the Settlers fully resettled. Even though this is true and looks promising, land issue abound the daily memos of the *woreda* as a source of minor clashes between the Bertha and settlers. Moreover, other *woredas* which have sufficient land began to object the settlement of people from Asossa *woreda* into their land fearing potential land scarcities (KI-22, 28th Nov, 2011: Asossa).

Secondly, the region has also identified that, the sparse settlement structure of the habitat as a case of Berthas and settlers land dispute. This is in contrast to settlers' dense settlement patterns living and farming within small plots of land. The region, therefore, in collaboration with the federal government started to gather the Berthas into 'villagization', without moving them further distances from which they are living; in the sense of bringing them nearer and nearer to the basic social institutions and vis-à-vis to transform inter-ethnic conflicts between them and the nearby living Settlers. This helped the region to seize large plots of extra Bertha land. It is a two sided gear which made the Berthas nearer to the basic social institutions as presumed and letting them take be advantages of the fruits of development and reduces ethnic tension.

Thirdly, even though it is a countrywide program, the region is also on the way to effectively implement the new 'urban land policy' Proclamation No. 721/2004(part two (2), which may be extended to rural lands, in which everyone can be entitled (certified through ID) to a specified land for use so long as he pays what is expected of him. The policy encourages individuals to prevent and conserve the biodiversity/fertility of his/her land and all of the activity is limited to that plot of land. This measure is expected to reduce land conflicts thereby ending conflicts between the Bertha and Settlers'. Although this proposal seems ideal, Settlers informant suspect that the Berthas will never be limited to a specified land, because they perceive themselves as the new land owners (KI-4, 15th Nov, 2011:Megele 34).

3.5 Outcomes of the Transformation Process

3.5.1 Success Stories and Manifestations

Right from the beginning, we have seen a number of glaring disputes and minor clashes between the Bertha and Settlers in Asossa *woreda*, caused by economic, political and inappropriate development policies and strategies, the analyses of various stakeholders involved, and the transformative mechanisms used to transform the conflict into constructive outcomes. The current intensity and dynamics of the conflict shows that, the inter-ethnic conflict taking place between the Bertha and Settlers is deescalating from time to time. Indeed, there are still areas which are a bone

of contention among the Bertha and Settlers. However, since the conflict is reduced to a non-violent level, we can presume that the interaction and communication between both communities is showing progress as a result of the transformative mechanisms used both by the formal governmental institutions and the indigenous values developed by the communities themselves. The social integration between these communities is changing for the better as is manifested in shared communal and societal values. Based on these manifestations, one can conclude that the transformative process used in the area under study healed the deep-rooted causes leading to the glaring disputes. Even though there are several manifestations which help us to see the progressive social integration, according to both informants and FGD participants from both the Bertha and Settlers, the following are the basic which need to be highlighted as indicators of growing ethnic integration and cohesion among the residents of the *woreda*. These are inter-ethnic marriages, observance of wedding and funeral ceremonies. On the contrary there are also failures.

3.5.1.1 Inter-Ethnic marriage

Inter-ethnic marriage for years in Ethiopia and elsewhere in the world was serving as one conflict averting mechanism. It is also a tool in abating further conflicts among peoples and ethnic groups. In most cases, the conflicting parties after they have gone through a full transformative process took their spouse from the conflicting parties in order to keep sustainable peace and build better social cohesion and integration among themselves. The conflicting parties exchange their spouse as collateral in bringing better outcomes from the conflict. With regard to the case at hand, according to FGD participants (FGD-2, 23rd Nov, Gambela, FGD-1, 19th Nov, 2011: Abramo), these two communities are showing signs of progress in social cohesion in which inter-ethnic marriage is taking place in recent years. The Berthas are arranging marriage with the Settlers and vice versa, but this is not actually the same with what other societies do in other parts of Ethiopia in which spouses are

given as collateral after the violent conflict is over as the main tool to up hold peace and order. Instead, in BGRS it came out of the transformative process that these marriages were some across. Deliberately, this has boosted the relation and communications between the communities. Before the federal restructuring, , it was a taboo for settlers to even talk with the Berthas who were then degraded. This vertical relationship after the federal restructuring has been culminated in the transformative process following the 2000 GC Bertha-Settlers' conflict brought better integration.

3.5.1.2 Wedding and Mourning Ceremonies

In addition to the growing inter-ethnic marriages between the Bertha and Settlers, wedding and mourning ceremonies are other indicators of the prevalence of better inter-ethnic conflict transformation and the resultant production of constructive peace process. According to informants and FGD participants (FGD-2,23rd Nov, Gambela, KI-16, 21st Nov, 2011: Asossa), when there is a wedding or mourning ceremony in either of the communities, the other would be invited to take part in both ceremonies. These are also a result of the transformative mechanisms employed to resolve disputes and disagreements in a peaceful manner. Even though now conflict among these communities is progressing toward a positive outcome, it is very elusive to conclude there will no longer be conflict in the area under study.

3.5.2 Some Failure Stories and Manifestations

Within the success stories discussed above about the transformation of inter-ethnic conflict between Bertha and Settlers' in Asossa *woreda*, there are some shallow backlashes. As the research indicated at different levels, the economic factors and inappropriate development policies that served as cause of the conflict has been transformed and turned to a better constructive outcomes via the use of different mechanisms. The question of proportional political

representation in the regional assembly and equal representation in the *woreda* council is still one of an arena of contention which needs to be considered. Because Settlers still claim that their political right was deprived in an area where they comprise nearly 50% of the *woreda* and 22% of the total population of BGRS (CSA: 2007).

Both informants and FGD participants from Settlers (FGD-3,15th Nov, Megele 34, FGD-4, 17th Nov, 2011: Amba 13), still strongly believe that, they have been treated as second class citizens in their country of origin. The right guaranteed in the FDRE constitution (Article: 38), shall be implemented regardless of any preconditions. This is, therefore, one of the major issues from the outset which triggered violent conflicts between the Bertha and Settlers in the *woreda*. Unless such deep rooted causes are considered and carefully addressed, they will fuel further inter-ethnic conflicts. According to Leaderach (2005), one of the failures of conflict resolution and transformation in the globe is attributed to the failure to understand the impacts and implications of deep rooted structural conditions existed in a society, because according to him conflict resolution and transformation practitioners mostly focused on the outcomes or ends than the processes. The transformation process achieved through addressing the deep-rooted economic problems and inappropriate policies could no longer persist in the long run, as far as Settlers' right to actively take part in the political arena of the region as well as in the local level is respected. Because conflict transformation does not only aims to end violence and change negative relationships between the conflicting parties but also to change the political, social or economic structures that cause such negative relationships. This can empower people to become involved in non-violent change processes themselves, to help build sustainable conditions for peace and justice.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1.1 Conclusions

There are a number of well-tried conflict resolutions and transformation mechanisms used to address the long standing inter-ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia particularly after 1991. One among those was the introduction of Ethnic form of federalism in Ethiopia. Conflict transformation is a sustainable multi-dimensional task of bottom-up and holistic peace building approach, aims at truly achieving positive peace (Lederach, 1996). In order to best find a solution and address the long standing inter-ethnic conflict through conflict transformational approach, practitioners need to look at the basic or structural and proximate causes that brought the conflict into manifest stages.

The findings of the study identified three basic structural conditions which served as a bench mark for Bertha-Settlers' inter-ethnic conflict in Asossa *Woreda*. These are the legacy of the past inappropriate development policies, economic factors which are related to land ownership and resources usage, and political factors which are related to equal representation in the regional assembly and *woreda* council. The structural conditions are interdependent and interwoven where there exists a spark in one of the factors described above, the other also comes in to effect.

The region in general and the *woreda* in particular had designed various intervention mechanisms to transform the conflict. Primarily, authorities at different level understood that the legacy of the past, counted to the *Dergue* entrenched designs of inappropriate

development policies that favored the Settlers. This ideological bar should be scraped to build further trust relationship between these two ethnic groups should make them equal beneficiary from the fruits of governmental development policy. Now sufficient awareness has been created over these people in order to create symmetrical relationship. Secondly, with regard to the economic issues causing inter-ethnic conflict, the *woreda* identified the main escalating factors to such as population pressure and the spontaneous loss of fertility of the soil. Scarcities of arable and grazing lands were the main bone of contentions among these two ethnic groups in the area. Specifically the Settler *kebeles* who live in dense settlements faced acute land scarcities which predisposed to conflict with the Berthas while seeking arable and grazing lands. The *woreda* then adopted a strategy to settle those people based on their consent into another area which sparse population and suitable both for crop production and livestock raring. This measure helped to transform violent inter-ethnic conflicts between Bertha and Settlers. Now-a-days at least the local people reached the level of settling the conflicts by themselves, without the intervention of formal governmental institutions. This is, therefore, one of the transformative mechanisms tried for years that has resulted in building trustworthy relationships among the conflicting parties.

Thirdly, it was the political factors and representation issue that caused inter-ethnic conflict between the Bertha and Settlers. The question of equal representation by the Settlers was raised in 2000 regional substitutive election when the Bertha top political officials refused to accept candidates from Settler *kebeles* to run for election because of their inability to speak the language of one of the five constitutionally identified ethnic groups, where the working language of the region is Amharic. Settlers challenged the regional government to restore their constitutional right "the right to elect and to be elected" and applied to the concerned authorities which eventually made the HoF tried to transform the conflict at least theoretically by restoring settlers constitutional rights. Nevertheless, settlers are still not proportionally represented in the

regional assembly as well as in the *woreda* council. This is, therefore, one of the biggest downfalls of the transformation process inferred from the views of key informants and FGD participants.

Generally, this research found that the transformation process taken from Asossa *woreda* with regard to Bertha-Settlers conflict identified the structural conditions, actors, issues and the general context of framing the conflict. These are the four most valid theoretical considerations that a successful conflict transformation should consider according to most contemporary conflict transformation scholars and practitioners view (Maill, 2004, Vayrynen 1991). But it does not necessarily mean that the conflict transformation process is over after successful identification of these predicaments; rather it continues to uphold until a careful and trustworthy relation among the conflicting parties is built and restored. This is one of the most significant approaches which make conflict transformation activity different from the long lived conflict management mechanisms such as resolution, settlement and prevention. Moreover, the process invited several actors beginning from the grass-roots level to the highest concerned officials, mostly involving the conflicting parties themselves to take part in the matters of their own, implementing bottom-up approach via win-win strategy.

4.1.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the study recommends among others, to the concerned bodies, starting from the federal to regional as well as *kebele* levels, need to give due emphasis to address the unsolved structural conditions. This will help the region to revise the transformative mechanisms in the following ways.

• The region need to give due emphasis to and to further strengthen community values and indigenous conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms parallel with the

bureaucratic or formal inter-ethnic conflict resolution and transformative mechanisms. Because the indigenous conflict resolution and transformation mechanisms resulted in win-win outcomes mostly done by the consent of the conflicting parties themselves than the formal transformative mechanisms.

- The organizational set up of BGRS, administrative, peace and security coordinating center need to prepare seminars, workshops and public discussions to create region-wide awareness of the society under investigation on how to avoid, resolve and transform inter-ethnic conflicts. In addition there is lack of skilled professionals and trained human power in the field of peace and security. Therefore the BGRS administrative, peace and security coordinating center needs to give due emphasis to employ and empower professionals and practitioners in the field of peace and conflict transformation. By making this, the region as well as the *woredas* can effectively transform inter-ethnic conflict into constructive outcomes.

- Settlers' constitutional right, "the right to elect and to be elected", seems unconditional and non-negotiable right that moved the transformation process half way along. Indeed, the process has identified this issue as one of the most critical structural issues which need to be transformed but the process failed to address the issue of settlers' proportional representation at regional assembly and *woreda* council. Hence the political representation issue of settlers needs to be answered through proportional representation both in the *woreda* and regional assembly.

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SECTION 2

The practice of inter-ethnic conflict transformation in Ethiopia:
The case of Amhara-Afar conflict in Kewot and Semurobi Gela Alo *Woreda*

Anteneh Alemu

Abstract

The Amhara-Afar conflict in Kewot and Semurobi-gela'alo woreda is one of the many conflicts in Ethiopia which can be described along ethnic lines. Despite the abundance of studies on the conflicts that occur along the Amhara-Afar frontiers, this particular site has been overshadowed due to much focus of researchers on the conflicts that occur across the Awash river valley. The few studies steered to the study area have largely committed themselves to focusing on the causes of the conflicts. Hence, the rituals of handling the conflict remain inadequately investigated. Furthermore, the specifics of conflict transformation practices in the area are underemphasised, owing to the tenacious emphasis on conflict management and conflict resolution vernaculars.

Thereupon, this study describes and analyses the process of transforming the conflict in the area. Cognizant of the need to identify the causes of the conflict as a priori orderliness in conflict transformation, the structural, proximate and triggering causes of the conflict are spelled out. Contingent upon that, the nature of the conflict and the dynamics involved are explained. The study also dwells on the activities being carried out in pursuit of the transformative objectives alongside the roles and impacts of the actors. Explaining the attempts of transforming the conflict dynamics into constructive imperatives and identifying the challenges in the process are also among the objectives of the paper.

The preferred research method for the study is a qualitative approach. In terms of typology, descriptive and explanatory techniques of research are employed. Both primary and secondary data sources are utilised for the materialisation of the study. Key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observation/network analysis are the tools used to generate primary data. Books, articles, minutes and official documents are used as secondary data sources throughout the research.

Finally, the findings indicate that the conflict in the study area is as a result of an interplay of various causes that cut across economic, political and socio-cultural factors. The old epitomes of the violence are characterised

by homicide, cattle raids and resource damages. Yet intentional assaults on women and livestock are some emerging trends that mark the changing dynamics of the conflict. The endeavours of transforming the conflict include particulars that intend to address the structural and surface imperatives of the conflict. Notwithstanding the successes and promises which the endeavours hold, conundrums of capacity limitation, narrow space for the participation of the local communities and other actors and suboptimal utilisation of local wisdoms of conflict handling stand out as unabated challenges to the practice.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
CAHW	Community Animal Health Workers
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICG	International Crisis Group
MoFA	Ministry of Federal Affairs
PSCs	Protracted Social Conflicts

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Amhara-Afar conflict is one of the many conflicts in Ethiopia that can be described along ethnic lines. The conflict covers two administrative *woreda*, namely Kewot *woreda* of the Amhara national regional state and Semurobi-Gela'alo *woreda* of the Afar national regional state. The conflict, for all the time it has spanned, has hugely impacted on the social and economic life of the people who live in the area. The conflict has also attracted some investigations that duly focused on the causes of the conflict.

Assessment of researches conducted so far reveals limitations in terms of methodology and findings. For instance, Tesfa Bihonegn (2009) conducted a study of institutions and mechanisms of conflict resolution by the federal government of Ethiopia. The data sources used for the research were highly dependent on secondary sources and the study was limited to only a few federal institutions. Referendum, and peace and democracy conferences are the only mechanisms set out by the research. A different study conducted by Asnake Menbere (2010) also traces out only two mechanisms of handling conflict in the findings: resettlement on irrigated pastures and peace committee conferences. One of the researches in the study area was also conducted by Kebede Chane (2009) whose focus was on the nature of the conflict in the area. As such, the researcher's attempt to explain the conflict resolution process is minimal let alone assessing the status of conflict transformation. Moreover, the emphasis accorded to the two *woreda* with which this study is concerned is compromised due to the researcher's ambition to cover conflict among various ethnic groups that live in a wider environ.

All the same, the issue of studying conflicts and their solutions requires much more investigation. The study of conflict management and resolution needs to be accompanied by a study of conflict transformation as the latter is a relatively new practice trying to gain traction. However, looking at the literature on conflict in Ethiopia, one can safely conclude that only a few studies have been done on conflict transformation. Even those studies that deal with conflict management or resolution tend to limit themselves to the institutional aspects of resolving conflicts.

Through the involvement of all the administrative units ranging from the regional administrations to the *kebele* level administrations, the two *woreda* administrations are striving to transform the conflict. The mechanisms employed for this purpose are numerous. They aim not only at resolving the sporadic conflicts but also envisage building a sustainable peace.

Though the *woreda* administrations have set out working to that end, the conflict still persists. The manifestations of the conflict like homicide, cattle raids and resource damages are concrete features of the area. The only achievement so far is the reduction of the incidences of violence in terms of frequency and intensity. The continuation of the conflict to date reveals that the contradiction between the two parties still persists. In principle, the ultimate objective of conflict transformation is to build sustainable peace (Lederach as cited in Miall, 2001). Yet, the continuation of the conflict simply manifests that this objective has not been met.

The other problem that directly emanates from the concept of conflict transformation is that the process is a long term one. The outcomes of the practice are not to be harvested overnight. This is the result of the focus of the practice on bringing positive peace as opposed to negative peace (Reimann, 2005). Practically, the endeavours of both *woreda* administrations face challenges of different nature and depth as well. Lack of administrative skills and resources, and undue focus on short term goals and surface

causes of the conflict are some of the conundrums that hamper the transformation practice. On top of that, lack of comprehensive approaches for the promotion of all stakeholder's participation and suboptimal utility of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in the area add fuel to the flame (Kebede, 2009). For conflict transformation practice in Ethiopia is a relatively unexplored field, lack of concrete experience forces the *woreda* officials to begin from scratch. All those intricacies in transforming the conflict in the area have made the search for results a momumental task.

Generally, the attempts to put an end to the protracted conflict have continued unabated. Nevertheless, the ultimate objective of building peace, or even halting the violence, has not been met. Yet, the reduction of the recurrence of violent clashes is to be recorded. With all these considerations, this research analyzes the achievements and loopholes of the practice of conflict transformation in Kewot and Semurobi-Gela'alo *woreda*.

1.2 Theories and Concepts on Ethnic Conflict

Defining ethnic conflict has not been an easy task for scholars. This is probably due to the fact that there is always more than one factor as a cause of ethnic conflicts. In line with this, the argument that ethnic difference alone, be it in terms of language, descent or cultural practice, cannot lead to ethnic conflict seems to have been taken for granted. The following theories explain the essences of ethnic conflicts each giving an emphasis on the different dimensions of the issues under discussion.

1.2.1 Protracted Social Conflict "Theory"

One concept which has a lot of resemblance with ethnic-based conflicts is the subject of Protracted Social Conflicts (PSCs). PSC

is "a pattern of hostile interactions among individuals and groups within a nation state..." (Azar and Moon, 1986). The focus of PSCs is religious, cultural or ethnic/communal identity. The pillar of those conflicts rests in the search for the satisfaction of basic human needs such as security, communal recognition and distributive justice. This line of argument explains much of the contemporary conflicts, which have a lot to do with developmental needs framed in the form of cultural values, human rights and security (Azar, 1990).

1.2.2 Basic Human Needs Theory

This theory takes human needs and the frustrations that result in the process of fulfilling them as the causes of conflict. Humans have basic survival needs which they try to fulfill at any cost. These needs can be expressed in terms of identity, security, recognition, development, and physiological and physical demands. John Burton (1997) believes that these basic needs lead to conflict due to frustrations that emanate when people are prevented from fulfilling them (as cited in Cunningham, 2001). Those basic needs and the fears and concerns about survival associated with them are prominent causes of intergroup and inter-communal conflict (Herbert as cited in Cunningham, 2001).

1.2.3 Modernization, Economic Interest and Cultural Pluralist Theories

Donald Horowitz (1985) also explains the nature of ethnic-based conflicts from the vantage point of three theories, viz. modernization, economic interest/materialist and cultural pluralist theories. One can identify three ways through which modernization theory looks at ethnic-based conflict. First, modernization theory views ethnic-based conflict as "a mere relic of an outmoded traditionalism, doomed to be overtaken

by the incursions of modernity" (Horowitz, 1985). Second, there are versions of modernization that regard ethnic conflict as "a traditional but unusually stubborn impediment to modernization" (Ibid.). The third trend in modernization theory "interpret ethnic conflict as an integral part- even product- of the processes of modernization itself" (Ibid.). It should be stressed, however, that the modernization theory has been criticized elsewhere as a Western centric view that paid little attention to the traditional values of the Third World societies.

1.2.4 Enemy System Theory

This theory holds that basic human needs divide people into out-groups (enemies) and in-groups (allies). The process of socialization connects self and group identities. Ethnic identity is particularly strong as it gives a sense of belonging, security and meaning. Thus, an attack on an ethnic group is felt both at individual and group levels. This sense of victimization opens up to violence and the sense of group identity serves as a justification to perpetuate violence. Individuals in violence thus feel no or little sense of guilt (Cunningham, 2001). In the words of Julius

> …the perpetuation of aggression is insured by the victimization of one group up on another… These reciprocal hostile actions stimulate and enlarge the opponent's historical enmity and validate each other's dehumanization… Victimization is the process that leads to the final behavioural action of the cycle… Since each attack triggers the process in the other, the two adversaries are locked in an ever expanding and vigorous dance of hostility (as cited in Cunningham, 2001).

These cycles of violence are still reinforced by chosen traumas. Chosen traumas lead victims to contemplate about past injustices and sufferings leading ultimately to a sense of entitlement or payment for past wrongs. In short, chosen traumas serve as justification for further violence (Ibid.).

1.2.5 The 'Path Dependent' Approach

Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd (2004) also propose a different theory of ethnicity and ethnic-based conflict, which they call it as "path dependence" approach. In their own words, the path dependence approach;

> [sees] ethnicity as a distinctive type of 'thin' concept which always requiring additional content, and locating it as one factor among many, which, depending on the tightness or looseness of their interlinkages and mutual feedback mechanisms, may form a path dependent self-reproductive system generating communal opposition and ethnic conflict (Ruane and Todd, 2004).

For them, ethnicity is only part of a system that cannot and should not be taken as a stand-alone point of analysis. Ethnicity is always interlinked with other complex categories. These categories are in turn embedded in sets of interlocking and intersecting power structures, which can generate a core conflict of interests. The categories result in an overarching ethnic division as they produce a multiplicity of 'sub-communities' at neighbourhood, local, town and regional levels. Such systems tend to have potent self-reproductive properties. Once solidarist networks and linkages are formed feedback mechanisms will reproduce them: to exclude oneself from one's community entails the danger of becoming vulnerable and defenceless. At this level, the merger of ethnicity with other characteristics reformulates the ethno-cultural symbol as a stronger imperative (Ibid.). The distinction between 'us' and 'them' becomes clearer now:

> Those who have defined their own qualities as civilized and progressive have a strong interest in not blurring or qualifying that definition by admitting value to the opposite qualities (Ibid.).

In abstract, Ruane and Todd believe that ethnicity cannot be dissolved into a general theory of conflict. The ethnic mode of categorisation is a strong way of situating oneself in space and time. This is especially true when ethnicity is dealt with in conjunction with other categories like class and religion (Ibid.). The convergence of these different categories with ethnic differences can lead to conflicts. As such, ethnic-based conflict resides in on a continuum with other types of conflicts, rather than being qualitatively distinct from them (Ibid.).

Generally, the above discussions on conceptual and theoretical debates surrounding ethnic-based conflicts imply that the causes for ethnic-based conflicts are various. Such conflicts can have their causes in economic, political, social and cultural structures and imperatives. Identity in general, and ethnic identity in particular, can only be a cause for conflict as long as other intervening variables are there. Therefore, labelling a conflict as ethnic-based does not and should not imply that ethnicity is the sole cause of conflict at any rate. The nomenclature ethnic-based conflict largely emanates from the ethnic character of groups involved in conflict.

1.2.1 Conflict Transformation: Methodological Approaches

Conflict transformation is a process of building peace by transforming a violent system into a peaceful one through long term endeavours. This process is a multi-dimensional one as it includes changes in the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict (Lederach as cited in Miall, 2006). Similarly, Miall (2004) defines conflict transformation as "a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflicts".

Conflict transformation assumes conflict as an agent of both social control and social change (Reimann, 2005). Conflict transformation theorists argue the relationships and structure of parties may be embedded in contradictory relationships that extend beyond the particular site of conflicts. As such, contemporary conflicts require something beyond the reframing of positions and the discovery of win-win outcomes (Swanstron and Weissmann, 2005).

Conflict transformation also targets the restoration of order and harmony of the conflicting parties with orientation towards the future (Boege, 2006). The pursuit for outcomes in conflict transformation has two elements. The first is a process oriented approach in which mutually negative attitudes and values between parties are addressed. This facilitates communication and cooperation between parties. The second is a change oriented approach that stresses the political imperatives to recognize and empower victims (Reimann, 2005).

As to Väyryen the practice of transforming conflicts involves four types of change: actor transformation, issue transformation, rule transformation and structural transformation (as cited in Miall, 2007). Also, Miall (2007) elaborates five issues that are stressed in emergent theory of conflict transformation which underline the changing nature of conflict elements. These include context (change in the meaning of stakes in conflict), structure (the relationship between actors and institutions), actors (as results of interests and mental formations), changes of goals (affecting the incompatibilities in conflict) and the level of events (referring to behaviour, communications, perceptions and cognitions of all actors).

Johan Galtung's transcend model is also another important contribution for the theoretical development of conflict transformation. The transcend model is a triangular depiction of three constituents, viz. attitude, behaviour and contradiction represented by A, B and C respectively(□kerlund, 2001; Galtung, 2007).

The ABC triangle has the advantage of relating the attitudinal, behavioural and contradiction elements in a two-way causation. In the first place, it is the contradiction that serves as the source of the behaviour and attitudes in conflict. In this regard, the behavioural aspect leads to incompatibilities due to the physical and behavioural acts of violence of the parties involved in violence. The behavioural aspect works equally for all parties whenever it is as a result of contradiction over similar interests. The attitudes of the parties are also outcomes of the contradiction developed in a similar fashion. Since the perceptions of the parties are derived from similar contradiction through imitation and projection, the conflicting parties share similar attitudes. Thus, similar attitudes and behaviour patterns derived from contradiction serve the purpose of transforming conflicts (Galtung, 1973).

Generally, conflict transformation is a concept that touches on various tasks. Schmid (2000), for instance, identifies the following features of conflict transformation process: focus on developmental process of a conflict rather than on its end point; recognition of the ways through which conflict transforms relationships, communications and perceptions; the desire to transform the destructive nature of conflicts to constructive imperatives; focus on structural transformative imperatives; and the involvement of wide range of actors including the conflicting parties themselves, local individuals and communities, and third parties (as cited in Botes, 2003).

1.2.2 Ethnic-based Conflicts in Ethiopia

1.2.2.1 Overview of Causes and Characteristics of Conflict in Ethiopia

A manual on conflict management and resolution prepared by the Amhara National Regional State's (ANRS) Security Affairs Office identifies different features of conflict in the Ethiopian context. The economic features of conflicts revolve around resource distribution and utility and levels of economic development. The economic issues in conflict rest up on unfair resource distribution and claims of ownership, structural rivalry for resource control and ensuing results of economic development endeavours that shift balance of power (ANRS, 2009).

Alemayehu Fentaw (2009) also cites competition for resources as a prominent cause of conflict. Evidences are available in the lowland areas of Ethiopia, where pastoralist clashes have a long history.

The social features of conflicts in Ethiopia cut across numerous variables. Cultural and religious interactions, unemployment status, ethnic and language differences, the nature of nexus between cultural practices and administrative structures and the nature of societal/communal livelihood are some of the factors (ANRS, 2009). The nature of political leadership is identified as a prime factor that amounts to the political features of conflict in Ethiopia. The specifics in the political category include questions of authority, power sharing and the nature of governance and leadership, among others. Culture is also identified as one factor in conflict. The cultural aspect is nonetheless acknowledged as a feature constituting potential values for conflict resolution (Ibid.).

Generally, those causes of conflicts can be summarized under two general categories: objective and subjective causes. The objective causes constitute those actual factors that have practical socio-

economic and political implications for the parties in conflict. Resources and issues that revolve around power and authority are some examples of objective causes of conflict (Alemayehu, 2009). The subjective causes of conflict are constituted mainly by psychological components. Some examples of subjective causes of conflict include perceptual and attitudinal variables like frustration, distrust and enemy images (Cunningham, 2001).

1.2.2.2 Dealing with Ethnic-based Conflicts in Ethiopia: Normative and Institutional Aspects

The prevailing normative approach to deal with conflicts in Ethiopia since 1991 has been ethno-linguistic federalism. The federalist approach was adopted mainly to resolve the nationalist dilemma, which has triumphed since the formation of the modern Ethiopian polity.

A federal political system is a system of organization that combines the principles of 'shared rule' and 'self-rule' (McGarry and O'Leary, 2005). In a federalist political system there are at least two entities: federal government and regional units. These entities exercise separate authorities as enshrined in the constitution. At the same time, the two entities share some authorities, i.e. concurrent powers. In this system citizens are guaranteed with the right to elect the federal and regional government representatives. The other peculiar feature of a genuine federalist political system is the fact that the federal government cannot unilaterally alter power sharing arrangements without the consent of the regional entities (Ibid.).

Ideally, federalism is conceived as having the potential for transforming conflicts. In the Ethiopian context, federalism is presumed to redirect conflicts to constructive primes so as to rebuild the nation (Tsegaye, 2010). The normative framework in Ethiopia, including the constitutional basis, accentuates the prevention, management, settlement and transformation of conflicts. The framework sheds light on the legal and political resources available to handle incompatibility of interests of different actors through the development of various laws, strategies and plans as emanating from the constitution (Ibid.).

In line with these principles of federalist political systems, the Ethiopian constitution has laid the legal framework for the establishment of regional states. Article 46(2) of the constitution provides for the establishment of regional states on the basis of settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the people concerned. There are nine regional states and two city administrations that constitute the Ethiopian state. Article 52 of the constitution gives the regional administrations powers that advance self-government while article 50(2) accords regional administrations with the right to establish and run their own legislative, executive and judicial organs. The sovereignty of regional states is also stipulated in the constitution as it gives them the power to enact and execute their respective constitutions (Article 52), to have their respective flags (Article 3) and to determine their respective working languages (Article 5).

After embarking on the institutionalization of ethnic federalism, the Ethiopian government has been undertaking decentralization activities to strengthen the capacities of regional and local governments in two phases. The first phase of decentralization conducted between 1991 and 2001 was aimed at creating and empowering regional governments. This phase enabled the regional governments to establish legislative, executive and judicial institutions to work independently within their jurisdictions (Tegegne and Dickovick , 2010). This phase has brought about some fundamental changes with respect to regional self-rule. Nevertheless, these changes could not reach the lower levels of administration. Particularly, the role of *woreda* was limited due to lack of power, resources and authorities (Ibid.).

These shortcomings paved the way for the second round of decentralization. This phase, known as District Level Decentralization Program (DLDP), was aimed, among others, at strengthening the power of local governments. This has brought significant changes in the administrative capacities of *woredas* as the process enabled them to establish more offices due to the *woreda* block grant scheme which made resources available (Ibid.). These normative approaches have boosted the role of local governments in dealing with conflicts. The *woredas* have accordingly established offices for security affairs.

Institutionally, regional and local governments have been accorded the power to deal with conflicts in different ways. The regional and local governments have the major responsibility to manage conflicts as such. There are different joint forums between the federal and regional governments established in pursuit of these objectives. These include, among others, a Joint House Speakers Forum (for speakers of the parliaments and regional councils), Educational Professionals Forum, Forum of Dialogue between the House of Federation and each regional state, Prosecutors' Joint Forum, the Council of Judges, and Afar and Amhara Cooperation Forum (Alemayehu, 2009).

However, the roles of regional and local governments in dealing with conflicts have been marked by some drawbacks. The understanding of the principles of federalism by regional and local governments' officials is one such a problem. Failure to develop a legal and institutional framework, the prevalence of parochial views and localized interests and a lack of capacity are the suspects for the problem (Ibid.). Above all, the lack of administrative capacities of some regional states, particularly of the peripheral ones, has huge implications. This problem is manifested by the differences in terms of skilled administrative and technical personnel across regional states (Keller, 2007). Moreover, efforts by the government to establish and to maintain closer contact with the local population have been undermined by this lack of capacity. This has particularly

resulted in different attitudes of ethnic communities towards the government (Ibid.). This is assumed to be an eminent challenge for the government in its attempt to deal with conflicts when it envisages the inclusion of the populace in transforming conflicts.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

2.1.1 Causes of the Conflict in the Study Area

Since the conflict in the study area involves two ethnically categorised actors, it can be taken as interethnic conflict. Yet, causes for a conflict cannot be relegated to a mere ethnic differences. The same holds true for the study area. The conflict in the area is a result of various variables that cut across economic, political, social and cultural imperatives. These imperatives can be dealt separately in three categories. As such, there are structural, proximate and triggering causes of the conflict.

2.1.1.1 Structural Causes of the Conflict

There are various structural causes of the conflict in the study area. These are causes that have been deeply entrenched into the configuration of the communities of the two *woreda*. Pervading the practices and structures of the communities, these are causes whose manifestations are made clear through the proximate and triggering causes of violence.

The relative economic underdevelopment of the area as compared to other parts of the country is one factor that tells a lot about the conflict. Chronic poverty is the characteristic feature of the area. This fact is vindicated by the low level of basic infrastructural coverage. Developmental endeavours to provide social services and infrastructural facilities lay at an infant stage. The number of health care centres and schools in both communities are handful.

Historically, the area has not attracted sufficient governmental attention owing to its peripheral location and the patterns of population settlement. The pastoralist way of life of the Semurobi residents resulting in constant mobility and dispersed population settlement patterns of Kewot *woreda* residents have remained specific barricades.

Low level of functional specialization can also be identified as a structural cause of conflict in the area. This factor can be explained more precisely based on plain pastoralism and farming distinction. The dominant activities that serve as sources of livelihood for both communities are farming and animal husbandry. The Kewot *woreda* residents practice both farming and animal husbandry while the Semurobi population is largely pastoralist. Yet, there are few Semurobi residents who practice farming. Farming and animal husbandry in the area are conducted in a traditional form. Thus, the practices serve the only purpose of sustaining the subsistence way of life. Moreover, market exchanges are undertaken on a weekly basis to fulfil the daily household needs. Apart from subsistence agriculture, the communities have no other major source of income. This narrow base of local economy traps both communities in a competition for similar resources, particularly land and water.

Natural resources limitation is the other structural cause of the conflict in Kewot and Semurobi *woreda*. The results of such limitation become vibrant in conjunction with the agricultural practice of the area on which the livelihood of the total population depends. Shortage of arable land in the area is a case in point. Through time, population increase in the area has led to smaller land holding size. This shortage is acute in Kewot *woreda* where the total population practice farming. Data from North Shewa Economic Development Department shows that the average land holding size for Kewot *woreda* in 1996/7 was 0.9 hectares per household (Atkilt, 2003). This is much lower than the year 1992/3 in which the average land holding size was 1.44 hectares per household. The growing

shortage of arable land has at times led farmers from Kewot *woreda* to push into the areas of Semurobi land holders. A focus group discussant from Semurobi, for instance, tells this story:

> The Amharas want to expand their farmland. They move into our land after ploughing theirs. For they know the benefit they gain from our land, they tell us that they have no knowledge of our border limit. But we cannot allow them to push into our border because we are well aware of our property as they are (Focus Group Discussion with elders, October 2011).

Those statements do not only inform the desire of the Kewot *woreda* farmers to expand their farmlands. They give an insight into the response from Semurobi land holders. The interest of both parties expressed in terms of land upshots in competition. Attempts to prevent Kewot farmers by the *Afars* witness numerous cases of violence that resulted in human and animal casualties. The incidences of violence are even greater during harvesting season or *meher* when every plot of land is desperately needed.

Farmers demand for more land is even aggravated by decreasing productivity of land. An aged informant from Kewot explains this problem as follows:

> I recall my parents harvesting more amount of crop from a relatively smaller plot of land than we do now from a relatively larger plot of land. We have used much of the land exhaustively. We worry for our children when we think of the future (Interview with KI-A, October 2011).

This personal account is further strengthened by a local resident from Kewot *woreda* who claims that "much land which had been covered by natural forest in the past is now devoid of trees; people clear trees in search of more farmlansd and fuel woods" (Interview with KI-B, October 2011).

Natural resources limitation in the area also accounts for shortage of pastureland. Particularly, the two communities compete over wet areas that serve as grazing lands. The risk of violence emanating as a result is even greater during dry seasons as the size of grazing lands falls due to rain shortage (Interview with KI-G, October 2011). Water is also the other scarce resource in the area. The area is afflicted by limited sources of water due to arid nature of the climate. People in the area travel 20-40 kilo metres to fetch drinking water from the nearest town, viz. *Shewarobit* (Interview with KI-G, October 2011).

In abstract, the economic basis of the communities largely explains the structural causes of the conflict. Exclusive dependence on agriculture at a time when its practice cannot sufficiently sustain the livelihood of the communities for reasons of natural scarcity, population pressure and loss of biodiversity are what constitute the 'Pandora's Box'. The limitations involved in there easily set the ground for competition.

2.1.1.2 Proximate Causes of the Conflict

The proximate causes of the conflict in the area are those that contribute to the eruption or escalation of violence. These causes have their origin in the structural ones but assume their own shape for the particular political, social and cultural practices.

Political and institutional drawbacks account for much of the problem in the area both in terms of conflict escalation and intricacies in transforming the conflict. The starting point of analysis here is, despite all its merits, ethnicity based federalism. Federalism was largely a response to the ethno-national discord that pervaded the political scene since Ethiopia's formation as a multi-national polity. While focusing on the "big house", however, the federal formula devolved national disorder to subnational and local levels (Tsegaye, 2010). Communal conflicts involving

human casualty and loss of property that are not directed against the federal government have often been ignited by ethnic-based federalism as to the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2009).

In a bid to resolve old contradictions, the federalist arithmetic conceded to new conflicts. These new conflicts are underlined by competition for new power, resources and opportunities. The awareness of new self was thus accentuated by demands for self-governance and autonomy, and distinct identity (Tsegaye, 2010).

Falling under two administrative regions, viz. Amhara and Afar regions, the two communities are now bestowed with the gist of 'self-administration'. Yet the administration of the Semurobi *woreda* in particular rested on insufficient grounds of self-administration from the vantage point of the federal constitution's vision for use of own languages. The working language of the Afar region is Amharic for all the practical and historical reasons. Undeniably, this loop hole has practical implications for Semurobi *woreda* administration for it simply fell short of authentic self-governance. The writer of the paper, for instance, needed translators to talk to some *kebele* chairpersons. This is a perplexing experience from the point of view of the fact that the official working language is Amharic. Exceedingly, the communication barrier in inter-*woreda* cooperation has led to some misunderstandings among officials.

Preoccupation with political configuration at the national level has also restricted the capacity of local level administrations particularly at the initial stages of devising the federal formula. In view of this, the government has taken on some activities of decentralisation. Notably, the District Level Decentralisation Program (DLDP) conducted since 2001 has contributed a lot to avoid predicaments at the local levels of administration, particularly at the *woreda* level which accorded them with the power to manage budgetary affairs (Tegegne & Dickovick, 2010).

Nevertheless, this attempt of strengthening *woreda* level

administration is far from being labelled as successful in the study area. Lack of administrative capacity in the *woreda* is observable. This deficiency hugely impacts on the endeavours of the *woreda* and *kebele* officials in dealing with the conflict effectively. A youth focus group discussant seems to capture this problem:

> Officials from both sides come and speak to us always. They just tell us to stop violence and go. The *woreda* administrations could not bring a viable solution for us. Both have their weaknesses (Focus Group Discussion with youths, October 2011).

The other administrative problem in the area with its contribution to the conflict is the issue of governance. Alemayehu's (2009) observation that misunderstandings that emanate from flawed comprehension of the federalist principles by local officials prompt the advocacy of parochial views and localised interests holds right in the area. Affiliation to one's own ethnic group and the sympathies emanating thereby could not accord the merits of trust and confidence to the officials. The impacts of this discourse are ostensibly experienced within the formal institutional conduct. A *woreda* official from Semurobi points to this conundrum:

> Sometimes we spend our time trying to assert our positions. The points can be realistic. But there are times when we do a great deal of it on the basis of emotions and attachments (Interview with Habahaba, November 2011).

The statements spearhead to the fact that the officials are distracted from focusing on the long term aim of transforming the conflict. Records of official deliberations conducted between the two *woreda* add impetus to this argument. Discussions that focus on previous misdeeds, individual cases of violence perpetration and reverbs of blames take the lead. Considerations of plundered properties similarly denote grand agendas of meetings.

Furthermore, the personal interests of officials at times aggravate the resentment of the communities at. The writer was informed of a case in which the deeds of local officials disappointed the residents of Semurobi community in *Harre Hamo kebele* (Interview with KI-C, October 2011). Once a land was divided between the two *woreda* to settle previous dispute over its ownership, the residents of the *Harre Hamo kebele* were expecting their share. Yet, the share was divided among the local officials (Focus Group Discussion with elders, November 2011).

Generally, political and institutional drawbacks that stretch from the national level down to the local levels of administration have their part in the conflict. Failure to identify the local context of the conflict, institutional limitations of the *woreda* and *kebele* administrations, and lack of administrative capacity of local officials and their incapacity or unwillingness to capture the bigger picture contribute to the conundrum by throwing in abrupt factors to the conflict in context.

The culture of violence deeply entrenched into the structural norms of both communities is the other strong imperative that explains violence in the area. Particularly, the values both communities embrace with regard to homicide and the ways through which they treat individuals who commit homicide play a considerable role in reproducing the cycle of violence. Looking at these traditional practices is appropriate at this juncture.

The Kewot *woreda* inhabitants, for instance, have their own way of praising their Amhara kinsmen who kills an ethnic Afar. An Amhara individual who kills an Afar person should present his blood stained knife with which he killed as a proof to be shown to his fellows. Once he did this his fellows would treat him with respect and appreciation. If the killer is unmarried, the chance for him to get married is higher. If the killer is an already married man, his wife acquires a high degree of respect and privileges. For instance, she will not be expected to line up in a queue to fetch water. The killer also leads a choir of traditional music in ceremonies like wedding. Even on his death a special ceremony will be held for his funeral.

Similarly, an Afar individual who kills an ethnic Amhara will receive parallel treatment from his fellow kinsmen. Once he is celebrated as a "hero", his knife would not be used to slaughter animals. Rather, the knives of those who have not acquired the status of "hero" would be used for similar purposes. Moreover, he will take the leading role of singing in a crew and will dance on a separate floor where only individuals with a similar status will be allowed to dance on. The more people he kills, the higher the privilege he acquires. He will hang on various decorations on his ears, neck and wrists to show his status.

Inherently, these traditions of upholding homicides reproduce a cycle of violence. Young members of either community will be instigated to commit homicide in search of such respects. They will also be forced to do so for they will be humiliated by their friends and fellows until they do the same thing (Interview with KI-F, October 2011). It is also relatively harder for them to get a bridal partner unless they acquire the respect and esteem that emanates as a result (Interview with KI-D, October 2011). On the other hand, members of either community will take revenge for the losses of their kin(s) besides the desire of not appearing cowards as of the tradition.

In short, the culture of violence expressed in terms of homicidal appreciation is one factor that gives an insight into how violence is sustained in the area. The attitude of the communities that treasures the tradition of vendetta simply produces and reproduces a vicious circle of human casualties as the cultural set up cannot enable them bring the violence to a natural halt.

2.1.1.3 Triggering Causes of the Conflict

Triggering causes of the conflict in the study area are generally made up of single key events and acts. For all the attitudinal dimensions built in the mind set ups of the communities, homicides committed on the basis of ethnic identity constitute one such a set of causes for large scale violence. There are cases when the attitudes of the communities simply result in homicide. An official from Kewot *woreda* brings on such an illustration into light in which misperception led to homicide. In his own words,

> One morning an individual from the Amhara side sent his younger brother to a field to herd cattle. At the end of the day, however, the younger brother did not return home. Later he was found shot dead in the field. The older brother had no doubt that the *Afars* killed his brother. After few days, he waited hidden in a bush to avenge the death of his brother. He killed three Afar women who were returning home after completing their market businesses. Nevertheless, it was found out later that his deceased brother killed himself with a gun he took to herd his cattle (Interview with Ayalew, October 2011).

This is only one instance which tells the consequences of the local communities' attitudes. Another related account raised in a focus group discussion reveals same corollary:

> An Amhara individual from faraway place went to Semurobi for his personal business. Later, however, only his dead body returned home. He was just killed not because he was local resident but merely because he was an Amhara (Interview with Ayalew, October 2011).

It should be mentioned here that competition and rivalry over limited resources in the area have practically shaped their attitudes. This attitudinal dimension is mirrored by the attempts of the two parties to identify themselves in terms of classification based on ethnicity. Almost all local residents, to whom the writer talked in the study area including focus group discussants, identify corresponding community members as "*Afaroch*" or "*Amarawoch*" which literally mean the *Afars* or the *Amharas*, respectively.

Cattle raiding is the other triggering cause of the conflict in the area. An interview with an official from Kewot *woreda* informed the writer that large scale cattle raiding occurs as a means of rehabilitation after loss of cattle due to drought (Interview with Zeleke, October 2011). Nevertheless, the official is of the opinion that cattle raiding on large scale has declined due to strong legal actions. A focus group discussant in *Sefiberet* also agrees with the official's opinion but attributes the decline to a different reason. As to him:

> Cattle raids is decreasing now as compared to the previous days. Both communities are now more careful in protecting their cattle. We deploy our cattle together. We herd them in groups and we use arms to protect our cattle and ourselves from raiders (Focus Group Discussion with youths, November 2011).

All the same, the decline works for raids conducted by organised groups. However raids conducted on individual basis are still prevalent. The gathering of peace committees every fifteen days deliberating on returning of raided cattle infer into the prevalence of such raids.

The other reason for which raiding takes place is associated with the traditional custom of the communities. Young members of both communities need large amount of cattle when they intend to join the marriage institution. Relatively large amount of property

possession is required to get bridal partner and to hold a lavish wedding ceremony as well (Interview with KI-D, October 2011). Raids purport to violence in such a way that either members of the community would take measures of counter-raiding both as revenge and as means of regaining lost cattle. Elder focus group discussants from Semurobi *woreda* also point out the inability of local officials to control raids as a factor that adds to the problem (Focus Group Discussion with elders, October 2011).

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the area can also be cited as a triggering cause of conflict. Possession of small arms and light weapons can be attributed to the culture of violence in the area. It is considered as a viable means of self-protection against violent clashes that occur during communal interactions. For violent attacks that occur in market places and during other activities, as well as during raiding acts, the possession of firearms is considered an indispensable choice.

The abundant availability of small arms and light weapons all over the study area on its own makes the situation all the more complicated. The armaments easily trigger violence particularly when members of the two communities face each other over contentious issues. An elder focus group discussant from Kewot *woreda* discloses the following thrust:

> The large availability of weapons causes a lot of troubles. During raids and interactions in areas of disputed land possession, the use of weapons is always there. We regret the losses and casualties that come from the use of weapons but we believe that we cannot live without one (Focus Group Discussion with elders, November 2011).

It is noticeable that small arms and light weapons pervade every activity of the communities. Besides, the problem is even made worse owing to the increasing number of modern armaments.

Statements from an elder focus group discussant in *Sefiberet* reinforce this stance:

> In the old days, weapons were more or less traditional. Mostly, knives and swords were used. But now every household has one or more modern firearms. Automatic weapons like AK-47 are largely available (Ibid.).

For possession of weapons is considered as an obligatory tool of self-protection and attacks, the residents of the area are prompted to acquire firearms at any cost. A local resident from Kewot *woreda* informed the writer about a case in which food aid provided to Semurobi residents was traded for firearms (Interview with KI-C, October 2011). The trend of acquiring firearms in part shows how production resources are transformed into conflict sources. Moreover, the wide availability and usage of armaments structurally hampers the culture of deliberation and tolerance as individuals can easily resort to the use of weapons when disagreements arise. Resource damages which are conducted intentionally by both communities also constitute the category of triggering causes of conflict in the study area. Members of both communities indulge themselves in burning ranges and damaging crops. Burning ranges are part of a strategy to prohibit each other from expanding into the holdings of one's own territory. Both communities use this as a means of containment (Interview with KI-A, October 2011). Semurobi residents as well largely use the strategy of damaging crops to prevent further encroachment attempts of farmers into their lands. These acts are also committed for the purpose of revenge once an action of burning ranges and/or damaging crops start out from either community members. The communities also damage water wells which either party uses for similar reasons.

2.2 Dynamics of the Conflict

2.2.1. The Process of Conflict Formation and Reformation in the Study Area

Before embarking on the analysis of conflict formation in the area, a brief overview of the pre-conflict scenario is of modest importance. This particularly helps to understand how the configuration of the structural, proximate and triggering causes produces and reproduces the conflict in the area.

The local residents of the area have a distant memory of peaceful relations in some aspects driven by dependent interests. An elder informant from *Kumame* explains this condition as follows:

> The Amhara used to allow us to utilize their post-harvest crop residues. Our cattle used to graze on their lands. They allowed us so since they considered the dung of the cattle as a natural fertilizer (Interview with KI-E, October 2011).

This interaction could be expected to have opened up for harmonious relationships in other spheres as well. A key informant from Semurobi also mentions other forms of exchange like random cattle sales and traditional medicines which are still practiced to a lower extent (Interview with KI-F, October 2011).

Putting the serene relationship that rested on the basis of reciprocal exchange in a historical context helps one grasp how the structural causes paved the way for conflict. The economic underdevelopment that pervades the area coupled with natural resources limitation is assumed to have impaired the harmonious relations of the communities. The resource dependent relation of the communities cannot be expected to sustain itself in view of

decreasing productivity of land and loss of biodiversity over times. Further explanation of this process of conflict formation can be provided using the human needs theory of conflict. John Burton (1997) notes frustrations that emanate when people are prevented from fulfilling their needs ensue in conflict whenever the needs are about basic means of survival like security, recognition, development, and physiological and physical demands (as cited in Cunningham, 2001). In the study area, resources required for the fulfilment of their livelihood like livestock, arable and grazing lands, and water are issues of survival. The intense use of these resources cum increasing population growth and the growing depletion of the resources due to artificial and natural factors have brought the two communities into a trap of competition designed for control and ownership intents. This competition is characterised by the attempts the communities make push into each others' territory and the desire they show to control the limited water resources like ponds and water wells, and the raids they conduct to increase cattle holding sizes. Once the communities are aware of the competition over the resources, they employ their own means of protecting their resources and containing the expansionist desire of the other party. Herding cattle through organised groups, burning ranges and damaging crops and water resources are the particular strategies both parties use in pursuit of the containment/preventive objective. In other words, the strategies employed by the communities in view of the prevailing competition result in alienation. Herbert's assumption adds impetus here as he claims that inter-communal conflicts emanate as a result of fears and concerns about survival associated with basic needs (as cited in Cunningham, 2001).

Edward Azar's (1990) concept of protracted social conflict, which is defined as a pattern of hostile interactions between groups that strive to ensure the fulfilment of their basic needs, is also an additional imperative that fits into the context of the study area. The case in the area does not only resemble the definition of protracted social conflict. Rather, the conflict in the area is structurally

determined by the level of economic underdevelopment that prevails. This coincides with Azar's assumption as economic underdevelopment, in combination with communal or identity cleavages, is what causes protracted social conflicts. Ostensibly, competition over limited resources (particularly emanating from the underdeveloped nature of the area) is the factor that shapes the communal cleavage in the area in precedence. Generally, competition, fears and concerns, and alienation revolving around the axis of basic survival needs constitute the foundation of the conflict between the two communities.

The process of conflict formation in the area cannot be relegated merely to ethnic differences. The feature of the conflict may not in fact be different from the national context. In Ethiopia, ethnic-based conflicts are not necessarily based on primordial sentiments since many conflicts in the country relate with social, political and economic reasons (Berhanu, 2008). The causes of the conflict in the area ascertain that the conflict between the two communities subscribes into the national context.

Once the conflict formation process is explained, the conflict reformation process and the ethnic nature of the conflict can be dealt together. It should be mentioned here that the ethnic dimension of the conflict is not treated at first hand in this explanation because the writer could not mention it as a foreground cause due to lack of indicators. Ethnic difference is simply taken as one among the various imperatives of the conflict. Ethnic difference appears as a strong factor in the conflict reformation process; thus, allowing the conflict to be identified as an ethnic one.

The contradiction of the two communities shaped by the structural causes of the conflict is the factor that leads the communities to identify themselves along ethnic lines. Though the contradiction is based on competition for similar agricultural resources, individual members of the two communities pursue their interests within a group framework. Individual members of the Kewot community

identify themselves as members subsumed into the community on the basis of lingual, religious and economic practice (particularly farming) similarities. As such, an individual member of the Kewot community is considered by the group, and considers himself/herself, as member of the community for speaking Amharic, for adhering to Christianity and for practicing farming. The Kewot community thus primarily defines itself as an "Amhara" community though there are non-Christian individuals who are not yet spared from the conflict. The identification of Muslim individuals in the community with an "Amhara" identity is made possible due to sharing samelanguage and economic livelihood. Above all, these individuals are members of the community for the "Afar-Amhara" conflict is determined primarily by the structural causes of the conflict.

Similarly, individuals from Semurobi community pursue their interests in the name of their group defined on the basis of lingual, religious and economic practice (particularly pastoralism) similarities. Individuals from Semurobi are members of a group constituted by Afar-speaking, Muslim and pastoralist members. These identities have simply created an "Afar" Semurobi community. The Afar community of Semurobi is also characterised by self-identity on the basis of clan lineage.

The limited nature of resources to be competed for frames the competition itself on a group basis. The knowledge of the viability of acting together and the benefits of sharing liability to a group are also the factors that set the competition in a similar manner. The easiest means of forming groups for that purpose is made available through ethnic differences. The differentiation of the communities along ethnic lines is also reinforced by the desire of either community to identify the other community in a similar way. Membership to an ethnic group is as strongly reinforced by the intention of 'outsiders' to distinguish the membership of others to a group as the individuals desire to ascertain their belongingness to a particular group (Barth, 1969). This line of argument can in

fact be illustrated by some theories on the formation of ethnic identity. Firstly, the desire of both groups to identify themselves as members of their respective communities can have an explanation in the situational approach to ethnicity because the group identity desire of members of the communities comes from the advantage they see in belonging to a particular group (Isajiw, 1993). The advantages of group membership are seen in two ways: knowledge of the viability of acting together and the benefits of sharing liability to a group. Secondly, as the subjectivist approach holds, after identifying themselves as members of a particular group based on rational choice the contemplation of belongingness to a group becomes a social-psychological realty to the communities through time (Ibid.). True enough, this point shows how the ethnic mode of categorisation sustains the ethnic essentials of the conflict in the study area.

The change in the political landscape of the country since 1991 has its own role in reinforcing the ethnic line of thinking. Owing to the reconstruction of the Ethiopian state as a multi-lingual and multi-cultural polity, the ethno-cultural differentiation of groups has been pronounced more loudly than ever (Tsegaye, 2010). This has its own stake in invigorating the ethnic line of thinking in the area. The identification of the communities along ethnic lines directs into how conflict in the area is conceived on a group basis. One manifestation is cattle raiding which is usually conducted by organised groups. Homicides committed on the basis of ethnicity and resource damages with the intents of harming the other party are also contemplated along the line of group thinking. In short, violence in the area is thought out and conducted on the basis of communal differentiation.

Since ethnicity has become a "social-psychological" reality for both communities, an attack on either community is felt both at individual and group levels. In this way one instance of violence opens the door for further violence. The Enemy System theory's explanation serves a great deal here. The sense of victimization at group level serves as a justification to perpetuate violence as individuals feel no or little sense of guilt (Cunningham, 2001). It is for this reason that individual members of the two communities indulge themselves in violent undertakings. In addition to the culture of violence, the assumption that violence is conducted in defence of one's own identity and ethnic group allures individuals to do so. Past injustices and sufferings, also called chosen traumas, reproduce the cycle of violence in the present and the future. In other words, acts of revenge and culture of violence occasion cyclical violence that count for loss of human and animal lives, and resource damages.

In the final analysis, the conflict in the study area is a result of various factors intertwined in the political, economic, social and cultural practices of the area. Ethnic animosity is just one among many factors that explain the dynamics of the conflict. All the more so, ethnicity in the area is a catalystic factor that only adds to other fundamental problems. The path-dependent approach to ethnicity seems to capture the epitome. This is consistant with of the theory that ethnicity is a potent force of situating oneself in space and time especially when ethnic mode of categorisation is dealt with other categories (Ruane & Todd, 2004). In addition to the Afar-Amhara identity, religious and economic livelihood differences, chronic level of underdevelopment, low level of functional specialisation and natural resource limitations are the other major causes of the problem.

2.2.2. Changes and Continuities in the Conflict

Apparently, the protracted nature of the conflict in the area continues to be a glaring fact. Though the conflict has a long history, so for instance, the efforts of officials and local residents could not bring about radical change. The conflict is now characterised by emerging trends.

One such emerging trend in the area is the beginning of intentional assault on women. Women used to serve as bridges for the two communities both in times of relative peace and violent conflicts. Since the killing of women was considered inappropriate culturally, women particularly used to sustain the mutual social and interactive activities of the rivaling communities. In times of turmoil, Afar women used to attend markets in different *kebele* of Kewot *woreda* with out fears. However, lately women are becoming victims of violence. Killing women is particularly perpetrated by Kewot community members. In one of the focus group discussions, a member of the Semurobi community claims that:

> Earlier, no one used to kill women. Women used to trade freely in markets. Where men cannot go to market places often for fear of violence. But now we cannot dare sending our women to markets particularly at times of discord. Amharas did not use to kill women; but this is changing now (Focus Group Discussion with youths, October 2011).

Killing women has huge implications that go beyond the cultural repercussions. The interaction of the two communities is becoming narrower. Particularly, the impairment of trade exchanges between the two communities limits the advantages to be gained from cultural and material exchange at best and damages the foundations of inter-communal interactions at worst. Needless to say, the frustrations that emanate from this new trend inevitably open up for revenge and wider scale violence. For instance, there are members of the Afar community who were distressed at the loss of twenty seven Afar women in a market place known as *Kureberet* few years back. During his stay in the area the writer was informed that there was no guarantee for violence not to erupt in the area owing to the prevalent exasperation in the Semurobi community after the latest loss of three Afar women few months ago (Focus Group Discussion with youths, October 2011).

Nonetheless, this new trend of killing women is not only explained by the consequence of revenge. It also vividly shows the level of growing animosities. A focus group discussant from *Kumame* reveals the following:

> Men killing men is not unusual. It has been there as long as one can remember the inception of the violence. Lately, our women are becoming intentional targets. The Amharas say 'unless we destroy Afar women, we cannot get rid of the *Afars* as a whole' (Ibid.).

This is a striking account that shows the worsening magnitude of negative attitudinal perceptions. In part, it hints at how the enemy image has deeply entrenched into the thoughts of the communities. The other new trend in the conflict is the killing of animals. Both communities have a high culture of respect for cattle. This is a result of massive dependence on cattle as every part of their lives is associated with cattle. Cattle are sources of immense wealth as they are used for farming and transport, and for their nutritional value as sources of meat and milk. Livestock sales also dominate market exchange for cattle are sources of income especially when individuals are short of money.

Currently, violent incidents involving animal casualties are on the rise. Unsuccessful cattle raid attempts count for animal loss. Owing to the modernisation of small arms and light weapons, the residents have now relatively better means of protecting assaults on humans. This factor is now diverting the tactics of the communities from attacks on humans to attacks on animals. In other words, killing of animals is emerging as a new means of revenge particularly for resource damages and previous cattle losses. A focus group discussant from Kewot explains this new trend as follows:

> In the old days, animals were targets of attacks only in raiding. There was no practice of killing animals.

> Even at times of hot violence we could retreat to avoid human casualty leaving back our cattle (Focus Group Discussion with youths, November 2011).

Cattle casualty is now increasing during raids for either community does not easily give up for raiding due to group herding strategy and possession of modernised armaments; thus leading to more cattle losses than ever before.

Informants from both communities also point out to the growing involvement of the youth in violence. An elder focus group discussant tells the following story:

> Elders work for peace. Women too beg for peace. It is the youth who gets involved in violence. After conflicts are resolved traditionally, those whose discord has not been resolved yet or those who have not been involved in recent conflict trigger violence anew even in market places (Focus Group Discussion with elders, October 2011).

The growing involvement of the youth can be attributed to a factor identified by a youth focus group discussant in Kewot. As to him

> The youth is now desperate. Every youth is looking for better life and source of income. We [the youth] think about how we can go abroad [to the Arab countries] to change our lives (Focus Group Discussion with youths, November 2011).

The statements reveal the level of frustration in the youth for they observe the declining economic viability of the area. Moreover, it is usually the youth that carries out some social activities which bring members of the two communities into closer contact. These activities include farming, herding and collecting fuel woods (Interview with KI-G, October 2011). The chance for violence is

higher especially when those activities are conducted in areas where contentions of ownership and usage rights exist.

Overall, those new patterns tell same story of violence perpetuation in the area. They all count to human and animal casualties, and resource damages. Homicides committed both on men and women, cattle raids and killings manifest the perceptions and outlooks of the communities framed on the basis of enemy image contemplation. The violence in the area, both in its old and new forms, reflects on the deteriorating situation of the basis for peace at least in the short run. Rightly, the violence is the result of the worsening condition of the basic causes of the conflict. In return, the proximate and triggering causes are sustaining the violence besides giving the violence a new shape.

2.3   Conflict Transformation Practice in the Study Area

The larger part of handling the conflict in the area was predominantly tuned along the methods of conflict management and conflict resolution. Conflict transformation as a practice in the study area is a relatively new phenomenon. Possibly, the failure of conflict management and resolution practices to bring radical change paved the way for the resort to conflict transformation.

2.3.1   Resort to the Ideals of Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation practice in the area has a short duration of experiment so far. Conflict transformation as a measure of bringing sustainable peace in the study area was institutionally framed particularly after the onset of Business Process Reengineering (BPR) in the nationwide civil service reform program (Interview with Worku, August 2011). The trend of handling the conflict

since 1991 revolved around practices of conflict management and resolution that encompassed all governmental tires ranging from the federal level to the least level of *kebele*.

Overtime, there was an increasing awareness that the conflict could not effectively be tackled through conflict management and resolution mechanisms. The efforts of conflict management and resolution characterised by lack of coordinated institutional conduct and focus on temporal containment strategies through deployment of security forces had unsighted officials from pursuing the long-run objectives of putting an end to the conflict. Eventually, absence of an explicit termination, temporal protractedness, and fluctuations in intensity and frequency of the conflict have finally led to the resort to conflict transformation ideals.

The resort to conflict transformation was initially directed from the federal level of administration. The Ministry of Federal Affairs (MoFA) envisaged the integration of conflict transformation as the last way of dealing with conflicts next to conflict resolution. The Ministry also advocates rehabilitation, developmental coordination, issue transformation and context transformation as intervention tools for the general process of conflict transformation (MoFA, 8).

The explicit placement of conflict transformation in the *woreda* structure of security affairs is a good step forward. In view of the protracted nature of the conflict, conflict transformation can have irreplaceable role in dealing with the conflict in the area. At least two rationales can be presented here. Firstly, the multifaceted strategies of intervention required for conflict transformation underline the need for multi-level changes including the reformation of communal structures that support violence. In this case, developmental interventions will help address the structural causes of the conflict as the conflict largely reckons on competition for resources. Secondly, the conflict transformation also paves the way for dealing with the proximate and triggering causes of violence. The attitudinal components of the communities in the area expressed in terms of hostile outlooks and the enemy images to each other, and the culture of violence that gains momentum as a result can effectively be addressed within the framework of conflict transformation. This emanates from the fact that actors in conflict can be taken as entities in a continuous change, and thus the goals of the actors can be reconstructed owing to changes in the mind set ups of the actors (Miall, 2007). As such, conflict transformation as a practice simply helps conquer the changing dynamics of the conflict handling techniques.

Yet the combination of conflict resolution and conflict transformation in the organisational structure of conflict handling has some repercussions for conflict resolution. This is reflected by the failure to integrate traditional conflict resolution mechanisms with the institutional arrangement. Even worse, the dominant conflict resolution mechanism in the area, i.e. *shimgilina* is kept at bay. The officials in the area render little attention to the use of shimgilina. An interview with a zonal official at Debre Berhan reveals the reason for the little consideration paid to shimgilina. For him:

> The *shimgilina* process in the area is embedded with problems. The mediators (shemgayoch) do not necessarily focus on the long term aim of resolving conflicts that erupt sporadically in the area. Moreover, the process of *shimgilina* is considered as more of a business source than a cultural value. There are even cases in which the local mediators instigate violence intentionally. Out of the blue, they tell members of either community that the other community is preparing for an assault. Upon receiving such information, members of the misinformed community attack the other ones as a means of pre-emptive strike. The mediators are tempted to air such baseless rumours due to the large amount of ransom paid to them. For single process of shimgilina, fifty to hundred thousand of birr is paid to mediators (Interview with Tsegaye, October 2011).

Apparently, this flawed nature of *shimgilina* has definitive repercussions for the long term aim of transforming the conflict. Sidelining this cultural practice for the reason stated above hardly justifies the relegation of the norm. Its consequence is not only limited to the loss of cultural value. The relegation also contributes for the less emphasis paid to conflict resolution within the institutional arrangement. The point, rather, should be looking for remedy since the situation is now contributing for less than capacity performance.

Generally, the resort to the ideals of conflict transformation stretching from the national level to local level of administration, particularly the *woreda* level, is a result of recognition that activities of conflict management and resolution could not necessarily bring the desired effect. The vision of ending protracted conflicts for constructive purposes can better be served through conflict transformation ideals.

2.3.2 The Practice of Conflict Transformation in the Study Area

This section focuses on the practical aspects of conflict transformation in the study area. The aspects of the transformation practice are addressed from the vantage point of emergent conflict transformation theory elements. This approach intends to address various issues like context, structure, mental worlds of the actors and goals of the actors. Additionally, Galtung's ABC model of conflict transformation, which stands for attitude, behaviour and contradiction, is used as an explanatory technique for addressing and stipulating the variables that configure the conflict and its dynamics.

2.3.2.1 Working on Attitudes: A Way to De-escalation

Owing to the long duration of the violence in the area, the attitudes which the communities reflect to each other are characterised by hostility. While both ethnic and religious differences set the ground for the communities to identify each other, their hostility is largely expressed interms of ethnic difference. Residents of Kewot refer to the residents of Semurobi as "*Afars*" while residents of Semurobi refer to their counterparts as "Amharas". Evidently, such references are used along inimical sentiments. For instance, popular poetic verses in Amharic from Kewot community reflect on this sentiment.

Afaroch metew bilu kebi kebi
Megen ye Yifat lij betiyit kebkabi.

Literally, the verses mean even if the *Afars* are agitated (*possibly for assault*), sons of *Yifat* do not fail to trigger gunfire. *Yifat* is an administrative name used during the previous regimes that includes, but also extends from, Kewot *woreda* of the Amhara regional state. On the one hand, the verses indicate the hostile nature of the relationship between the two communities. On the other hand, the verses imply the depth and scope of enemy image contemplation that is signalled even beyond the area inhabited by the communities in the conflict.

There are also other accounts that reflect the negative attitudes that dominate the mentality of members of the communities. The communities blame each other for triggering violence, for committing homicides and for plundering properties *inter alia*. These blames do not necessarily take into account the rationales for the deeds. They are simply manifestations of the hatred component developed over time. Generally, the attitudes which either community holds towards the other can be summarized as follows:

- The others are our historical and practical enemies.
- The others are land grabbers.
- The others are perpetrators of violence and traitors of peace agreements.
- The others are property looters.
- The others are killers.

Attitude is a very important component of the conflict in the study area since it shapes the context of the conflict. The context in return affects conflict by changing the meanings of the stakes in conflict, and the self-understanding and perceptions of the actors (Miall, 2007). It is as a result of the attitudinal component that the competition for resources which counts as a structural cause is diverted contextually. Thus, the communities perceive their hostile interactions in terms of ethnic and economic practice differences. The attitudinal dimension also shapes the material and psycho-social interests of the communities. The actors in conflict are arrangements of material interests and mental formations shaped

by the social and cultural environment in which they operate, and shaping the environment at the same time (Ibid.). In line to this, the vicious circle of violence characterised by human and animal casualties, and resource damages is sustained by the conscious acts of members of both communities whose psychological makeup is influenced by the culture of violence that pervades both communities.

The complexions surrounding the attitudinal dimension of the conflict necessitate working on the attitudes of the conflicting communities. One of the mechanisms through which the two *woreda* administrations work together on the attitudes of the communities is the peace committee arrangement. A *woreda* official interviewed in *Shewarobit* town mentions that the establishment of the peace committees in the area was made possible through the joint efforts of Afar and Amhara regional administrations (Interview with Zeleke, October 2011). The financial resource that facilitates the conduct of the peace committees is obtained annually from the regional administrations' budget. The composition of the peace committees from both *woreda* envisages the representation of different sections of the communities. As such, elders, women, religious leaders and the youth constitute the membership of the committees. The members of the peace committees are selected at *kebele* level through the summit of the local residents. Educational level, social status (i.e. respect acquired due to achievement), age and experience in mediation are the main selection criteria the residents use to reach on consensus (Interviews with KI-F and KI-G, October 2011).

The joint session of the peace committees from both *woreda* summon every fifteen days. The main objective of the peace committees is to promote the culture of deliberation between members of the communities. Officials from both *woreda* ascertain the functions of the peace committees as follows:

- To discuss on the general status of peace and security in the area.
- To provide inputs for policy frameworks on issues like development and to promote community participation.
- To identify causes of violence in the area and
- To facilitate the return of looted properties, particularly raided animals, to owners (Interview with Habahaba, October 2011).

Peace committees usually involve themselves in identifying individual perpetrators of violence. Upon identifying the causes for sporadic violent incidents, the members of the committees comment on the deeds and provide general suggestions as to what should be the right course of action when disagreements arise. In a nutshell, this general discourse aims at reframing the attitudes of the parties in a conflict through pieces of advice (Interview with KI-F, October 2011).

The other activity that aims at reframing the attitudes of the communities is the promotion of inter-communal interaction. Infrastructural undertakings like transport and communication frameworks are the main links in use to serve the same purpose. A *woreda* official from Semurobi provides an instance in which two roads that connect the two communities were built recently (Interview with Habahaba, October 2011). One road that stretches from *Kureberet kebele* of Kewot to *Asgefen kebele* of Semurobi and the other that stretches from *Medina kebele* of Kewot to *Kumame* town of Semurobi were built through the involvement of the local residents. The engagement of the two communities in such joint activities is an instance that can promote close communication between the two communities apart from creating awareness in the sense that the two communities have issues in common. Moreover, the development of such infrastructures is assumed to play a role in addressing issues of underdevelopment thereby increasing the level of interaction and cultural exchange between the two communities.

The expansion of education in the study area is the other mechanism used by the officials in addressing the attitudinal dimension of the conflict. A former official from Kewot *woreda* points to the efforts of the two *woreda* administrations in building schools across border areas (Interview with Worku, August 2011). The objective of this activity is to enable children from both communities attend their education in similar schools so as to increase the level of interaction. This is a noble endeavour from the point of view of long term aims at conflict transformation. The vision of shaping the attitude of the new generation in the area is to be attained in such a manner as the children from both communities can develop the virtues of fraternity and understanding while spending their school times together.

There are also attempts of restoring broken relationships of the communities in some areas. For instance, a market place in *Sefiberet* which has been closed owing to repetitive clashes that occur during market days has now been reopened and security forces are deployed to manage possible clashes (Interview with Ayalew, October 2011). There is even a trend of increasing inter-communal marriage as the officials in the area informed the investigator (Interviews with Ayalew and Zeleke, October 2011). The investigator has also witnessed handful cases of inter-communal marriages in *Kedebora* and *Sefiberet kebele* of Semurobi and Kewot *woreda*, respectively. Generally, the *woreda* officials are carrying out the aforementioned activities in view of reshaping the attitudes of the communities for good.

However, working on attitude can only serve the purpose of de-escalation (Galtung, 1973). Thus, the attitudinal dimension of the conflict cannot be taken as a stand-alone point of conflict transformation practice. As far as the structural causes of the conflict remain unaddressed, working on attitudes only paves the way for dealing with the contradiction and behavioural aspects of the conflict. Besides, the attitudes of the communities are derivatives of the contradiction, i.e. the structural causes. Therefore, the works on attitude are normatively accompanied by works on the behavioural and contradiction elements for a whole-encompassing change.

2.3.2.2 Working on Behaviour: Containing the Violence

The behavioural element of the conflict in the area is manifested by the physical acts of violence. Animal and human casualties, cattle raiding and resource damages fall under this category. Violence that involves human casualties is primarily a result of the culture of violence and its associated variable, viz. revenge. Animal casualties are suffered during violent raiding attempts. Moreover, there is an emergent trend of killing of animals for purposes of revenge. Resource damages occur in the form of damaging crops, burning ranges and destroying water wells. These are strategies used by the communities to prevent the expansionist desire into each other's holdings.

Such forms of violence are perpetuated by both members of the communities. There is no single type of violent deed that can be attributed exclusively to one of the communities (Interview with KI-A, October 2011). Only numerical differences can be observed as one community can perpetuate more violence in one way or another than the other community. In other words, the behavioural aspect of the conflict expressed in the form of physical acts of violence is similar for both communities. This is a result of the fact that the structural causes of the conflict are similar for both parties. Dealing with the behavioural aspect of the conflict, or containing the violence, is the other necessary condition for transforming the conflict. In the study area, the aim of dealing with the behavioural aspect is pursued within the frameworks of conflict management (Interview with Habahaba, October 2011). In the first place, unusual activities in any area that can result in violence will be brought to the knowledge of the respective *woreda* security affairs offices through informants at the local level. The *woreda* officials will then try to stop the unusual activity which, for instance, can be encroachment into the territories of others' holdings or into disputed territories. However, the attempts of the officials do not succeed more often than not. This failure is a result of lack of effective and viable means to prevent violence. One of the mechanisms of preventing violence is the deployment of security forces to such areas. Usually, security forces are deployed only after the eruption of violence owing to slow institutional conduct and resource limitation. Thus, the deployment of security forces serves the purpose of containing an already erupted violence at large (Interview with Ayalew, October 2011).

The next official step as stipulated in the institutional structure is identifying individual perpetrators and bringing them before court of law. Yet there is an institutional gap between the two *woreda*

administrations in following the institutional norm. Particularly, officials and residents of Kewot *woreda* complain about the unwillingness and incapacity of Semurobi *woreda* administration to bring perpetrators to justice. An official from North Shewa zone of ANRS has this account:

> Clan leader of the Semurobi community is more powerful than the *woreda* administrator in the eyes of the community members. Officials from Kewot *woreda* prefer the clan leader to the *woreda* administrator particularly for the purpose of identifying those who commit homicide. If we try to identify perpetrators though the help of *woreda* officials, they bring very old persons so that no one would take such persons for legal punishment (Interview with Tsegaye, October 2011).

This trend has actually resulted in resentment among the residents of Kewot *woreda*. An interview with a local resident discloses this resentment as he feels that "only Amharas are punished while the *Afars* face no legal punishment" (Interview with KI-C, October 2011). Such cases of impunity have practical implications for inter-*woreda* cooperation on top of the communal discord that can unveil.

The activities of peace committees in reframing the behaviour of the actors in conflict contribute to the process besides the official attempts of containing the violence through conflict management process. Generally, more effective means is required in view of the opportunities that working on the behavioural aspect can create to the conflict transformation process. Achievements regarding the behavioural aspect of the conflict are matters of necessity for it enhances the results of the works on attitudes and contradiction in sum.

2.3.2.3 Working on Contradictions: Restructuring the Basics

The central point in any conflict transformation practice is the reformulation of the fundamental causes of the conflict. These fundamental causes of conflict can be described as contradiction. In the study area, the contradiction is constituted by the structural causes of the conflict that includes the chronic level of poverty and underdevelopment, low level of functional specialisation and natural resources limitation.

Apparently, restructuring the sources of the contradiction between the communities is not an easy task at any rate. Firstly, transforming conflict goes as far transforming the relationships and interests as restructuring the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflicts (Miall, 2004). Changing the culture of violence subscribes to transforming the conflict in the area. Undoubtedly, such changes that affect the social and cultural make ups of the communities are daunting tasks to realize owing to the repercussions and resistance such changes entail, and the timeline and resources required. Secondly, conflict transformation per se pertains to changes of relationship and structure of conflicting parties embedded in contradictory relationships that might extend beyond the particular site of conflicts (Ibid.). This assumption is in harmony with the observable reality in the study area. The structural causes of the conflict between the communities are features of large parts of the country. Thus, the mechanisms that help address the contradiction as an integral part of the transformation practice are to be framed first and foremost within the national policy context. In consideration of the structural causes of the conflict in the area, developmental endeavours can be regarded as the main panacea to redress the contradiction.

In line with the aforementioned assumption, the two *woreda* administrations seem to have adopted developmental endeavour

as the mainstream approach for restructuring the contradiction between the two communities. An official from Kewot *woreda* administration concedes to this point:

> The primary way through which we try to deal with the conflict is to integrate both communities through development. These developmental activities include socio-economic infrastructural build ups like roads and schools, biodiversity conversation and joint farming activities (Interview with Zeleke, October 2011).

The on-going specific developmental activities in the area cuts across economic and social issues. For instance, the building of roads that connect the *kebele* of both communities is expected to bring economic benefits for the communities. Nowadays, the communities have an easier market access to the town of *Shewarobit* where farmers can sell their produces at a better price (Ibid.). Though this advantage primarily favours farmers of Kewot *woreda*, few members of Semurobi who are lately practicing farming also benefit from the opportunity. Moreover, better market prices also serve as an incentive for Semurobi community members to shift into farming. There is an increasing awareness that shifting into farming will help appropriate more income as measured against dependence on animal husbandry as a sole source of income. The *woreda* administrations are working to expand the practice of farming in Semurobi areas. They have developed a mechanism by which farmers from Kewot *woreda* share their experience of ploughing land to members of Semurobi community (Ibid.).

Also, there are activities that aim at the joint promotion of the communities' livelihoods. The *woreda* administrations are developing a framework through which disputed lands can be cultivated in cooperation. For instance, *woreda* officials from both sides mention the cultivation of a formerly disputed land in an area named Dahoda after an agreement was concluded on its common use (Interviews with Zeleke and Habahaba, October

2011). Moreover, farmers from Kewot *woreda* rent arable land from Semurobi land holders on an annual basis (Interview with Hussien, October 2011). At least two advantages can be gained from this trend in particular. First, it contributes to solve the problem of land shortage as previously unused lands are integrated into the production system. Second, the interaction that emanates as a result paves the way for high level communication, understanding and cultural exchange. In some *kebele* the communities develop water wells for common use as well (Ibid.).

Provision of social services like health care centres and schools is also undertaken in consideration of curbing problems associated with underdevelopment in the long run. While the growing coverage of health service is a remedy for problems associated with poverty, the opening of new schools has the additional role of curbing the highly rampant illiteracy in the area.

Beside the governmental attempts to improve agricultural productivity, a non-governmental organisation named FARM-Africa works in the areas of animal productivity and expansion of farming practice. FARM-Africa particularly works in Semurobi *woreda* where drought recurs and people depend on food aid for their survival. The organisation provides veterinary care to increase the productivity of animals at the service of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW) trained by the organisation. It also provides access to credits to the community members that help them run small businesses and buy pumps for small scale irrigation. The organisation as well provides trainings in crop cultivation, weeding, ploughing and harvesting. Above all, the organisation has a noble experience of helping the community members to map their resources, identify their needs and the solutions to them. The organisation has also set up a structure through which the community members work with local governmental staff. The organisation's activities have the complementary role of contributing to the improvement of the resource holdings and empowerment of the Semurobi community.

Those activities have their own merits in reformulating the sources of the basic contradiction despite the organisation's lack of direct involvement in conflict handling.

Finally, there are arrangements for strengthening cooperation between the two *woreda* administrations for the purpose of enhancing joint efforts. The inter-*woreda* cooperation is sought to sustain the activities of reformulating the structural causes of the conflict. As such, the administrations have an institutional arrangement through which they share experts and resources. A former Kewot *woreda* official mentions a mechanism that enables the administrations to develop a joint annual plan on common issues (Interview with Worku, August 2011). The *woreda* officials also conduct joint meetings once in a month (Interview with Habahaba, October 2011). These trends have a dual advantage of solving capacity problems of the *woreda* and enhancing inter-*woreda* cooperation for the attempt of restructuring the sources of the contradiction requires the concerted effort of all actors.

In summary, the works on the attitudinal, behavioural and contradiction aspects of the conflict are framed on a scaffold that touches on the changes preceding conflict transformation. In the study area, the aspect of actor transformation targets at changing the mental formulations of the existing actors. The activities which are conducted in the attitudinal aspect contribute for actor transformation. The attitudinal endeavours also help in issue transformation by reconfiguring the interests and goals of the actors. The developmental activities also contribute for issue transformation as such activities aware the communities that their structural problems are similar. The interaction of the communities in different socio-economic spheres like schools and markets, their joint participation in construction, and mutual deliberations in peace committee gathering help in rule and structural transformations. The interaction of the communities, and the understanding that ensues as a result, affect the communities' norm of interface; thus serving the rule transformation variable.

The imperatives of developmental endeavours direct to structural transformation for they aim at addressing the structural causes of the conflict. In other words, the developmental imperatives pertain to a change in the existing social structure that shapes the communities' relationships.

Notwithstanding the successes of the work in progress, the conflict transformation practice in the area has its own deficits. Firstly, the local officials do not really seem to have grasped the ideals of conflict transformation despite the stipulation of the practice in the organisational structure. The drift into activities of conflict management and resolution is such a manifestation whose source can be attributed to lack of knowledge. Secondly, insufficient emphasis given to grass roots participation is another loop hole with immense implication for the conflict transformation practice. Lack of sustained institutional mechanisms for widening the scope of community participation is a case in point. While the role of peace committees is to be credited, their performances do not suffice. The committees often lack sense of direction and purpose as deliberations are embedded with allegations and counter-allegations. Above all, the failure to effectively deal with the physical acts of violence is at the heart of the problem for it sustains the vicious circle of destruction in the area.

2.3.3 The Role of Stakeholders in the Conflict Transformation Process

As the discussions so far unveil, the overwhelming majority of the conflict transformation practice activities are shouldered by the local level of administration, particularly the *woreda*. The concentration of the task at the *woreda* level is unfolded by changes in the national policy context for good or bad. The Ministry of Federal Affairs has transferred the role it used to play to the Regional Security Affairs Bureaus of the two regions, viz. the Amhara and Afar Regional States. Owing to this change, the

woreda receive direction and support from their respective regional administrations. An official at the Ministry of Federal Affairs, who used to coordinate the Ministry's role in the area, attributes the reason of transferring the total responsibility to the capacity of the regional administrations to handle the case (Interview with Yirgalem, January 2011). The informant also points to the intense negotiation of the regional administrations on conflicts that occur in the border area of the two regions as laying the ground for the transfer of the responsibility.

Thereafter, the two *woreda* administrations have undergone organisational restructuring since 2009. Activities surrounding early warning, conflict management and conflict resolution are now within the jurisdictions of the two *woreda* administrations. In short, the major roles of the *woreda* can be summarised as follows:

- Assessing the general status of peace and security, and indentifying potential and instant causes of violence through locally based informants as part of the early warning system
- Facilitating the works of peace committees by channelling resources and finance from the regional administrations
- Deploying security forces to areas where violence erupt
- Coordinating developmental activities around social and economic services in pursuit of long term conflict transformation aims and
- Bringing perpetrators of violence before justice

The role of the residents at the grass roots level also deserves a categorical assessment for conflict transformation cannot be idealised without the participation of the actors in conflict. One mechanism through which grass roots participation is pursued in the area is the peace committee arrangement. Yet the structure of the peace committees does not allow for whole-encompassing community participation as only selected members of the communities are represented within the arrangement.

The *shimgilina* process, which subscribes to the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, can also be taken as a gap filling arrangement. The practice enables the communities to have their roles in resolving conflicts on their own right. *Shimgilina* has a valuable importance for it helps conquer the personal views of conflicting actors at first hand. Nonetheless, its importance has not been optimally utilised for different reasons. A focus group discussant in *Sefiberet*, for instance, expresses his frustration for he sees no sustainable solution brought so far through *shimgilina* (Focus Group Discussion with elders, November 2011). According to his account, peace arrangements fall shortly after resolution of a particular conflict. An interviewed local resident also reveals failure of a system of reparation devised by the communities which enables families to acquire compensation for their lost relatives in violence (Interview with KI-F, October 2011). At least two reasons can be identified for this weak spot. First and foremost, the practice has not yet been integrated with the official practice of the *woreda* administrations. Second, the recurring trend of the violence in the area has contributed for the weakness. Keeping aside the drawbacks of the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, such systems provide a space for the communities to have their roles in conflict resolution.

The role of the local residents in the conflict transformation process is also pronounced in the developmental activities that involve the direct participation of the communities. Particularly, the economic and social activities that are carried out by the joint efforts of the communities are of invaluable importance in ensuring community participation.

Beyond this, the area lacks the ingredients of non-governmental organisations' participation. A mention should be made concerning the role of FARM-Africa, however. Though the organisation makes no direct contribution to conflict resolution practice in precise, the agricultural activities it carries out in Semurobi have their merits with regard to the long-term aim of addressing the structural causes of the conflict.

In the final analysis, the scope of stakeholders' participation falls short of the envisaged standard as measured against the requirements for conflict transformation. Particularly, the absence of viable means for communal or grass roots level participation marks the spot of deficiency. Conflict transformation cannot be realized not only without the participation of governmental and non-governmental organisations but also without the participation of the local residents.

2.4 Challenges to the Conflict Transformation Practice in the Study Area

Though conflict transformation has normatively been acknowledged within the legal frameworks, it was not the firsthand means of dealing with conflicts in the immediate aftermath of the federalist system's inauguration. The dominance of the cultures of conflict management and resolution historically underlines the late resort to conflict transformation as an ideal alternative. This is manifested by the late introduction of the practice to the institutional arrangements both at national and local levels after the introduction of Business Process Reengineering (MoFA, 2009). More precisely, the treatment of conflict transformation as a secondary option for dealing with conflicts shows the lesser emphasis accorded to it as compared to conflict management and resolution.

The conundrum stated above has some lingering effects even after the adoption of conflict transformation in the institutional frameworks. Lack of clarity on the practice particularly at the *woreda* level emanates from this gap. Resort to the conventional practice of conflict management and resolution and undue focus on short term trajectories compromise conflict transformation efforts as a *modus operandi* (Interview with Worku August 2011). Practically,

effective utilisation of conflict transformation ideals takes time. Even more, harvesting the fruits of conflict transformation can only be yielded in the long term (Maill, 2004). These facts inhibit local level administrators from pursuing the long term objective of structural and fundamental changes. This is in addition to local officials' agitation to deploy security forces to contain violence and their preoccupation with bringing individual perpetrators to courts of law (Atkilt, 2003). Apparently, short-sighted vision is to be acknowledged as an imminent challenge.

A related factor that can be taken as a challenge to the process of conflict transformation in the area is lack of capacity on the side of officials at the local level (Interview with Habahaba, October 2011). While administrative capacity limitation results in governance problems on its own right, the repercussions it entails for conflict transformation is more glaring. Needless to say, capacity limitation is one of the factors that counts for the drift into short term conflict management and resolution practices.

The ground on which the practice of conflict transformation started out also lacks sufficiency. Firstly, the basis for grass roots participation is much narrower than what ought to be. The only viable means of participation for local residents so far is the peace committee arrangement. Secondly, the developmental endeavours in the area still lay at an early stage. Veritably, the underdeveloped nature of the area is an equal match of the governmental attention the area received so far. Thirdly, the area lacks the attention of non-governmental organisations' involvement in a broader scale that might have contributed to the efforts of conflict transformation directly.

The involvement of federal institutions in the study area is increasingly fading. The disengagement of the Ministry of Federal Affairs is a case in point. This aggravates the capacity limitation predicament in the area. Moreover, the lesser emphasis paid to traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and the absence of integration between the formal procedures of conflict handling

process and the traditional ones is a bedrock story. The impotence to control illicit arms trade also stands as unabated challenge to the conflict transformation practice in the area.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.1 Conclusion

Since the introduction of ethnic federalism as a *modus operandi* of state politics in Ethiopia, the ascendancy of interethnic conflicts and their settlements have dominated discussions in the academia and policy spheres. The desideratum of introducing ethnic federalism at the outset was the remaking of the Ethiopian state with the aim of reconciling ethno-linguistic discords whose sources can be traced back to the formation of the present day Ethiopian polity (Merera, 2011). For one thing, the new experience of ethnic federalism in the country unleashed into political discussions dominated by ethnicity prime. Ironically, the introduction of federalism as a gadget of handling conflicts conceded for new conflicts and/or multiplication of old conflicts. The new conflicts that ensued as the result spin around issues of self-determination and distinct identity, inter-regional and intra-regional border disputes, and competition for more robust minority rights inter alia (Tsegaye, 2010).

Fundamentally, the aim of this study was to investigate the process of conflict transformation in Kewot and Semurobi *woreda* of the Amhara and Afar regional states respectively. In the first place, the study tried to impart insights into the causes of the conflict and the process of conflict formation and reformation. The changing dynamics of the conflict were thoroughly analysed as well. Descriptions of the mechanisms that are being utilised to transform the conflict, the practical challenges and the role of the actors in the transformation process were the subsequent concerns of the study.

The protracted nature of the conflict is exasperated by ethnic differences. Ethnicity as an intervening variable hampers communication between the communities. As the parties in the conflict identify themselves as "Amharas" and "*Afars*", ethnic differentiation has become a psycho-social reality for both communities. A concrete proof of this setting is provided by the tendency of the parties in the conflict to engage themselves in violence in the name of their identity groups. Forthrightly, ethnic difference in the area is a factor that aggravates the violence as an intervening variable.

It was in the face of these trends that conflict transformation was opted for as a viable alternative of dealing with the conflict. Developmental and interactive activities are the primary ways through which the two *woredas* are engaging themselves with the practice. The developmental endeavours in the area aim at resolving the sources of the basic contradiction, viz. underdevelopment and natural resources limitation. Social and economic infrastructural build ups compose the efforts of restructuring the basis of the conflict in the main. There are also interactive activities directed towards the purpose of de-escalation. The peace committee arrangement is instrumental in this regard. Joint peace committee deliberations, conducted on a regular basis, aim at reframing the attitudes of the communities. Additionally, economic and social activities, involving the interaction of the members of both communities, are promoted institutionally by the two *woreda* officials, with the expectation that such activities will redress the attitudinal components of hatred, distrust and enemy image. The conventional conflict management and resolution norms are also used to address the behavioural element of the conflict as they help contain violent clashes that erupt sporadically.

The overwhelming responsibility of handling the conflict transformation practice is shouldered by the two *woreda* administrations. The involvement of federal institutions in the area is steadily declining as illustrated by the decision of the Ministry of Federal Affairs to handover its responsibility to the Amhara and Afar regional administrations. The regional administrations are now at the apex of the structure. They provide policy direction and financial resources to the *woreda* administrations so as to enable them manage the transformation task. Apparently, the conflict in the area has not attracted the attention of non-governmental organisations working in the area of conflict settlement. The only non-governmental organisation in the area, viz. FARM-Africa works in Semurobi *woreda* in the field of agricultural productivity. The effort of FARM-Africa in transforming the pastoralist way of life of Semurobi community is assumed to have its own contribution in reframing the economic aspect of the contradiction. The role of the communities in the conflict transformation aspect is also limited in more than one way. This is reflected by the fact that traditional conflict resolution practice mechanisms in the area are discredited in the eyes of the officials. The limitation has its own predicaments as considered from the vantage point of highly required grass roots participation in conflict transformation.

In abstract, the resort to conflict transformation practice in the area is a result of the recognition that the conventional conflict management and resolution practices could not bring about sustainable solutions to the conflict in the study area. Time has revealed that the treatment of the conflict at surface level could not result in the desired outcome. Though one cannot gainsay that the practice is far from being labelled as successful, the attempts to address the causes of the conflict that embed the socio-economic structure and cultural/customary practices of the communities still rest on the promises which conflict transformation holds.

3.1.2 Recommendations

The drawbacks identified throughout the researcht are associated with both the causes of the conflict and the practice of conflict transformation in the area. Forthrightly, the transformation practice

in the area can be promoted not only through addressing the bottlenecks of the transformation practice but also by reformulating the basic sources of the contradiction. In fact, the necessity of dealing with the causes of the conflict has been acknowledged at the juncture that marked the resort to conflict transformation. What is needed, however, is a more rigorous routine of promoting the developmental endeavours in the area.

Issues related with technical and administrative capacity limitations are matters of concern as well. The engagement of federal institutions and the regional administrations momentous support, besides making them an authentic part of the solution, can amount to building the capacity of the local officials. Boosting the capacity of the local officials can also bestow upon them the confidence of the community members.

The attempts to devise a framework for the participation of various stakeholders also need to be strengthened. Particularly, the need for the participation of the communities at the grass roots level is something that needs to be addressed. In this regard, enhancing the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanism will be of immense importance. There is also a need for the advantages of the *shimgilina* process to be thought out concomitantly.

There is also a need for the recognition of the reality which is that conflict transformation as a practice takes much time. This is important as the quick reactions of the officials, in conjunction with the enthusiastic euphoria of harvesting the fruits of conflict transformation overnight, shifts the attention of the officials to short term goals of containing violence. Awareness creation activities on the essences of conflict transformation can contribute to the pursuit of the long term aims.

Moreover, renovating the role of peace committees is vitally important. Deep scrutiny into the performance records of the committees can help capitalise upon their contributions to the peace process. In a nutshell, higher degrees of attention need to be accorded for the conflict in the study area. Taking the ethnic-based nature of the conflict for granted should not be allowed for it distracts the focus on the basic causes of the contradiction. In view of this, the undertaking of more investigations in the study area is recommended.

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A. Key Informant Interviewees (Officials)

No.	Name	Place	Sex	Position	Date
1	Ayalew	*Shewarobit*	M	Kewot *Woreda* Conflict Management Expert	October 2011
2	Habahaba	*Kumame*	M	Semurobi *Woreda* Vice-administrator	October 2011
3	Hussein	*Kumame*		*Kebele* Chairperson	October 2011
4	Tsegaye	Debre Berhan	M	North Shewa Zone Security Department Officer	October 2011
5	Worku	*Shewarobit*	M	Former Kewot *Woreda* Conflict Management Expert	August 2011
6	Yirgalem	Addis Ababa	M	Conflict Management Expert at MoFA	January 2012
7	Zeleke	*Shewarobit*	M	Kewot *Woreda* Vice-administrator	October 2011

SECTION 3

The political economy of Small Arms and Light weapons (SALW) among pastoralist communities:
The case of Borena, Ethiopia

Eniyew Abera

Abstract

In this study the causes and effects of illicit arm proliferation within the Borena society are described and analyzed by qualitative methodological approaches. The analysis was based mainly on the data that has been gathered through questionnaire, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and personal observations. The practice of the Gadda system, the limited presence of the state as well as the mobile nature of the pastoralist livelihood have resulted in the militarization of the youth, and the expansion of the 'gun culture' amongst the Borena community of Southern Oromia sub Region. The diffusion of such weapons feeds cycles of insecurity, undermines livelihood strategies, impedes development opportunities and intensifies cattle-rustling practices. Fear for life and physical well-being, as well as fear to freely exercise religious, cultural, political and economic rights and entitlements arise from this environment – where small arms are relatively easy to procure and controls are extremely lax.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
GA	UN General Assembly
EAST	Eastern Association for Surgery of Trauma
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa
FGD	Focus Group discussions
HDI	Human Development Index
ISS	Institute of Security Studies
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NIROBI PROTOCOL	Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa of 2004
NRA	National Rifle Association
OSCE	Organization for Security Cooperation Europe
PCDI	Pastoralist Community Development Initiative
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAS	Small Arms Survey
UNSC	UN Security Council
SEESAC	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIDR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the Study

The declaration of the 'New World Order' after the end of the cold war generated a worldwide optimism for international peace and security. Billions of people around the world expected to see a shift from proxy war to a more peaceful and prosperous world. However, the shocking events that unfolded since the collapse of the socialist block shattered those dreams. Our world faced new challenges in the years subsequent to the Cold War. The conventional inter-state wars fought between internationally recognized sovereign states were replaced by more horrific domestic civil wars, fought outside of the laws of war. Wars, which were formerly fought around borders, against outsider enemies are pulled towards the center. Intra-state war is an all inclusive kind of war that involves non-uniform wearing civilians. This type of conflict knocks at the doors of many countries, from Bosnia and Ireland in Europe to Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan in Africa. People who used to live together in peace turned against each other and most of the wars were fought along ethnic or along religious lines.

The easy availability of arms and the incapability of the international community to tackle the problem have increased the number and magnitude of internal wars. The United Nations is crippled in its ability to stop the internal wars due to its principles of "non interference in the internal affairs of the state" policy. Moreover, during the Cold War many countries around the world managed to accumulate arms, by far exciting their military requirements. The downsizing policy of the armed force implemented in the aftermath of the end of the cold war period has left many western countries with huge stockpiles of arms and ammunitions. Conflict in Africa, particularly West Africa, East Africa and the Great Lakes Region had provided attractive markets for the western countries

to earn from their arms surplus. Millions of arms and ammunitions manufactured in the north are cheaply transferred to Africa, which resulted in the possession of arms by many individuals and organized non-state actors such as warlords, insurgent groups, rebel groups and terrorist groups.

Africa is one of the richest continents in terms of natural resources and cultural heritages. However, the contribution of these resources for the development of the continent is very low. This is because; such resources are used to purchase weapons rather than improving the life of society. In the African context, the abundance of resources has caused conflicts, and resources are more of a curse than a blessing (the paradox of plenty). In particular, the Horn of Africa is one of the most greatly affected regions in the world; both by conflict and poverty.

Although SALWs are the distinct categories of weapons, the author use the term 'small arms', ' arms' 'firearms', 'weapons' and 'guns' interchangeably to cover both small arms and light weapons, unless the usage of 'Small Arms' or 'Light Weapons' is technical.

Life in the Horn of Africa has been characterized by extraordinary suffering from long and interrelated civil and inter-state wars. The proliferation of SALW further intensified the suffering of civilian population making the Horn of Africa one of the most armed regions in the world. In Somalia alone, some estimates place the number of small arms and light weapons in the millions (Griffiths-Fulton, 2002:1).Furthermore, research in north-eastern Kenya has found that every second household has a gun (*Ibid*). These proliferations of small arms in the region stems mainly from the cold war era, which the socialist and capitalist blocks brought to the region to support their proxy wars (*Ibid*). Currently, the main suppliers of guns to the region include China, Russia, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Iran, Ukraine and the US. Craft production, the small scale manual production, has also

proven to be a significant source of illicit weapons in the region (Stohl and Tutlle: 2009:19-20).

Weapons are circulated throughout conflicts, leaving one conflict zone and entering another where the demand is greater. Weapons from Chad have been used in Darfur, while weapons in Somalia have originated from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Egypt, Eritrea and others (*Ibid*: 21).The current international arms control system is failing to adequately regulate the arms trade and to hold arm brokers and dealers accountable for their actions. As a result, weapons continue to be transported into regions where they are undermining development and fueling human right abuses (Oxfam, 2010: 2).

In the Horn of Africa, the culture of gun ownership is probably associated with the way of life in the region. The very nature of pastoralism depends on mobility from one place to another in search of water and grazing land. Because of this, fights over scarce resources and the use of weapons become part of their daily life in the region (Kiflemariam and Masson, 2002: 20). Due to intensified competition over dwindling life-sustaining environmental resources, various pastoral groups who inhabit the Horn of Africa frequently clash with one another, as they seek out the best grazing lands and water points. The armed community consider themselves as potential winners in the event of conflict (*Ibid*). The other factors that define gun ownership in the Horn of Africa are the traditional and cultural meanings attached to the gun. In most societies of the Horn, having a gun is a sign of power, authority and prestige. For example, a person who can offer a gun for a dowry is believed to be a better husband and having a gun is a sign of wealth (*Ibid*).

The prevailing state of political anarchy in Somalia, porous borders in the region, poorly coordinated disarmament, the mistrust between clans and ethnic groups, cattle rustling activities, proxy war and the economic backwardness of the region directly

or indirectly determine the availability of small arms in the Horn of Africa (UNIDR, 2008). In some countries, there were evidences of the transfer of arms from state to non-state actors (*Ibid*). Such transfers of weapons have occurred when the state was unable to provide for the security of a certain part of the country. However, in many cases, state to non-state arms transfer has created the imbalance of gun ownership, which, ultimately, leads to greater insecurities.

The presence of weapons has directly or indirectly resulted in the loss of many lives and has caused many injuries, by fueling conflict and by increasing its life span as are the cases in Sudan or in Somalia. It can also facilitate other crimes and human right abuses such as sexual and gender-based violence. In the Horn of Africa, human security is understood as freedom from attack of the other group (living in the same or neighboring district) and freedom from any arms related harms (Kiflemariam and Masson, 2002: 13). Furthermore, illegal arm sales can divert government funds from development initiatives and can increase national debt (Oxfam, 2010: 7). Scarce resources at state, local, and individual level that are spent on weapons rather than on development makes the Horn of Africa one of the poorest regions in the world (UNIDR, 2008)

Recognizing the challenges posed by the proliferations of illicit arms, this study describes, explains and analyzes the political economy of small arms in the pastoral communities of Borena in southern Ethiopia. The research is unique in a sense that most of the researches that have so far been conducted on arms mainly emphasize the supply of arms including production, distribution and transfer of small arms. In other words, the subject of demand (motives and means) for small arms has been relatively neglected in the academic literature. Gun control policies have emphasized the supply-side arms market such as export-controls, weapon registries, and arms and ammunition marking and tracing. Nonetheless, many acknowledge supply-side policies have limited

effectiveness due to failure to comprehend the nature of small arms and of the political economy of production and distribution. Therefore, this paper addresses both the supply and demand side of small arms and light weapons in the study area. The demand side analysis of firearms, in the study area, is based on the "means and motivation" (which is called the economic theory of demand) model developed by Brauer and Muggah in 2006.

1.2 Meaning and Understanding of SALWs

The phenomenon of conflict is an integral part of human life everywhere and it is happening all of the time. The magnitude of such conflict ranges from simple disagreement and verbal fights between individuals to more prolonged global wars that involve multiple actors (Bonta, 1996: 405). Different instruments of violence, which varies from bone and arrow to modern machine guns, were used to defeat the opponent. After the invention of gun powder in 1250 in China and later machine guns in Europe, firearms have become the most widely used means of violence. Today, small arms and light weapons are the most widely spread and easily accessible types of arms. This is due to their technical suitability and the contributions of European colonial expansions.

What are SALWs? What are their main defining features? Like many social science research topics, there is no universally accepted definition of SALWs. Some define it broadly to include knife and arrows, whereas others view it narrowly to include only those relatively portable guns. For the purpose of this study, however, SALWs (A/60/88) means any portable lethal weapon "designed to expel or launch a shot, bullet, or projectile by the action of an explosive". It sticks to the UNDP and OSCD definition of SALW as :

Small arms are those weapons designed for personal use, and include revolver, refills and carbines, self-loading pistols, sub-machine guns, light machine guns, land mines, and assault rifle. 'Light weapons' are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew….They include inter alia heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a caliber of less than 100 millimeters (UNDP, 2008:2; OSCE, 2000, Preamble, para.3).

Small arms offer distinct advantages over other alternative means of violence. All actors to conflict—government, military, militias, paramilitary units, armed opposition, guerrillas, and civilians— use small arms and light weapons due to their enabling features. They are relatively cheaper, lighter, durable, extremely lethal, concealable and easy to operate (even by children and the illiterate); they work with compelling accuracy and from a great distance to the target (Brauer and Muggah, 2006: 144; European Commission, 2001, Boutwell and Klare, 1999, Osman, 2010:30). In terms of their durability, guns may last 100 years if they are properly maintained so that a gun owner may only be required to make one purchase in a lifetime (Jacobs, 2002; IX). They are also mobile assets and can be easily transferred (shipped from place to place), carried by a single individual or a small group of people, and are almost impossible to track or monitor easily. These factors have made their availability larger and accessibility easier in all parts of the world (Brauer and Muggah, 2002: 6; Naím, 2005).

Because of their long life span and easy mobility, small arms are continuously recycled from one conflict zone to another between different countries or within a state(from one regional state to another in the case of Ethiopia) (European commission, 2001)..

1.3 The Supply of SALWs

Despite being a key component in conflict, small arms have only recently begun to receive academic attention (Killicoat, 2006:1). Most of the literature considers small arms as an economic commodity and offers explanations using the force of demand and supply. So far, research on small arms has been almost exclusively case-study driven making it difficult to draw general empirical lessons. The first attempt towards developing conceptual or general supply model of the small arms has emerged with the work of Marsh (2006). He develops a conceptual model for the illicit acquisition of arms by rebel groups. One of his hypotheses stated that "the more liquid is the arms supply in a particular country, the easier individual combatants can obtain weapons through independent suppliers" (*Ibid*).

In economic terms, the conceptual 'supply mode' deals with the production, transfer and distribution of small arms. Literature concerned with the supply side approach estimated that out of the total 875 million world's firearms, civilians owned some 650 million. Most of these arms were manufactured by 1,249 companies that are found in more than 90 countries (Krause, 2007: 2; UNIDR, 1; Gills, 2009:57). The bulk of production occurs in 30 countries, led by the USA, Russia and China (Gills, 2009:57).

In addition to modern industrial large-scale production, several countries have long traditions of craft production. For example, blacksmiths in West Africa produce various types of firearms including pistols and hand-gun assault rifles (Vines, 2005: 252-25; Aning, 2005:79-105). Similarly, Peshawar district in Pakistan is reported to have some 200 workshops producing different types of small arms, which have been sold in some 1,900 arm shops found in the district (Small Arms Survey, 2004:195).

Most of the firearms currently circulating in the world were acquired and accumulated during the cold war era (Lock (1999:

4). The stocking of small arms during this time greatly exceeded the military requirements, due to greater competition between socialist and capitalist blocs. Forty years of the cold war era encouraged the diffusion of SALWs to every corner of the world and most states were able to accumulate a bulk of firearms. Since the end of the cold war, actors who had access to such arms were diversified because of the intensification of intra-state conflicts. The emergence of warlords, guerrilla forces, and different forms of violence (eg. political, ethnic, cultural and religious) challenged the monopoly of the state over firearms.

The distribution of firearms is extremely uneven geographically, demographically, and institutionally (*Ibid*). Europe and USA are thought to have nearly 384 million firearms (Stohl and Tuttle, 2009: 19) whereas Africa's share is estimated between 30 to 100 million (Griffiths-Fulton, 2002: 2). The rate of national ownership ranges from as high as 90 firearms for every 100 person in the United States (ranked first), to less than 1 firearm for every 100 residents in countries like Ghana and Tunisia (Small Arms Survey,2007. annex4).Ethiopia is ranked 174th with the average total of 320,000 civilian firearms(*Ibid*).

Institutionally, from the total number of small arms, about 55 to 60 percent is owned by civilians, with 35 to 38 percent in the hands of armed forces, 3 to 5 percent held by the police and other state forces, and 1 percent in the hands of non-state armed groups (i.e. insurgent groups, terrorist groups) (Coe and Smith, 2003: 6; Krause, 2007:2). In Africa 79 percent of small arms are owned by civilians (Stohl and Tuttle, 2009: 21). If lost or stolen, these weapons can easily flow into the black market and contribute to the vast number of unregistered illicit weapons om the continent. Weapons also tend to be unevenly distributed between urban and rural settings, between different age groups and sex and between different levels of wealth and education (Killicoat, 2006: 1). Globally, a rural young man is considered to be the principal demographic group who is likely to purchase weapons. Particularly, uneducated young men and those who experience negative income shocks are the most important demographic groups tend to purchase firearms (Killicoat, 2006: 1). But, this does not mean that elders, the wealthy and the educated are not looking for guns.

1.4 The Demand Side Approach to Firearms

This approach describes the issue of SALWs from the perspectives of those who seek to acquire firearms. According to Brauer and Muggah (2005), the "ultimate desire for small arms acquisition is governed by the interaction of independent variables referred to as means and motivations", equated with 'ability' and 'willingness'. This is called the 'eco¬nomic theory of demand' (Varian as sighted in Killicoat, 2006: 1; Muggah, 2004: 2). Means and motivation can serve as either inhibitors (lack of motivation or means) or stimulator (Brauer and Muggah, 2006: 139).

Motivation refers to the socially, culturally, psychologically and politically mediated preference for the ownership of small arms (Muggah, 2004: 2). These motives are dynamic and wide ranging from the need for hunting and sport shooting to a concern with personal or collective defense, the pursuit of social status and even predatory behavior (*Ibid*). Whereas, means primarily refers to the socio-economic capability of obtaining small arms that comprises not only; assets or resources available to purchase, rent, steal or borrow guns, but also groups drive, organizational and social capacity and the network that makes acquisitions possible (Brauer and Muggah, 2006: 140). Robert Muggah (2004: 2) in his article, "Diagnosing Demand: Assessing the Motivation and Means of Firearms Acquisition in Solomon Island and Papua New Guinea, stated that a specific firearm ownership is fulfilled if and only if both the means to acquire and the motivations to possess are satisfied.

There is no universally accepted single variable that explains the reason why civilians tend to possess firearms. Rather, theories of gun ownership suggested that, the motivation (and means) for gun possessions are highly diverse (across time and space), sometimes overlapping, and can also be understood contextually. Possibly the most well-known theory of firearm ownership stems from the psycho-analytical perspective in which firearms are seen as representative of male dominance and masculine power (Diener and Kerber, 1979; Wright and Marston, 1975; Williams and McGrath, 1976). In some places, ownership and use of firearms is rooted in tradition and cultural norms, and explained by 'gun culture, which the 2006 study conducted by South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse define as:

> Gun culture is the cultural acceptance of gun ownership in situation where the principal motivation or justifications for it is not for utilitarian or economic reason but because their society has a set of values and norms that deem it acceptable behavior.....as a sign of masculinity and status (SEESEC, 2006:1)

There was a widespread notion that gun ownership is equated with having status or a purpose in life or society (Perry, 2004:25). 'Gang culture' is a good example where the group present weapons as an attribute of their identity (Cvetkovic, 2006:44). For them, gun ownership is a source of cultural pride, and in some other cultures, people often justify gun possession as historical inheritance from family "all our forefathers carried weapons and so we will" (Perry, 2004:23). This attitude towards guns is particularly common in societies where conflict has been persistent and people have fewer options for a better quality of life. In all of these societies, high rates of unemployment, abuse of human rights, gender violence and limited access to education have created the feeling of "what other options do we have?" (*Ibid*: 25). Therefore, with a disarmament program, a person may feel that he or she has lost their only option for life, and position in society (*Ibid*). For instance, in Albanian

folklore guns can symbolize a man's honor, and death is preferable than disarmament and subsequent dishonor (SEESAC, 2006: 7).

Self or community protection is the other most important approach of understanding the ownership of firearms (particularly in western countries). For self-defense advocates,, the right to defend oneself from any form of threat is a universally recognized right, provided the threat is immediate and the response is necessary. Particularly, in violent or crime-ridden societies, the demand for weapons for self-protection is inevitably high due to perceived insecurity. Moreover, people's distrust of security officials and lack of capacity for law enforcement also stimulate the demand for arms, since citizens feel they cannot rely on the government for security (*Ibid*: 4).

In most of South East European countries, carrying a gun for self/community protection is deep rooted in the tradition of the society. Guns provide the means of protecting the family and of defending sovereignty and guns are a tool for keeping social and national identity. Firearms are also glorified as an instrument of independence, freedom and honor (*Ibid*). In the Albanian tradition guns are often compared with the mother's womb. Also the cultural meaning ascribed to a firearm has an implication on the constitutional provisions related to firearms. For instance, in Lithuania (2002, art.34 (2)) a person enjoy the right to use any arms in the defense of oneself or property and defense of other person or interest of the state. Similarly, countries like Finland and Estonia legally recognize some professions (e.g. Farming) as areas that require firearms (Parker, 2011:24).

1.5 Social, Political and Economic Cost of Small Arms

Whether owned by civilians or rebel groups, whatever its motives are, the proliferation and misuse of arms have both direct and

indirect negative effects on security, safety and development. The proliferations of illicit arms caused violence in conflict (e.g. DRC, Somalia, Sudan, Sera Leon, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, etc), accident and suicide (e.g. Colombia), street crime (e.g. Salvador) and personal dispute (e.g. India) (Peter, 2006). Indeed, its aggregate or ultimate result is similar; it results in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children every year, intensifies and prolongs conflicts, and causes injuries (Coe and Smith, 2003).

The global annual death toll from firearms is estimated between 500,000 and 740,000, while one million more people are injured. More than half of the affected people are civilians, and the majority of deaths have occurred outside of conventional war zones (Gills, 2009:9). In some countries, civilian deaths during peace time are far greater than life destroyed during violent armed conflicts. Non-uniform wearing innocent children, women and elders are indiscriminately targeted by the conflicting parties. With regards to arm induced conflicts Oxfam GB noted the following:

The cost in lost lives, lost livelihood, and lost opportunity to escape poverty is incalculable. Every day millions---are living under fear. And every minute, someone is killed (Oxfam GB, 2004:1)

Small arms are a weapon of choice in civil wars, inter-state wars, and terrorist activity. The changing nature of wars from inter-state to intra-state also increased the global usage of small arms. For instance, small arms are predominantly used throughout all wars that have been fought since the end of the cold war. (Jekada, 2005: 38).With the wide usage of small arms, the civilian causality from armed conflicts increased from 5% during WWI to 95% in 1995. This is because of the fact that in the case of intra-state conflicts, the effects of firearms extends to post conflict periods. Negative consequences of small arms are extended far beyond death or injuries. It undermines development, prevents the delivery of humanitarian aid, and results in the creation of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) (Muggah, 2001: 70).

The study published by UNDP in 2002: 'Development Held Hostage: Assessing the Effects of Small Arms on Human Development' stated that the proliferation of small arms have significantly affected the ability of the state to implement national development programs (Muggah and Batchelor, 2002:15-17). On one hand, resources meant for development projects were diverted to the purchase of arms, on the other hand vital infrastructural development initiatives were imperiled by arm related insecurity (Muggah, 2001:75). For instance, by 1994, it was estimated that one-fifth of the developing world's debt was due to arms import (Amnesty International.et.al, 2004). Moreover, the proliferation of small arms disrupts employment and commercial activity, destroys and discourages investment by diverting resources from development project. For instance, the annual monitory cost of gun violence is estimated to be $100 billion in USA, and 12.5% of the GDP in El Salvador (Peters, 2006). However, measuring the monitory value of life lost and the associated psychological and emotional damage is unlikely (Muggah, 2001:71).

1.6 Debate on Guns Ownership and Control

Previous researches on illicit arms suggest that the more guns in a society, then the higher the rates of firearm-related offences. However, there is no uniform opinion with regard to the direct link between gun ownership and crime. Some view guns as a cause of violent crime, whereas others argue positively and consider guns as a tool of crime prevention. The debate over guns often center on the issue of self-defense (Pro-guns) and violent crimes (Pro-guns control).

Advocates of gun control policy argue that in the absence of gun laws, citizens are extensively armed; creating a greater incentive for criminals to acquire more guns (Ghatak, 2000:2). In contrast, 'pro-gun' supporters argue that those gun control laws undermine

the ability of the society to defend themselves or other citizens against criminals, and hence end up increasing gun violence (*Ibid*). For instance, in the USA, a significant number of gun owners are subscribed to a notion of 'there are no bad guns, only bad men' (Squires, 2008: 8).

Besides, some moderate pro-gunners believes that even where gun possession is considered as problematic, high rates of gun ownership alone do not necessarily imply high rates of firearm crimes. For instance, in Switzerland gun ownership is high yet the level of crime is very low (Squires, 2008: 8). One of the famous slogan of moderate pro-gunner is "guns do not kill people, people kill each other" and they believe that guns are not the only instrument of violence. They ask "Does instrument matter in terms of the harm done? What difference does it make if violent people use knives or spears instead of gun?' (Cook and Ludwig, 2000:34-5)

Extremist 'pro-gun' literature severely criticizes firearm control legislation, putting forward the example of Nazi extermination. Halbrook (2000:537) declare that "totalitarian governments will attempt to disarm their subjects so as to extinguish any ability to resist crime against humanity". Similarly, David Kopel stated that "if not for gun control, Hitler would not have been able to murder 21 million people" (Kopel and Griffth, 2003). Furthermore, the National Rifle Association (NRA) of America has claimed that "no dictatorship has ever been imposed on a nation of free men who have not been first required to register their privately owned firearms (Sherrill, 1973:1979-1980). Arm control is the single best way to take freedom away from the people (*Ibid*).

The link between gun ownership and crimes is also explained from the nature of 'gun owners' perspectives. There are two categories of gun owners: 'high-risk' gun owners and 'low-risk' gun owners. 'Low-risk' gun owners tend to be socialized by their families into legal gun ownership and for socially approved reasons (Lizotte and Sheppard, 2001:1-2). They do not tend to use their guns for

criminal activities and are unlikely to directly increase the risk of violent crime (*Ibid*). On the other hand, 'high-risk' gun owners obtain firearms from secondary-markets and tend to be more likely to use guns for criminal activities (*Ibid*).

Although both theories elucidate their arguments from different perspectives, their applicability requires contextual analysis. The mere presence of arms does not directly cause violent crimes; and there should be other variables. In the context of Africa, intermediate variables that turn firearms into violent usage are plentiful. The presence of conflicts, poverty, unemployment, ethnic rivalry, insurgent movement, environmental degradation and limited security provisions are the most significant variables. For instance, young men who have lost their families and jobs often participate in criminal activities or join insurgent groups as are the cases in Somalia or in Kenya.

1.7 Gun Control Policy (Responses to the Problems of Firearms)

The discussion on small arms gained international attention during the 1990s, after the end of the Cold War. Since then, scholars and other interested parties have conducted considerable research on small arms. International and national institutions have held conferences, seminars, workshops and training forums all with the common agenda of alleviating this problem. Currently, various entities within the United Nations (UN), inter-governmental organizations and others have taken steps to deal with the issue. For the first time in history, the UN has raised the issue of small arms proliferation on its General Assembly Resolution (Number A/RES/50/70B) Forum. This international attempt to address the challenges of small arms peaked in the mid 1990's with the adoption of a resolution on the regulation of civilian possession of firearm (ECOSOC, 1995).

At national levels, states come up with their own legislative control mechanisms depending on their own domestic experiences and attitudes on gun use and gun violence. The State can take one of the two general approaches to civilian possession of firearms: basic 'right' or 'privileges' (Parker, 2011:3). In some countries (eg.US and Yemen), there is a right to have a gun and accordingly regulations tend to be more permissive; legislation limiting the right of possession is narrowly phrased, while in most of other jurisdictions, states place greater restrictions against civilian ownership of firearms (*Ibid*: 36). However, the uneven implementation of illicit arm control agreements and legislations leaves loopholes that arms traffickers can utilize for the transfer of arms.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Background of the Study Area

Geography has made us neighbors. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners and necessity has made us allies.

John F. Kennedy

Understanding the social, economic, ecological and geographical situations is the starting point for our understanding of the world around us. Through geography we can make sense of the impact of current events t hat affect the society under investigation, and its relation with others. Geography helps to map disputes over resources and borders, political instability, ethnic conflict, terrorism, and natural disasters—these have international repercussions. People's ways of life and the degree of livelihood insecurity determine the action and reaction of the community. Culture and religion are also important in guiding, as well as in giving meaning to the behavior and actions of the society. Accordingly, this chapter is concerned with the examination of the political geography and socio-economic situation of the Borena society, in order to understand the reasons for the proliferations of SALWs in the area. It analyzes the geographically enabling conditions for acquiring firearms and how the pastoralist ways of life stimulate the demand for arms.

2.1.1 Physical Characteristics: Geography and Agro-ecology

Ethiopia is one of the countries in the world where pastoralism is practiced extensively as a basic livelihood system. The pastoral

communities of Ethiopia mainly inhabit the arid and semi-arid peripheral lowlands, which make up about occupying about 60 percent of the country's total land mass and providing food for about 7-9 million people (12-15% of the total population) (PCDI, 2008:1; PFE, 2006). Pastoralism is widely practiced in three regional states- Oromia, Afar, and Somali. There are other smaller pastoral groups in Benishangul-Gumuz and Southern Nation, Nationality and Peoples Region (SNNPR). Generally, a total of about 29 nationalities, 21 zones, and 133 districts take part in the pastoral economy. Despite their significant number, pastoralists have been marginalized historically and geographically for centuries. This has resulted in poor socio-economic and infrastructural development, and service delivery. Unemployment rates are very high due to the absence of an alternative livelihood system that could substitute cattle-herding, during times of severe drought. Unemployed pastoralists who lost their animals are left with two choices, either waiting for the help of NGOs or participating in criminal activities, including illegal trade and cattle stealing. Usually, unemployed youth moved to nearby towns, and participate in contraband trade than waiting for emergency food supply, whereas children, women and elders are the principal beneficiaries from NGOs assistance.

Some traditional conflict management practices are also contributes to the criminality of the youth. For instance, if a person belongs to Borena clan kills someone from his/her clan, justice is served by excluding the perpetrator from the community. He or she is prohibited from attending any kind of social events like meeting or ceremony, and marriage with a Borena clan member is also forbidden. Such an act of social punishment can force the person to either leave the community and moves to new location or join criminal groups.

Before being restructured as one of the 17 zones of Oromia regional state in 1995, Borana zone was part of Guji. The newly formed Borena Zone occupy a total land mass of 45,434.97 km2 and is located at the southernmost tip of the country. It is the largest zone in terms of territorial coverage, and the average population density is between 55 and 65 per km2. The area is located between 30261 to 60321N latitude and 360431 to 400461E longitudes extending for about 331.6kms north to south and for about 442.06kms east to west. The zone is made up of 13 districts namely Yabello, Teltelle, Dire, Miyo, Moyale , Arero, Dugda Dawa, Bule-Horaa, Gelana, Abaya, Melka Soda, Dilo and Dhas. They are located in two ecological zones, including-the semi-arid lowland to the south and the more humid land falling at relatively higher altitude to the north.

Borena shares common boundaries with Guji zone in the east, Somali regional state in south-east, SNNPR in the north and west. The region has a long international border with neighboring Kenya (521kms long) in the south, and the town of Moyale, Dollo Ado, Suftu (Mandhera) are the main gate ways to the community (see Annex III, Administrative Map of Borena).

Ecologically, the area is characterized by semi-arid landscape that lies in the altitudinal variation of 1000m to 1,500m above sea level(ASL) with a few exceptional areas that rise up to 2000m (Wassie and Fayissa,2010:4). The average annual rainfall is bellow 600 mm (Dida, 2008), and the amount decreases as one moves southwards. Borana has four defined seasons comprising of two rainy and two dry seasons. The first rainy season (locally called *Ganaa*) extends from mid March to May, whereas the other rainy season (locally called *Hagaya*) is for two months from mid-September to mid-November. Surface water, such as seasonal ponds and rivers, is the main source of life in the area during normal rainy season, although there is no perennial river that flows throughout the year.

A traditionally constructed deep water wall (up to 25 m) locally called '*Eela*' is the main source of water for both people and animals, especially during dry season. *Eela* is a deep hole established to make use of underground water so that its usage is labor intensive requiring a chain of five or six people to uplift the water to the

level where it can be poured into jars for human consumption or into troughs for the animals. Land in pastoral areas of Borena is classified into rangeland (*lafa marga*), cropland (*lafa qotisa*), forest or bush-land (*lafa badda*) and water resource area (*lafa bishani*) (Mesele and Coppock, 2006). Grassland is considered as the best in terms of its high soil productivity and covers large areas of the region. The range-land of Borena community is categorized into open grazing area accessible to all members of the clan and is restricted or reserved grazing area owned on household bases. Bush-land is a forest covered area (especially high and broad leafed forests) mostly degraded and not suitable for crop-production. Because of the harsh ecological conditions and limited production capacity of the land in Borana, relatively little area exists under cultivation (although with increasing population more marginal land is being cultivated). Few areas around *Eala* and seasonal river ponds are categorized as the water land in Borena traditional land management system, which belongs to the community as a whole.

2.1.2 History, Demography and Ethnic Composition

The word 'Borena' (Boran or Borana) apparently surfaced in Ethiopian history between the twelve and sixteen centuries with the emergence of two Oromo group- Borena and Barentu. During the time of the Oromo expansion 'Borena' represented one of the two Oromo descendents (the other being Barentu) who expanded south to the present day western Shawa, Kaffa, Gamu Goffa, Borana, Sidamo, Illubabor, Wallaga, and the Gibe regions(Asefa,2010). Currently, the name 'Borena' is geographically and demographically situated to represent "the Sabo and Gona" sub-groups of the Oromo mainly living in Southern Ethiopia and Northern Kenya. For Oromo people living in these two areas, 'Borena' symbolizes not only the land and people but also culture and animals.

The administrative zone of Borena has a total of 1,081,644 populations belonging to diverse language families (CSA, 2007). The Oromo (Borana, Gabra and Guji), the (SNNPR) (Gedeo), Amhara and Somali (Garii, Digodi, Merehan, Gurre, Duriane and Shabelle) make up the largest ethnic groups in the area (CSA. 2005). Of these, the Oromo (particularly the Borena clan) are numerically the dominant ethnic group in every district of the zone, followed by the Somali. Others are minority groups living around towns, and depend on small scale farming and trading.

2.1.3 Means of Life and Livelihoods

The arid-and semi-arid agro-ecological zone of Borena is suitable for pastoralism, which constitutes the single most important source of life and local livelihood. Pastoralism is a mobile livelihood system exclusively based on livestock production. The seasonal disparity of pasture and water made life in the pastoralist communities of Borena (like elsewhere in the world) mobile, characterized by a movement of people and animals from place to place. The mobility can be between districts, zones, regions and even to neighboring countries, particularly Kenya and Somalia. And the duration can be temporary or permanent, regular or irregular depending on the reasons of the migration. Based on the duration and regularity, Borena has two types of mobility; '*Godaansa Foora' and 'Godaansa Warraguda'*

Godaansa Foora is the temporary mobility of certain members of the family (usually able bodied young men between the ages of 17 to 24) and capable animals to the neighboring localities where pasture and water is relatively abundant. This is a planned type of mobility that takes place regularly during the dry season and covers relatively shorter distances; it can be between zones or districts. Before the actual movement, a team (called 'Aburu') will be sent to assess the suitability of the new area. The *Aburu* gather information on the carrying capacity of the area, the absence of

animal disease as well as the local security situation (Kajela et.al, 2005). Based on the information, a decision is made about the number and type of animals taking part in *Godaansa Foora* and of its duration. Occasionally, elders establish communication with the hosting communities to avoid possible conflicts. Children and women remain behind, taking care of the newly born and animals and conducting domestic activities.

The other form of livestock mobility that occurs during acute periods of drought and large scale conflict is called '*Godaansa Warraguda*'. It is an unintended movement of the herd that involves the whole of the affected communities (female, male, children, young or old) and the entire herd (including the newly born as well as older animals) to a more peaceful and rainy area. *Godaansa Warraguda'is* a relatively permanent mobility that may last years. The distances covered are longer and involve crossing into the territories of neighboring countries (Kenya and Somalia).

The magnitude and frequency of drought has increased in recent years; and drought that had occurred once a decade started to recur within a year or two since the late 20th century. The frequency of the drought increases the number of mobility, which together with other factors, like the presence of inter-ethnic settlements, the availability of shared resources and political differences, resulted in conflicts. According to research conducted by CARE Ethiopia (2008) the Borana pastoralists are in constant conflict with other neighboring pastoralist or agro-pastoralist communities of Gedeo, Gujji, Geri, Gabra, Hamer, Waata, Elbore and to the Konso. The Borana society considers the Geri clan of Somali and the Guji Oromo as their "traditional enemies ", and ascribed the later as *janjjamtuu* (to mean bad or ruthless). Similarly, the Gabra Miigo clan emphasize the cruelty of the Boran and their suffering at the hands of the Boran.These traditional enmity creates unhealthy resource competition and ethnic rivalries usually expressed in the form of military domination and in the accumulation of arms.

Livestock are the main source of food and transport for the Borena. They are also the symbol of pride and respect in the Borena tradition. Thus, the Borena community would scarify anything, even their lives to keep their animals safer. Cattle have a special cultural value in the sense that when animals arrived home at the evening after days of grazing, the owner is traditionally obliged to await them outside their *mona*/*boma* (a fenced plot of land used to keep animals at night) and welcome them standing (PFE, 2004:3).

2.1.4. Socio-Cultural Practices and Traditional Institutions

Beside its large livestock population, the Borena community has rich cultural and traditional heritages pulling the society together and creating a strong sense of identity. The society is considered to be more socially cohesive and co-operative and has well-developed, elaborate institutional arrangements. The cohesiveness of the society is one of the main reasons, for Borena Oromo, to be the more dominant group in southern Ethiopia (Wario, 2006). The Borana children consider themselves as the descendents of the same family and it is common to hear words like 'we' and 'our' instead of 'I' and 'me' in their daily conversation. Furthermore, the society considers its private property as something that belongs to the group, and they articulate as 'our animal (instead of my animal)', 'our land' (my land) and 'our house' (my house). Such group perception has an impact on gun ownership because security provision for communal property is the collective responsibility of the society. According to Borena tradition everyone is responsible to manage and protect their resources, to keep the safety and security of the society, as well as to participate in war (either in actual fighting or indirectly).

The social organizations of the Borena society have vertical and horizontal ties. Vertically, the household is the lowest unit in Borena social organization integrated into *Milo* (sub-clans), *Gosa*

(clans) and Moieties (branches). The categorization is purely social and biological, and marriage arrangement is restricted to only between opposing moieties. However, the settlement patterns are not along clan or blood lines, thus the society were inter-mixed in their geographic settlement. The horizontal tie of Borena society is based on settlement patterns. In Borena finding urban-like crowded houses are unusual, rather limited numbers of small huts were concentrated in one place, and other similar houses are found about two or more kilometers away. The households are grouped into *olla*, *areda*, *reera*, and *Dheeda*. Olla is a residential encampment of a group of 5 to 40 households, whereas the next territorial unit composed of 4 to 10 *ollas* is called *areda* (Hogg, 1993). *Dheeda* is the highest group in Borena horizontal structural system. The horizontal structure is organized to facilitate grazing, and the number of household that made each territorial unit is not static due to the mobile nature of pastoral life.

Borena is also famous for its *Gadda* system, a complex traditional social system that guides every facet of life. It deals with social, political, economic and religious issues of the Oromo people. It defines how political power is assumed, resources are managed and conflict is resolved. *Gadda* is a system of social organization based on age-grade classes of the male population that succeed each other every eight years. A complete *Gadda* cycle consists of five age-grades so it takes about 40 years for a man to reach the uppermost grade. The most senior age-grade usually forms the Council. The *Gadda* Council formulate and interpret customary laws, arbitrate disputes and is responsible for passing the traditions on to the next younger generation. Until recently, most community problems have been traditionally solved along *Gadda* principles and the state's justice system are often kept as an alternative. However, the overriding role of *Gadda* system in conflict resolutions and resource management was greatly reduced; and elders lost their cultural authority over matters affecting the society. The society (particularly the youth) is increasingly unwilling to be governed by those traditional regulations and principles. For instance, the

Gadda system used to have its own unique principles concerning a firearm; who is supposed to use it, when to be used and against whom (which will be discussed in the next chapter). Although some of these principles still survived, most customary laws concerning firearms are not followed by the society.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter is concerned with the experience of Borena community of southern Ethiopia with SALWs and is primarily based on field data the author collected during a 12 day study tour of the area from 10 to 22 November 2011. General observation that directly or indirectly related to illicit firearms, supplemented with information elicited from the key informants through interviews, questionnaires and the Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Elders, local people, pastoralist gun owners, NGO staff and government officials (intelligence and law enforcement) are the principal source of firsthand information. A response of about 150 research participants are qualitatively analyzed and interpreted along with other related information collected from secondary sources.

3.1.1. History of Small Arms

Modern firearms are believed to have entered the Horn of Africa in the late 1520's with the coming of the Portuguese and the Ottoman Turks to support the war between the Christian Highland kingdom and Muslim Sultanate of Adal, respectively. At the time, both the Portuguese and Ottoman Turks were competing to dominate the Red Sea commerce, thus the Portuguese supplied firearms and 400 musketeers (infantry) to Christian Ethiopia(then called Abyssinia), which was under the leadership of Lebna Dengel. In response, the Turks provided arms and 900 musketeers to the Sultanate of Adal lead by Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrihim al-Ghazi. This was the first introduction of firearms in the Horn of Africa. Later, kings and queens in Ethiopia were able to accumulate firearms to incorporate new territory. This was successfully completed by

1900. Furthermore, the establishment of a modern army during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I was also important in the history of firearms. During these early stages the availability of arms was limited to regular security forces, elites close to the ruler and a few civilians. The majority of the civilian population was unarmed, even those few who were armed used spears and knifes for protection and for hunting.

The politics of the Cold War, the 1977/78 Ethio-Somali war, and the collapse of the Derg regime can be cited as the recent turning points in explaining the proliferation of illicit arms in Borena. The military Junta received heavy and light arsenal from the former communist bloc countries. Together with the 500,000 highly trained active combatants, the regime was the most militarized one in Eastern Africa. However, the forced recruitment into the military and the administrative complexities within the army resulted in army defection (usually with their weapons). Furthermore, the collapse of the Derg regime was followed with the poorly managed Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program that left many weapons in the hands of returnees and civilians. Information obtained from Borena Zone Intelligence Office reveals that many civilians residing in the region were able to acquire firearms in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Derg regime (informant Bogale Beharu).The period is also characterized by heavy plundering of military stores by ordinary citizens, which were subsequently not properly retrieved especially in the marginalized peripheries.

The disintegration of the regime left a significant number of former combatants to flee to the neighboring countries (especially Kenya, Sudan and Somalia). The border town of Moyale in the south, Matama in the north and Jijiga in the east are the most important cross-points to these countries. Most soldiers sold their firearms, whereas others exchanged their weapon with non-military clothes in order to facilitate a safe border crossing. The 1977/78 conventional war between Ethiopia and Somalia (aka Ogaden

war) was also a turning point in the proliferation of SALW among Borena communities. Pastoralist communities of Borena who inhabit the peripheral areas of southern Ethiopia were extensively armed by the regime to halt the "Greater Somalia" movement that aimed at the unification of all Somali speaking communities under one government. At the end of the 1977/78 war, significant number of firearms in the then Ogaden Sub-province were pulled further south to Borena by Somali arm dealers. The increase of intra-state wars and insecurity created following the emergence of failed state in Somalia can be seen as the third important historical factor that partially explain the political economy of SALWs among Borena community.

3.1.2 Gun Ownership among Borena Community

Responses from key informants and FGD participants shows Borena pastoralists are amongst the most heavily armed civilian communities in Ethiopia, although, there was no single variable that could explain why they are so armed. A combination of different socio-economic, political, historical and cultural factors explains the availability of guns in the hands of pastoralists.

3.1.2.1 Culture as Independent Variable

Culture is an important variable that explains why specific groups of society are doing what they are doing. It gives meaning to the human behavior associated with the possession of firearms. The "culture of guns" in Borena was deeply rooted in the folklore of Oromo people and the institution of the Gadda system. The Oromo people have a warrior tradition which glorifies those who are keen on the art of killing at warfronts and defeating enemies. Courage at fighting and defending the territory was (and still is) a sign of heroism. It is something that is praised by society. Best

performing warriors are admired and rewarded with land, titles and political power. Many stories are told, different songs (*wedduu*, *gerarsaa*) are sang, and numerous verses are written and passed from generation to generation about the heroic warriors.

The warrior traditions of the Oromo people were institutionalized through the *Gadda* system, which was based on five age grades (*Gadda*). The names of these grades varied from place to place. In Borena, these grades were *dabalee* (ages one to eight), *rogge* (ages eight to sixteen), follee (ages sixteen to twenty-four), *qondaala* (ages twenty-four to thirty-two), and *dorri* (ages thirty-two to forty). Every grade has its own specific privileges that increase over the grades (from one to five). Between the first two grades, Oromo male children assume little responsibility and are not even allowed to fully participate in politics.

The third (*follee*) and fourth (*qondaala*) grades are critical for this research due to the militaristic nature of the responsibilities assigned. Between the ages sixteen and twenty-four, they took on the responsibilities of learning about war tactics, politics, law and management, culture and history, and hunting wild animals. At this grade a young Boran marries and starts the independent life-cycle of adulthood. Response from the majority of the respondents also indicates most people learn how to use fire arms between the ages of 15 and 20 which directly fit into the third *Gadda* grade, when military tactics are learned. When young men are between twenty-four and thirty-two years, they serve as soldiers and are prepared to take over the responsibilities of leadership, in peace and in war. This institutionalized gun culture stimulates the militarization of the Borena society.

Guns are a sign of masculinity, wealth and pride and there is an ascribed meaning to a gun caring person. There is an old saying that a man is respected with 'gun, age and wealth'. These are the most important attributes that determine the status of a person in a community. Culturally, gun firing symbolizes certain events in Borena. For instance, the sound that comes out of gun shows

happiness when a mother gives birth to a baby boy, marriage ceremonies and traditional holidays. Guns are also fired on the funeral ceremonies of a wealthy person, because firing of a gun is believed to chase out the bad spirit that stops the soul from entering heaven. On such occasions, even those who do not possess a gun can borrow from their family or friends.

Table 3.1: Traditional use of firearms other than conflict

Ceremonies	Number of Respondents (out of 100)	Percentage
Marriage ceremony	32	32%
New child born	33	33%
Death funerals	8	8%
Holidays	27	27%

the value of "number of respondents" and "percentage" is equal because the sample size selected for questionnaire is one hundred.

Source: own field-work survey

As table 2 shows, information obtained from 92% of the respondents reveals the traditional celebrations of Borena festivals, marriage ceremonies as well as the birth of baby boys are accompanied by firing to symbolize the fest. The birth of a baby boy is celebrated with the belief that he will someday become a strong worker and warrior capable of protecting the community. Marriage is celebrated since it is the time when boys and girls enter adulthood. Response from 8% of the respondents indicates that gun is fired in the funeral ceremony to show respect and sorrow to the dead person. Death is marked as an important event; it brings members of the community together to say goodbye and the sound of the gun is believed to chase-out bad sprits that stop the soul from entering heaven. During holidays too, the Borena youth usually carry firearms while dancing.

3.1.2.2 Self and Community Protection

Previous research on the ownership of gun shows the primacy of self-defense in explaining the demand of firearms (Brauer and Muggah, 2006). Likewise, responses from 81% of the respondents, and the majority of interviewee reveal that civilian society possess arms to protect live and property; to assert control over scarce natural resources and to defend themselves against rival groups. Guns are also purchased for the purpose of hunting as well as for their traditional value. The mobile nature of pastoral life exposes the community to safety and security threats such as wild beasts, thieves and bandits as well as enemies from other clans or ethnic groups. The excessive belief in self-defense resulted in the accumulation of firearms which further causes insecurity and hostility in the region. Violent crimes are common in the area because the presence of guns turn small quarrel between individuals into bloodshed or wider conflicts.

Table 3.2: Types of violent conflicts in Borena

Type of crimes	Number of respondents (out of 100)	Percentage
Revenge	46	46%
Killing	32	32%
Cattle rustling	32	32%
Steeling and robbery	27	27%
Kidnapping	19	19%
Clan conflicts	19	19%
Organized crimes	11	11%
Rape	8	8%
Banditry	3	3%

The sum of the percentage exceeds one hundred because research participant responds more than one answers for the same question.

Source: Author's fieldwork survey

Table 4.2 Illustrates that revenge, killing, cattle raiding, steeling and robbery, kidnapping, inter-clan conflicts and organized crimes are the most widespread types of violent crimes. The first three crimes (revenge, killing and cattle-rustling) constitute more than 70%; whereas a crime of rape is relatively low due to harsh community punishment. The frequency of crimes vary based on the level of conflicts; minor incidences tend to happen daily or weekly, while major organized conflicts occur once a year. These conflicts are the main push factors for huge availability of small arms in Borena. People are pessimistic about their security due to the presence of actual and potential fears. Because of this, they often keep their guns (which they consider as security insurance or life savior) separate from them. Responses from 65% of the respondents reveal Administrative Zone of Borena is one of the most insecure regions in Ethiopia.

Guns are considered as more than a reliable friend, even more than family as they follow the owner everywhere all the time. Because of the limited presence of the state to ensure local societal security, everyone is responsible for the security of himself, his family, community and property. In the old days, people used to carry spears and sticks when they traveled from place to place in search of pasture and water for their cattle. The technical capability of these traditional weaponries is relatively poor compared to modern arms. However, traditional instruments have also had devastating effects on life and property. The 1994 Rwandese genocide and the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya are among recent memories, which clearly show the devastating effects of such traditional arms.

The scarcity of resources due to environmental degradation has intensified the competition among armed groups. As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the Borena community shared land and water with the Garri, Gabra, the Gujji Oromo, Burji, Konso, Degodi and Merihan. During the olden days when relations between these ethnic groups were peaceful, resource sharing was not a problem. However, the decline in the quantity and quality of water and pasture, due to environmental degradation and over population, created unhealthy competition over access to resources. The division of territories along ethnic or clan lines further intensified the already existing resource competition. This in turn has diverted the nature of the conflict from controlling economic resources to politics. Specially, the question of identity has mobilized the whole community (ethnic groups or clans) to become involved in the conflict. As a result, preparation (arm accumulation) has become a routine activity.

For instance, traditionally the Borana consider other neighboring communities as their traditional adversaries, and to develop a sense of enmity towards these people. Due to this perception, the Borena clan wants to be better armed than their enemies. Information obtained from FGD participants exhibits the Borena community firmly believes that military strength is critical for the survival of their community due to "the winner takes all" perception. For instance, the superior clan can confiscate the property of its opponent. Supporting the deal at hand, an elder interviewee in the community told the researcher "most bandits, cattle raiders and criminals who practice commercialized cattle rustling own modern firearms; then how can we stop them with spears and bows?" In general, life among pastoralist communities of southern Ethiopia is based on the Darwinian teaching of the "survival of the fittest". Besides, individual competition within a clan or ethnic group also explains the widespread of arms in the area. If a person kills or inflicts injury on someone, the victim or his/her family usually purchases arms for the purpose of taking revenge. The act of revenge against the perpetrator is believed to restore the family's or clan's honor. This perpetrator-victim cycles (i.e. today's victims are tomorrow's perpetrators and vise-versa) have resulted in the militarization of the civilian society over the years. A response from 46% of the participants shows that revenge is the top form of violent crime in the area. Furthermore, 78% of the research participants agree that almost all violent crimes occurring in the area involve the direct or indirect use of firearms.

Apart from revenge, the social responsibility of individuals to protect the community at large from the attack of other clans can be cited as one of the reasons for the proliferation of arms in the area. As discussed in chapter three, the Borena community has been more cohesive owing to the similarity in lifestyle, culture and a feeling of belongingness to the same ancestor. Resources are owned commonly; thus the protection and management of these resources are communal responsibilities. In the area, socialistic-communal perception prevails over the capitalist or individualistic one. The cohesive nature of the society has also made the issue of security as the duty of the whole society (young or old, male or female, rich or poor). Every person is alert when it comes to security. In the Borena culture, when two persons meet on the way, they ask "*daimtuu lafaa maltuu jiraa*" (translated as children of my land what is new). This is called the "Bush Telephone" (i.e. non-selective process of information sharing between societies) by NGOs working in the area.

Most people tend to own firearms as part of community protection. Those who do not have gun due to reasons other than economy are considered as irresponsible to their family and community. Thus, one can be socially obliged to buy firearms even if he is not personally interested, just to earn societal respect. Every able minded member of the community is responsible in matters threatening societal safety and security. For example, in times of clan conflict, all members of the community participate directly or indirectly. Women prepare food and give moral support; elders give advice and issue fighting plans; and the youth or adults participate in the actual fighting. Those gun owners unfit for combat due to their health or age transfer their guns to other fighters. Refusal to participate in the conflict is punishable with up to five cows (Interview with Wario). Therefore, in time of conflict the ownership of gun is transferred from an individual to the community.

The long serving Gadda system also encourages the possession of firearms for the purpose of self-defense. It is believed that at some age all men should learn the art and science of war to safeguard the identity of the Oromo people. Usually, the head of the household (father) is responsible to train his son(s) about the expected behaviors and actions in the warfront. The training includes target shooting and maintenance of firearms. Being born from the gun-owner family is not a necessary condition to know about firearms, because a Borena child can learn either from the extended family or from neighbors. Eighteen percent of male respondents know how to use a gun and they have acquired the skill between the ages of 13 and16. Particularly, 17 years is the average age to independently carry firearms. At this age a youth is given a personal firearm as a present from his family.

The Borena tradition of firearm training is not a one-time action; rather it is a continuous process. Right from childhood a father would tell stories about heroism and what their forefather sacrificed for today's Borena land. At the age of 10 a child is physically introduced to gun and theoretically told how to use firearms. Above the age of 13 the training is no longer in-house and requires going to the forest where there is no movement of people since it involves actual shooting. One of my interviewee remembers his gun shooting training. He said, "one day my father told me to travel with him towards nearby *Malkaa* (water area); as usual he was carrying the Ak-47. He puts three medium sized rocks together and showed me how to target and shoot from about a distance of 100 meters." (Interview with Kato Gobe).

3.1.2.3 Commercialized Cattle-rustling

Besides its defensive purpose, firearms are also owned for offensive use of cattle-rustling, that is, to raid or steal livestock from other pastoralist communities. Cattle-rustling has been practiced since time immemorial among the pastoral communities. It was traditionally accepted and fundamentally different from the current practice of livestock theft. In the olden days, Borena

youth were encouraged to participate in cattle-rustling as a rite of transition to manhood. It was also practiced to acquire the bride price, a trend steadily increasing in recent years as poverty has deepened. Elders bless those who go for a raid and the weapons of choice were home-made and traditional ones. Yet, over the past three decades, the motive behind cattle-rustling and its *modus operandi* have significantly changed. The traditional practice, that involves the use of arrows and bows and which prohibited attacks on women and children, has been increasingly replaced by the militarized criminal activities of livestock theft. This activity relies on the indiscriminate use of firearms against all members (men, women and children) of a rival community. The proliferation of small arms in the post-1970s caused the formation of heavily armed and militarized pastoralist groups or criminal gangs who engage in cattle-rustling for purely commercial reasons. This has further led to an escalation of cattle-rustling attacks, fuelled by the increase of small arms. Its effect on life and property becomes shocking and its frequency also increases exponentially.

3.1.2.4 Limited Presence of the State

The Borena inhabit the remote arid and semi-arid lowland of southern Ethiopia and they have been economically marginalized and politically excluded for decades. Even though there are some progresses, the issue of social exclusion has not exhibited a paradigm shift. The provision of security as well as access to imperative infrastructure, such basic health care service centers and schools are limited. Because of this, every community member participates in security provision and elders play an important role in the provision of justice and conflict resolution. Forty-nine percent of the participants agreed that security provisions were a matter of societal responsibility, whereas 32% and 12% of the respondents leave the issue of security for elders and that of government authority, respectively. Similarly, responses from 81% of the respondents show that a person turns to a friend, neighbors

or elders if he/she is threatened while the other 19% would go to the police or local authority for protection. The figure reveals the primacy of roles of ensuring security was entrusted to local community than to the state.

Even today, the government does not sufficiently reach the remote societies of Borena, and even where it reaches its activity is rather inadequate due to resource limitations and lack of commitment. The limited presence of the state is an opportunity for the society to easily acquire arms. Societies are largely free from any state restriction on arms possession and transfers occur frequently. Law enforcement institutions are exclusively found in towns and the police force is deployed only to accessible areas. Awareness creation programs about the effects of firearms and training about its legal handling is nonexistent. Furthermore, association of the firearms with clan politics and lack of societal support also act as obstacles for the justice and security institutions established to deal with crime cases. For instance, it is difficult to treat armed crime cases like killing and raiding of livestock according to the FDRE's criminal law. Because, most of the time, the cases are attached with defending ethnicity and it is difficult to get evidence exposing the criminals to justice since the people who witness the crime do not want to allow their clan member to be prosecuted. Rather, they hide criminals who belong to their clan or ethnic group.

3.1.3 Source and Transfer of Firearms

Arms that are responsible for fueling conflicts in the pastoralist societies of the Horn of Africa originated from many sources. During the Cold War huge quantities of arms were pumped into the Horn of Africa by competing socialist and capitalist blocs, engaged in proxy wars. Although the Cold War has ended with the disintegration of the USSR, the flow of arms has continued to pour into the region as part of stockpile reduction programs in western countries and by numerous emerging arms producers such as

China, Iran, and Ukraine. The fall of regimes in Ethiopia (1991), Rwanda (1994), Somalia (1991), and Uganda (1979 and 1986) and the poorly managed disarmament campaign introduced many civilians with firearms. Moreover, civil wars in Sudan, insecurity in Kenya and the multiplicity of insurgent movements in the region had also contributed to the steady stream of weapons into the region. Once weapons reach the hands of civilians, they can be easily recycled from one conflict to another. The easy circulation of firearms is facilitated by the long and porous boundaries, common inter-border settlement and by the presence of administrative challenges such as corruption.

Most small arms in Borena appear to enter illegally from the neighboring countries which have been experiencing internal strife, including Kenya, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan. Information obtained from Borena Zone Administrative and Security Office reveals that Kenya and Somalia are considered as the current most common suppliers of small arms and ammunitions to the Borena pastoralists due to geographic proximity and political instability. Ethiopia shares long boundary with neighboring countries: Djibouti 349 km, Eritrea 912 km, Kenya 861 km, Somalia 1,600 km, and Sudan 1,606 km (Nation Master, 2011). These boundaries are neither demarcated nor controlled, with the exception of accidental patrolling in some get-way areas.

Life in the pastoralist communities who live in dry border area is characterized by frequent mobility in search of pasture and water. In addition to shared resources, they have shared identities and speak the same language. The households living in Borena of Ethiopia usually have families or friends in Kenya or Somalia. Cross border trade between Ethiopia and Kenya facilitates the transfer of weapons. Like other contraband goods, weapons are smuggled into the region and are sold by traders in the black markets. The frequent drought, which has occurred in the region in recent years, has killed hundreds of thousands of animals and left many pastoralists poorer and unemployed with no future hope

other than contraband. Information from FGD participants shows the steady increase of contraband goods and contrabandists in the Ethio-Kenya border.

Once the SALWs and ammunition arrive at borders, they are easily transported by vehicles from border points since the police hardly do thorough checking of vehicles at the numerous checkpoints along the roads. For example, during the 12 days of my field work along the border of Kenya and Ethiopia, I had crossed three times into the territory of Kenya (specifically to a place called 'Gambo') and no police man from both countries bothered to check our vehicle. Border control is very lax where it was supposed to be strong. It would have been very easy for me to transport a pistol, explosive or smaller Ak-47 without dismantling it. Animals, especially camels, are the other means of transport used by arms dealers to transfer and distribute firearms in the region. Similarly, arms originating from Somalia enter Borena through the regional state of Somalia, and the Borena and Somali routes are connected at Moyale, a district under the administration of both Liben Zone (belongs to Somali Regional State) and Borena Zone.

Direct buying by individual is the other widely practiced mechanism of acquiring firearms. Some pastoralists who have access to gun sellers as individuals can buy guns for themselves. A response from the FGDs participant indicates the mutual exchange of goods between communities also makes it easy for people to acquire guns through barter trade, where members would exchange livestock (camels, cows and goats) for arms. At some point of time, these guns are transferred to the third party if little profit is gained or even at a loss if the owner wants to replace it with other type of firearm. Person to person transfer of arms are more frequent so that a specific type of gun can circulate among four or five people within a year or two. In this way, each gun owner is involved in the proliferation of illicit arms.

Table 3.3: Source and transfer of firearms in Borena

Source and Transfer Mechanisms	Number of Respondents (out of 100)	Percentage
Black market	45	45%
Buy from other person	30	30%
Get from a town of Moyale	19	19%
Inherited	8	8%
Borrowing	8	8%
Buy from police	5	5%

*The value of "number of respondents" and "percentage" is equal because the sample size selected for questionnaire is one hundred.

Source: own field work survey

As shown in table 4.3, the black market is the current most important source of firearms for the society of Borena. Once a firearm entered into the territory of Borena, it can circulate through borrowing, inheritance or person to person purchase. Like any other property, guns are inherited by a family member or extended family. For instance, in Borena the eldest son inherits his father's gun. This is due to the belief that he will represent the family and protect the community on behalf of his father. If the deceased does not have a son, the inheritance moves to the extended family members.

Arms are also temporarily acquired through borrowing from other persons. In the majority of cases, the Borenas borrow firearms from members of their community. However, some respondents indicated that the borrowing seldom takes place across borders. The society of Borena is known for its emergency support system called *Birmenna* (*Mirmena*). It is a support system which can extend across borders to protect clan members from a common enemy. The support involves the physical participation in fighting and the supply of firearms. In time of heavy inter clan conflicts, the Borena clan in Southern Ethiopia borrow or rent firearms and

radio communication equipments from Borena Oromo in Kenya (Interview with Kato Gobe).

The killing of the gun owner, during raids and clans conflict, is another mechanism by which a weapon is confiscated forcefully from the original owner. Because in the art of Borena warrior tradition, success at the warfront is evaluated by the number of enemy force killed, property destroyed and arms gained. Conflicts play significant roles in the circulation of arms from one clan to another, although the rate of transfer depends on the magnitude of the war. In the major of conflicts, the winning party is able to get hundreds of enemy firearms, whereas in minor incidences the number is very small, one or two and sometimes nothing. Those who lost their arms re-acquire them through the same process or other means like purchase. In the long run, the circular process of losing and gaining firearms has resulted in the accumulation of arms in the area. The frequently occurring conflicts have also resulted in the duplication of arms. In other words, strong fighters who succeed in killing the enemy fighter are able to get an additional weapon that formerly belonged to its opponents.

3.1.4 The Distribution of Firearms

According to information obtained from Borena Zone Administration and Security Office about 80% of Borena households are armed, although its distribution is uneven geographically and demographically as well as based on wealth status. Pastoralist areas which are located remotely close to border areas host extensive number of arms rather than areas relatively closer to Addis Ababa. This is due to the lower prices of firearms and indirect (e.g. transportation) costs associated with the transfer. The easy accessibility and limited state control facilitated the supply and reduced the cost of arm possession. Pastoralist districts of Dire, Dilo, Arrero, Dhas, Moyo and Moyale possess more guns than sedentary agriculturalist districts like Galana, Abaya and Bule

Hora or agro-pastoralist areas of Dugda Dawa, Melka Soda, Yabelo and Teltele. The introduction of agriculture into pastoral economy has reduced the pastoral mobility and has made them settle longer in a specific area. In agrarian and agro-pastoralist areas arms are replaced by plough and ammunitions by seed.

The ownership of firearms also differs in terms of age and sex. A youth group between the ages of 17 and 30 is the most armed, and women are culturally excluded from owning any kind of arms, including the traditional tools such as spears (*warana*). Because, according to Borena culture women are perceived as peaceful, and prohibited from direct participation in fighting. Due to the presence of gender bias, females are also considered as weak, and allowing them the possession of arms is seen as indirectly arming the enemy (interview with Alhake Jateni). In other words, it is believed that the enemy can easily confiscate the arms from females. Although females are excluded from arms possession and from fighting, they are the main factors behind any tribal conflicts. They are the major provokers of conflict in a way that they sing different songs of braveness that appreciate men or youngsters who have killed somebody and undermine and insult those who had not killed a person or refused to participate in fighting (Interview with Gume Guyo). Women play significant roles behind every single gun purchased and bullet fired.

The wealth status of the households is also important in the distribution of firearms. Richer households tend to have up to five guns whereas the poor own none. But, there are exceptions where the poor own firearms for animal raids and show off. For some, guns are not only used to protect wealth but also to acquire wealth, by engaging on animal raids.

3.1.5 Types of SALWs in Borena

Most of the Borena society own small arms (i.e. firearms used by a single person) whereas, few possess light weapons (i.e. firearms used as a crew). A response from the participants indicate that Russian-made AK-47 semi automatic rifle, Mk-4, G3, FN, PKM, RPG, M14, M16, pistols, hand grenades and mortars are found in the hands of the Borena community. Of these, the Ak-47 is the most popular weapon of choice. This is due to its technical specification and wider availability. It is relatively small in size, not very heavy; easier to use, efficient and widely available. It can be easily dismantled and concealed. An AK-47 weighs a little more than 10 pounds—making it easier to carry around and use—and can fire a magazine of bullets (about 30 bullets) in less than a minute to an effective range of 300 meters. Price is the other reason behind the wide spread of Ak-47 among pastoralist societies. Its price is relatively lower, given the technical features, although this differs over time and space. Five years ago the average price of Ak-47 around Yabello (Zonal town) area has been estimated at below 6,000 birr, whereas it was as low as 4,000 around the district of Moyale and other border areas. Recently, due to devaluation of Ethiopian birr in terms of foreign currency and inflation, a used Ak-47 would cost up to 10,000 birr in the border area of Moyale (770 kilometer from Addis) and 12,000 birr in Bule Hora (Interview with Getachew Gelano). Similarly, ammunition for an Ak-47 would cost 10-15 birr depending on the location of the market. Arms like RPG, Mortar and PKM are classified under the category of light weapons. Their market availability is very limited due to higher prices making their ownership be confined to fewer richer people or ex-soldiers. Unlike small arms, the usage of light weapons is limited to heavy conflicts. Although the society of Borena is armed with explosives, the types are not identified. Most people who live in towns and business people are armed with pistols. In rural areas, pistols are often owned as a supplementary or secondary weapons by those who posses another type of arms.

3.1.6 The Effects of Small Arms

3.1.6.1 Fueling of Conflicts

Responses from key informants and FGD participants reveal that small arms are widely used in inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts by organized criminals, insurgent or 'terrorist groups', and in violent crimes. Although violent conflict is not a new phenomena in the area, its frequency and magnitude has increased since the 1990s, and its effect has become more fatal than before. This is partly due to environmental degradation and ethnic antagonism after the establishment of the federal system in Ethiopia in 1995. The past resource conflicts are currently politicized and converted into border conflicts. Furthermore, the proliferation of arms is like putting petroleum on the fire, because it intensifies the severity of the conflict. Conflicts have become a daily phenomenon particularly in districts of Moyale, Miyo, Arrero and Dire, due to the closeness to the border and overlapping inter-ethnic settlement claiming the same territory.

This misuse directly and indirectly affects hundreds of thousands of people and severely undermines sustainable development in already poorer areas. The proliferation of SALW is most serious along Ethiopia's southern borders where pastoralist communities have ready access to assault rifles and other weapons. The introduction and spread of such sophisticated weapons among these communities has intensified conflicts and blurred the line between longstanding ethnic competition—manifested in cattle rustling—political violence, and crime. Guns are now widely used to carry out acts of banditry and cattle rustling in Borena and have been responsible for growing numbers of human casualties.

The misuse of arms contributes to the deaths or injuries of parents and caretakers or may force a separation of families, undermining traditional family structures, and support systems. Although it is difficult to precisely figure out the exact number of people killed or injured, it is undoubtedly an enormous amount. Information from 73% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that at least one member of their family was affected by gun related violence in the past five years. The fighting caused widespread death and destruction, triggered huge refugee flows and undermined development throughout the region. For instance, in June 2006 the conflict between the Boran and Guji in Southern Ethiopia killed 100 people and internally displaced about 90,000 civilian (interview with Bogale Beharu). During days of my field work in November 2011, there was conflict between Garri clan of Somali and Borena in the district of Arrero that left three people dead.

3.1.6.2 Underdevelopment

Apart from the direct casualties and the injured, the biggest direct impact of armed violence in the area is the creation of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). The destruction of assets (cattle) through armed violence triggered the displacement and most of the violence-induced displaced are women, elders and children. This is because men are more often killed or participate in fighting. Displaced people most often face malnutrition, starvation and are exposed to communicable disease. Poverty is deep rooted and development is undermined due to the loss of access to land, property, jobs, and assets that are means of livelihood. The displaced, denied of their livelihoods and traditional support structures of Busa *Gonfa* (support system to those who lost their asset), are the poorest of the poor. Civilians may not be able to acquire food, supplies, and other assistances. Insecurity caused by small arms proliferation also limits health care services, which prevents adequate care for preventable and treatable conditions and diseases. The health care centers and clinics could not perform regularly due to frequent armed conflicts. Health indicators suggest that health standards in the region are among the worst in Ethiopia.

Moreover, the proliferation of SALW can divert huge community resources to non-productive investments, for desperately poor people. It increases individual spending on security and causes them to alter their lifestyles in areas with high violence. The cost of illicit arms proliferation has been particularly severe for pastoralists, who are greatly affected by large-scale cattle raiding. Gun violence can also cause government spending to be redirected into security rather than development projects. Furthermore, the wide availability and misuse of small arms destroys the development works and insecurity associated with it increases the cost of the projects. Development projects were interrupted because of the tribal conflict and threat of conflict in the area. For instance, according to information obtained from PCDP office, the 2 million birr school project at *Mil-bana cari liche* area in the district of Miyo was deliberately destroyed by a Borena clan one day before its opening ceremony. The school was smashed to revenge the previous distraction of Borena water pump by Garri clan of Somali.

Since the 1990s, the frequency and magnitude of conflicts in Borena has increased. Aid workers had faced difficulties at accessing areas of need and development projects may be cancelled or delayed because of security and crime concerns. Relief and development workers providing humanitarian and development services are also at risk. Contractors and employees are reluctant to work in areas of tribal conflict and even those who agreed to work requisite additional cost. For instance, in *Dukale* area (found in Miyo district) a formerly 60,000 birr project increased by more than three-fold to 200,000 due to violent conflicts (Interview with Hailemariam Kajela). Besides, insecurity associated with arms causes unscheduled work, delays the project as well as reduces both the quality and quantity of the delivery. On the day of my interview with the PCDP staff in Yabello, the team had plans to visit their project in Arerro district (100 kilometer east of Yabello); however, the tribal conflict in the area forced them to change their plan. In times of conflict, both parties to the conflict consider newcomers to the area as a member of an enemy force even if he/she does not belong to any of the conflicting parties. There are also situations of indiscriminate attacks on NGO employees who work on humanitarian assistance. For instance, the bombing of GTZ or GIZ in Arrero district (Wayib kebele) in 2005, which left the driver dead, is a recent example of attacks on humanitarian organizations (Interview with Alemayew Asfaw). NGOs operating in the region, as elsewhere, follow the rule of "No gun on board" and no staff is allowed to travel with guns.

There are also a number of indirect impacts likely to have long-term implications. In the situations of armed violent conflicts in Southern Ethiopia, schooling was frequently disrupted through the closure of schools, and displacement. Due to the death of teachers, the loss of equipment and books, and the absence of students who flee during violence. Children were unable to attend school regularly because of frequent interethnic cattle raids, which had increased due to uncontrolled small arms proliferation. Indeed, some schools were forced to close, looted, and burned down and school development projects were interrupted because of the conflicts and the threat of conflicts in the area.

Furthermore, uncontrolled availability of arms has also changed the traditional balance of power between elders and the youth. Traditionally, elders used to have authority over societal matters, but their customary power was weakened as young men have armed themselves. The social capital that can be used as mechanism for maintaining order within and between communities, which has the potential for managing violence was heavily degraded due to the erosion of the elder's traditional authority. The youth believes that guns will help to get respect in the society and they often say "*jaban nama qawe qabu*' which means the strong is the one who possesses a gun.

3.1.7 Control of Illicit Arms

The international community, including the United Nations, recognizes the overwhelming effect of illicit arms proliferation on peace and security of the world. Many conferences were held, laws were issued and institutions were created to deal with the problem. Ethiopia is signatory to all major international and regional instruments towards the reduction and control of the proliferation of illicit arms. The Nairobi Declaration (2000) and Nairobi Protocol (2004) are the most important documents on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit SALWs in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. The Nairobi protocol is a legally binding document that requires member states "to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of, the excessive accumulation, trafficking in, possession and use of SALW in the sub-region"(Article 2(a and b).

Ethiopia has taken important steps in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol. The National Focal Point (NFP) housed at the Federal Police Headquarter, was established to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol in Ethiopia. Ethiopia also includes the provision on illicit arms in its criminal code. Article 481 of the FDRE's Criminal Code prohibits unauthorized and illegal trade, transport, possession, store and transfer of weapons, explosives or ammunition, and the involvement in the activity is punishable with fine and rigorous imprisonment up to fifteen years. Owing to this article and other international provisions, 9,531 individuals were arrested and prosecuted between 2003 and 2004, for their involvement in illegal arms crimes. In addition, in 2006 and 2007 more than 11, 700 small arms, 3 000 hand grenades and 170, 000 various types of ammunition were destroyed (Institute for Security Studies, 2008:5).

However, given the severity of the problem the measures taken were far below what is actually required. Arms control activities are mainly limited to cities and towns, leaving the significant part of the armed society untouched. The activity of gun registration and licensing of firearms were at its infant stage in many pastoralist areas. For instance, according to information obtained from Borena Zone Administrative and Security Office, most arms currently circulating the region are neither licensed nor registered. Laws associated with illegal arms enshrined on the Criminal Code of Ethiopia were loosely implemented in the zone. Most people are unwilling to register their firearms because of the fear of being apprehended or disarmed. Response from the majority of the participants(57%) shows Borena society are not willing to give up their arms and even if they agree certain conditionality must be fulfilled.

Table 3.4: Conditionality for pastoralist disarmament

Conditions for the Disarmament	Number of Respondants (out of 100)	Percentage
Improving the economy	17	17%
Improving political participation of the society	3	3%
Consultation with the society	24	24%
Improving security	27	27%
Changing with cash	21	21%
Sever penalty	8	8%

*The value of "number of respondents" and "percentage" is equal because the sample size selected for questionnaire is one hundred.

Source: own field work survey

Information on the above table shows that the step by step process of improving and transforming the life of pastoralist community, the security and involving the society in matters affecting their life including disarmament program is key for disarming the community. Additionally, the guns-by-cash policy is also important in disarming the community. Increasing border control, licensing

firearms and issuing and implementing strong legal system and sever penalty are also suggested by the key informants and FGDs.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the current patterns of the proliferation of firearms and their effects on the safety and security of the Borena society. It presents the general trends of illicit arms and the actions that need to be taken in order to tackle the problem.

4.1.1 Conclusions

One critical conclusion that can be ascertained from this research is that the easy accessibility and wider availability of arms has resulted in the militarization of Borena society. The region is one of the most armed in Ethiopia. The majority of the society possess different types of firearms, ranging from 'small arms' such as Ak-47, M16, M14,G3 and pistols to lighter machine guns like mortars and PKM. In terms of popularity, the number of 'small arms' exceeds that of the 'light weapons' due to the differences in the availability, economic affordability and physical features. Most of the arms that are found in the region are automatic or semi-automatic, capable of firing many rounds within a second and their individual possession is internationally prohibited. Such wider arms possession by civilians will shift the balance of power from center to periphery in the long run and will certainly challenge the idea that states are the sole source of coercive authority.

The society is extensively armed due to the fact that the demand side (means and motivation) precondition is well fulfilled. The cultural meaning assigned to guns and the insecurity of the area

has motivated society to own firearms. The widespread possession of arms in the region is attributed to culture, conflict and cattle-rustling. In this vein, although the practice of the *Gadda* system contributes a lot to the cohesiveness of Oromo society, it has played little role in controlling the proliferation of arms. The practice of *Gadda* system has institutionalized the ownership of arms. It creates a "gun culture" and "warrior tradition" among the Oromo society; and it associates heroism with the art of fighting and victory at war.

The increased numbers of conflicts are another pull factor for the spread of arms in the areas. Competitions to control water and pasture and the commercialized cattle-rustling practices have caused many conflicts. The increase in the frequency of conflicts in turn triggers the availability of arms. Firearms are an important factor in the dynamics of pastoralist conflicts as arms acquisition is now both a cause and consequence of insecurity and conflict. Moreover, the role of states to ensure peace and security is very limited due to the marginalization of the region. The society of Borena fills the security gap by habitually arming themselves for protection from armed attacks and from cattle rustlers. Moreover, the applicability of self-defense has a cultural manifestation, in the sense that everyone is traditionally obliged to defend himself, his family and the community at large. Thus, a person is socially forced to purchase arms even without his will and those who do not own guns are seen as irresponsible to the communal peace. Therefore, self or community protection is considered as one of the core justifying factors for how widespread arms are. Generally, the demand and ownership of firearms in Borena is rising.

The lower price of a gun, the geographic proximity of Borena to the border, the limited involvement of the state as well as the presence of shared identity has further facilitated the condition to acquire arms, which Brauer and Muggah consider as "means". The presence of a long porous border has facilitated the easy transfer of arms into the region. Kenya and Somalia are the current two main sources

of arms. Arms that originated from these countries are transferred to Ethiopia by illicit arm dealers. Inter-border settlements and shared identities also facilitated arms trade between individuals (outside the normal market). Person to person transaction is the most widely practiced and the safest mode of transfer. The transfer of arms recurred during conflicts and drought seasons for the fact that in these times the higher rate of unemployment induces new dealers to the arms market. With the increase in the frequency and the magnitude of drought and conflicts, the number and speed of arms circulation in the region will increase instantaneously.

Widespread availability and misuse of arms continues to threaten human security and safety. It has irrevocably changed the landscape of conflict and society and expands the level of underdevelopment in the area (such as problem of access of social services). The increase in poverty levels in turn stimulates the demand for both offensive and defensive purposes.

4.1.2 Recommendations

It is recognized that tackling the problem of SALWs requires a comprehensive, coordinated and concerted action of government agencies and civil society at national, regional and international level. The recommendations to tackle the problems of illicit arms include;

Awareness creation campaigns – Educating the society about the deadly effects of illicit arms can be used to ensure the safe usage, and prepare the ground for voluntary disarmament programs. Successful disarmament campaigns begin from the mind of the person. Awareness creation initiatives can encourage the public to become more involved in anti-proliferation measures and helps to change attitudes to SALWs possession in the long run. The indigenous institution of Gadda system is important in the awareness creation campaigns due to its acceptability by the

majority of the society. Initiatives to tackle SALW proliferation should set out at the grass-roots level in outlying areas, where the problem is often at its worst, and may be more effective than externally imposed measures.

Improving the life of the community – Experience from the sedentary agriculturalist and agro-pastoralist areas of Borena shows that the demands of arms are directly related to the people's ways of life. The introduction of small scale agriculture into the pastoral economy reduces the mobility of pastoralist, which in turn decreased the number of conflicts over pasture and water. Diversifying the livelihood system and creating alternative job opportunities can stop the involvement of the youth in illicit arms market.

Development interventions – The spread of illicit arms is closely associated with the level of development in the study area. Development intervention in schools, water projects and resource management play critical roles in reducing resource conflicts. Improving the life of the local community will influence the possession of arms in the long run.

Cross-border co-operation – Arm dealers benefit from the current situation of border insecurity. Cross-border co-operation is needed between the relevant law-enforcement personnel on the issue of arm trafficking. This could involve, for instance, joint border monitoring and anti-trafficking initiatives.

Review of legislations – Reviewing legislations relating to SALWs will provide valuable information about the strengths and weaknesses of the existing laws and their implementations.

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SECTION 4

The Role of Gender Equality in Promoting Peace and Development:
The Case of Awra Amba Community in Fogera Woreda of Amhara National Regional State

Eskinder Teferi

Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to explore the role of gender relations to the peace and development efforts in the Awra Amba community. To achieve this objective, the study employed both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with selected community members and with key informants, focus group discussions with selected community and committee members and non-participant observation of gender based activities and gender relations in access to and control over resources available in the study community. Secondary data was obtained through critical review of related literature and relevant documents. Both primary and secondary data were organized thematically and analyzed through systematic interpretation and triangulation of various sources to maintain the reliability and validity of the research findings. The study pointed out the rather distinct political and socio-economic organizations and institutional fabrics that distinguish the study community, the factors that contributed to the existing gender relations within the study area; and the dominant and central features that characterized such relationships therein. The study found that gender relations in the study community are guided by the principle of mutual understandings amongst all members of the community. The study also found that locally available resources are collectively owned and administered by the 'Development Committee' and income is equally distributed to all household heads (men and women) at the end of each fiscal year. Research outcomes identified the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community as contrary to gender relations in other communities of Amhara region, where the patriarchal gender ideology is most prevalent. This makes the study community, candidly, versatile in various activities in general and in the peace and development processes in particular. Gender equality, as the findings of this study imply, has manifold advantages insofar as peace and development processes are concerned and is, forthrightly, an arch over that connects the two greatest goods-i.e. 'peace' and 'development' in the study community. As such, for these reasons and to speed up the peace and development processes, the state at the national level needs

to actively pursue and soundly implement policies that both guarantee gender equality in the truest sense of the term and to provide public goods such as sufficient education not only for young girls, but also to adult women across the length and breadth of Ethiopia.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

A	Attitude
ACCHC	Awra Amba Community Compliant Hearing Committee
ACDC	Awra Amba Community Development Committee
ACECC	Awra Amba Community Elderly Care Committee
ACRC	Awra Amba Community Reception Committee
ACRRPC	Awra Amba Community Rules and Regulations Preparation Committee
ACSC	Awra Amba Community Security Committee
ANRS	Amhara National Regional state
B	Behavior
BoFED	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
C	Contradiction
C1	Cultural Violence
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Cooperation
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning
CQFD	Comit□ Qu□b□cois Femmes et D□velopment
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
D	Direct Violence
ESPS	Ethiopian Society of Population Studies
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	Gender and Environment
GNP	Gross National Product
IIRR	International Institute of Rural reconstruction
IND/COL	Individualism/Collectivism
LD	Liberal Development

MAS/FEM	Masculinity/ Femininity
MEDaC	Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation
N	Nurturance
PDI	Power Distance Index
SNNPR	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region
SUVM	State Use of Violent Means
UAI	Uncertainty Avoidance
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
V	Violence Triangle
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development

Glossary of Local Terms

Birr	Ethiopian unit of Currency
Gott	A village or Sub-division of a kebele
Injera	White leavened bread made from teff flour
Kebele	The smallest formal unit of local government in Ethiopia equivalent to a sub-district
Teff	Economically important Ethiopian annual Cereal crop
Woina-dega	Temperate-like climate
Woreda	Equivalent to a district in the administrative division of Ethiopia
Wott	Something like Stew

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the Study

Although the concepts of "gender", "development", "war" and "peace" have been the subjects of considerable debates, writers and researchers in the area agreed that "gender inequality" deeply influences women's lives. Everywhere, 'women", as a group, enjoy relatively fewer advantages, their works and opinions are undervalued. They earn less than men, are prevented from owing resources, face various hurdles to hold positions of authority, face various forms of violence and threats of violence, and so on. Moreover, the dominance of patriarchal social organizations, especially in rural households, has given more importance for men in the production activities and, hence, in the division of labor (CCIC, 1991).

Different studies such as Boserup (1970), Bossen (1989), and Hess and Ferree (1987) have suggested that, rooted in the family as one and the smallest socio-cultural and economic units, every society practices at least some division of work by sex and age. This is particularly true of rural areas where culture holds big value. In such areas, the socio-cultural construction of what a female or a male human is and is expected to be, plays the leading and dominant role in the gender division of labor -which refers to the differential task of females and males in and outside the private realm (Fetenu, 1997:8).

In Ethiopia, although the demographic characteristic of the country shows that women comprise half of the population and are, thus, key participants in the formal and informal economic activities, their statuses and roles have always been shattered and undervalued due to the prevalent patriarchal system. Consequently, this "lower" valuation of perceived female characteristics and

activities results in women being viewed as subordinate to men-both economically and in power and status. As a result, until recently, women are 'invisible' in the development and peace processes, which aggravates impoverishment that mainly affects women's lives in different forms, especially, in relation to access to and control over resources and power.

Nonetheless, as various anthropological and gender studies indicate, gender identity and division of labor are not static, immutable and universal. Rather, in a given period, what women and men do, perform, or take responsibilities, and what are perceived as their respective characteristics tend to vary enormously from society to society, within a society, from culture to culture, and sometimes from community to community (Fetenu, 1997; CCIC, 1991; Hirut, 2002). Hence, gender relations and identities as well as gender roles are dynamic and are subject to socio-economic, political and cultural changes within a given society and period. As a result, with the change in value, socio-economic, political and cultural settings of the people induced by social problems and other factors, social transformation would occur among people that change the traditional gender role, belief system, etc., of the society or the community at large.

The Awra Amba community is one of such cooperative agricultural villages that undertook a great social transformation, which culminated in the formation of a new social order and an extraordinary lifestyle, different from the rest of Amhara's way of life. The community is located in northern Ethiopia, Amhara National Regional State, South Gondar Administrative Zone, Fogera *Woreda*. Founded in 1972, some 68km from the town of Bahir Dar, the capital of Amhara region Awra Amba is a small farming community where there is no gender based division of labor (IIRR, 2003:30). With an estimated population of about 96 households and 400 people, members of the community are ethnically Amhara (Halpern, 2007; IIRR, 2003). Once the community members as a whole drafted the rules they decided to follow in 1986, the people

of Awra Amba have lived and are living according to these rules (IIRR, 2003).

With a view to uncovering the dynamics in the field of 'development', 'gender' and 'peace', the review aims to provide some direction through the vast ocean of conceptual and theoretical imprecision surrounding the field of "development", "peace" and "gender". To this effect, a herculean attempt is made to come up with one possible and tentative interpretation of the concepts of 'peace', 'gender', and 'development'. Emphasis is given on the conceptual and theoretical linkages of the three core concepts, along with previous empirical studies conducted on their correlation

1.2 Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

1.2.1 "Sex" and "Gender"

In the literature, many scholars use the term 'sex' and 'gender' in a way that seems unworkable. For centuries, it was believed that the different characteristics women and men exhibit were natural, immutable and unalterable, determined by biological differences or divinely decreed (CQFD, 2004:7, CCIC, 1991:15). Those characteristics included both the ideas and values about what was considered to be "feminine" or "masculine" and a set of behaviors, attitudes and practices ascribed to men and women (*ibid*). As a result, scholars from different academic disciplines entertained different approaches to understanding 'gender' and 'sex'.

Goldstein (2001:2), for instance, with the aim to "detach gender inequality from any putative inherent or natural basis", employed the term "sex" to refer to what is biological, and "gender" to what is cultural. In *War and Gender* (2001), he argued that 'sex' is fixed, based in nature, whereas 'gender' is arbitrary, flexible, based in culture (*ibid*). In the same vein, in Gender and Development, the term 'gender' is employed to refer to characteristics and

behaviors shaped and determined by society, whereas 'sex' is used to describe characteristics that are acquired and determined biologically (CQFD, 2004:7). Hence, feminist's long awaited claim, which asserted that "gender" is marginally related to biological sex and it, instead, is a social construct, "socially learned behavior and expectation that distinguish between masculinity and femininity" (Spike and Runyan, 1996: 31), began to take shape and to gain credence.

Consequently, the academic literature concerning gender studies today, more or less, depicted a similar picture about the things that the term 'gender' denotes and connotes. Pankhurst (2000:28), for instance, used the term "gender" as denoting "all the qualities of what is to be a man or woman which are socially and culturally, rather than biologically, determined". In a similar way, the Ethiopian Society of Population Studies (ESPS, 2008:9) defined 'gender' as "a set of characteristics, roles and behavior patterns that differentiates women from men socially and culturally". In short, the various definitions that different scholars provided for the term "gender" are summarized by Scott. Hence, this study employs his oft-quoted definition of the term "gender" as a working definition, which is composed of two interrelated and interdependent components: inter alia, "gender is a constitutive element of social relationship based on perceived differences between the sexes", and "gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power" (Scott, 1988:42). While the first component justifies feminist's view of "gender" as a "way of organizing the world into sets of distinct, mutually exclusive categories", the second component strengthens their assertion that "[these categories are in a relationship of super/subordination of one to another]" (Confortini, 2006:345). Hence, while "sex" differences are physiological related to procreation, to biological reproduction, the concept of "gender" signifies the differences in roles, responsibilities, access to and control over resources, as well as, sphere of authority between men and women, which is socially and culturally determined (Fetenu, 1997; Hess and Ferree, 1996).

1.2.2 "Peace" and "Development"

1.2.2.1 'Peace'

The concept of 'peace' has gone through centuries since the time of its inception, as early as the first period of history. Bönisch (1981:165), in his re-examination of the concept, stated that since the time of Greek city states, "peace was not merely understood as a contrast to war, as a state of no war, but also identified with material well-being and socio-economic progress." Hence, earlier thinking have been viewed as antecedents of 'peace theories' though the terms 'negative peace' and 'positive peace' were not necessarily used at that time. Nonetheless, in modern times, it is only recently that a number of peace researchers such as Johan Galtung (1969, 1991, 2002), Kenneth Boulding (1977, 1978, 1991), Bert Roling, and others have worked to determine the complexity of peace as opposed to war. Out of these works emerged one of the breakthrough, and the widely accepted definition and presentation of peace by Johan Galtung. Galtung first elaborated the concept of peace in his *Violence, Peace and Peace Research* in 1969, when he introduced the crucial difference between direct/personal and structural violence, and later in 1990, he introduced the concept of 'cultural violence', which together with the above two types of violence, forms the violence triangle. He stated that "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969:168). Hence, he formulated a theory of violence based on the argument that direct/personal violence is only one of the three shapes which violence assumes. The other two corners of the violence triangle, namely structural/indirect and cultural violence, are present in society in more subtle, but not less damaging ways (Confortini, 2006:335).

Thus, Galtung claimed that the three corners of the violence triangle graphically illustrate that all types of violence breed each other in many ways and that violence reproduces itself across

the three dimensions (Galtung, 1990:297). Moreover, these three categories, direct, structural, and cultural violence, are useful when thinking about peace, since peace is simply the absence or negation of violence. Hence, he argued that only the elimination of violence at all levels can lead to true peace (Confortini, 2008:335). Furthermore, Galtung also came up with a transcend model (conflict triangle) while discussing conflict transformation and, hence, peacemaking and peace building. The transcend model is, again, a triangular depiction of the three constituent elements of conflict: Attitude, Behavior, and Contradiction, represented by 'A', 'B' and 'C', respectively.

'A' stands for the parties' attitudes (psychological makeup like perceptions, outlooks and enemy images) to-or-with each other, which are usually defined on the basis of the conflict. 'B', in turn, refers to the behavior of the parties (usually manifested through physical acts), which becomes a serious problem when violence is involved. Finally, 'C' stands for the contradiction (mainly structural causes of conflict) between or among the parties (Akerlund, 2001:51; Galtung, 2002: 3-4).

According to Galtung, 'A' and 'B' are the derivatives of 'C'. Once the attitudes and behaviors arose from contradiction, the three elements work to breed each other and, thus, conflict reproduces itself across the three angles of the conflict triangle (alternatively called the 'ABC' triangle), as violence does in the 'V' triangle (Galtung, 2002: 5). He argued that the behavioral aspect works equally for all parties whenever it is a result of contradictions over the same interests and, in turn, leads to incompatibilities because of the physical and behavioral acts of violence of the parties involved in the conflict (*ibid*). With regard to attitudes, since perceptions of the parties derived from the same contradiction by way of imitation and projection, conflicting parties usually share the same attitudes (*ibid*). Thus, the isolated treatment of any of the derivatives only serve the purpose of de-escalation and cannot solve the basic conflict, for it is impregnated in the contradiction.

Accordingly, any attempts in transforming the conflict and, hence, peace-making and peace-building, require cumulative efforts on all the three dimensions of the 'ABC' triangle (Akerlund, 2001:51; Galtung, 2002: 6).

Therefore, in light of his theory of 'violence' and transcend model, Galtung came up with the notions of 'negative peace' and 'positive peace' also termed as 'absence of violence' and 'social justice', respectively (Galtung, 1969:183). Hence, Galtung showed that peace is not a state but a process, and moreover, he moved beyond the relatively meaningless definition of peace as a mere absence of war, and linked it with the orientation to a positive peace, aiming at the socio-economic development of such orders and systems that are necessary to make a stable peace. Accordingly, the mere absence of personal violence does not lead to a positively defined condition (egalitarian distribution of power and resource) and, hence, 'true peace' refers to both the absence of personal violence and the presence of positively defined conditions or social justice (Galtung, 1969:183). In short, according to him, 'true peace' as the opposite of 'violence' encompasses more than the absence of violence, "peace with nature, peace between gender (sic), generations and races, where the excluded are included not by force, and where classes, nations and states serve neither direct nor structural violence" (Galtung, 2002: 4).

Later, scholars from different disciplines defined 'peace' in a more or less similar way with Galtung's extended notion of peace. For instance, a feminist scholar Reardon (1993:6) defined "peace" as a social environment (characterized from local to global levels, by 'tolerance', 'mutual respect' and serious endeavors to understand differences, and to build community and confidence) that favors the full development of human person. According to her, the above characteristics of social environment, in turn, depend upon equity and equality among nations and ethnic groups, as well as, between women and men (*ibid*). Hence, according to Reardon, similar to Galtung, the comprehensive notion of peace for which

equality is essential requires not only the absence of direct/personal violence, but also the "transcendence of social and economic discrimination that impedes human development" (*ibid*).

In the same vein, Pankhurst (2004:12) claimed that an egalitarian vision of Galtung's social justice/positive peace, implies equality between "ethnic and regional groups, and, through mentioned far less often, among the sexes". Furthermore, Enloe (1988, cited in Pankhurst, 2004:12) elaborated the claim of the above two feminists by defining peace in feminist term as "women's achievement of control of their lives", which she regarded it as requiring not only just "the absence of armed and gender conflict… but also the absence of poverty and the conditions which recreate it".

Hence, as agreed by scholars from different field of studies, peace and more generally, "a culture of peace" refers not simply the absence of war, but also to the meeting of human needs based on a desiderata of social structure such as democracy, open communication, and gender equality as opposed to the hierarchical, secrecy, and male dominance characteristics of a culture of violence (Basabe and Valencia, 2007: 406). In UNESCO's (1995 cited in Basabe and Valencia, 2007: 406) term, "a culture of peace" is, thus, defined as referring to "… a set of values, attitudes and modes of behavior based on non-violence and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms of people".

According to De Rivera (2004: 532), such "a culture of peace", as defined above by UNESCO, must rest upon an octagonal base as its objective indicators. These eight fold base includes (1) education for non-violent resolution of conflicts, (2) sustainable development,(3) human rights,(4) gender equality,(5) democratic participation,(6) mutual understanding, tolerance and solidarity among people,(7) participatory communication and free flow of information, and (8) concern for international peace and security (including voluntary disarmament and other positive initiatives). Indeed, most of these elements and the catching words in UNESCO's definition of "a

culture of peace" are also shared by Gandhi's vision of peace in which Ahimsa (Non-Violence) and Satyagrha (Truth Force) are the only sound means that hold the promise of engendering "a culture of peace" (De Silva, 2001).

In a nut shell, four orthogonal factors that may be considered as the four different dimensions of "a culture of peace" in a modern nation state can be identified from De Rivera's octagon. The first is 'Liberal Development' (LD), which is the major structural dimension that embraces 'Social Development' (like high literacy, life expectancy, and living standards),'Democratic Development' (democratic participation, protection and respect for human rights, etc.), and 'Gender Equality' (Basabe and Valencia, 2001:406). The second dimension, 'Violent Inequality' (VI), on the other hand, indicates income inequalities (Gini's Index), homicide rates, and violations of human rights, and 'State Use of Violent Means' (SUVM) as a third dimension, in turn, related to military acts as a prime tool of foreign policy instrument and state's military expenditure (*ibid*). Finally, the fourth dimension is 'Nurturance' (N), which is related to tolerance and gender equality (*ibid*).

Furthermore, De Rivera (2004) claimed that as a holistic concept, each of the bases in "a culture of peace" should, at least theoretically, be related to subjective aspects of culture such as the values, attitudes and behaviors of "a culture of peace". Boulding (2000:196) defined these subjective aspects of "a culture of peace" as "a mosaic of identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, and institutional patterns that lead people to live with one another and the earth itself without the aid of structured power differentials, to deal creatively with their differences, and share their resources". Hence, analysis of peace process in a given society should consider cultural values and beliefs as well as societal structures apart from the objective dimensions discussed above.

Moreover, as of De Rivera, the various subjective cultural aspects have strong relations with the different objective structural

dimensions. For instance, according to Basabe and Valencia (2007: 407), believing that one has control and freedom of choice is positively related to LD, interpersonal trust should be negatively related to VI, praising peace and non-violence should be inversely related to SUVM, and mutual respect, understanding and tolerance should be affirmatively related to N. Hence, the various subjective dimensions of culture discussed in the previous section again influence and determine "a culture of peace" by shaping gender roles, identities and relations that, in turn, either positively or negatively affect the four objective orthogonal factors.

In short, although alternative formulations of the concept of 'peace' (like 'critical peace research' that conceived peace as a process and a permanent attempt to contravene the different dimensions of force (Jahn, 1979, Kielmannse, 1979)) are still unfolding, Galtung's presentation of the extended notion of peace and the notion of "a culture of peace" that stemmed from it, remained as the widely accepted discourses in the field of conflict and peace studies. Hence, this study employs the concept of "a culture of peace" and Galtung's definition of peace as a working definition, which is summarized by Habtamu (2008, cited in IIRR, 2009:4) as: … [A]situation in which individuals and groups feel satisfied in the relationship which they have with others or in the opportunities they have to change those relationships. Peace is an attitude, state of mind and mode of behavior that reflects mutual respect among people and accepts participation by all. Peace can also be defined as the absence of dispute, conflict or violence.

1.2.2.2 Development

What do we mean by "Development"? A clear conception of the term is difficult, at best, and a pipe dream, at worst, to pin down. According to scholars and writers in the field, in its modern sense, the term "development" dates back to the post war era of modern development thinking. Since then "development" is used to mean different things across time and space, which makes the term often elusive and cryptic. Indeed, "development" can, at best, be described as a field in influx, characterized by ongoing shift of meanings and rapid change and turnover of alternatives. Although specialists in the field more or less agreed that development means making a better life for everyone, meeting basic needs, the course taken by development beyond this is subject to the material and cultural visions of different societies (Peet and Hartwick, 2009:1). As a result, a single and unified definition of the term is almost impossible to come up with.

Consequently, while some writers and scholars in the field speak of the end of development and development theories, others proposed way outs from the dilemmas surrounding the field, as well as, to make sense of the dynamics surrounding it. According to specialists in the second category, three different way outs are possible. The first option is to view the entire "archeology of development discourse as a deconstruction of development and as part of a development critique' (Pieterse, 2010:8). Another is to treat it as part of historical context in which development change meanings in relation to changing circumstances. Development, treated as such, serves as "a mirror of changing economic and social capacities, priorities and choices" (*ibid*). The third way out is to recombine the different views as dimensions of development, "as part of the development mosaic and thus to reconstruct development as a synthesis of components" (Martinussen, 1997).

The third option is, particularly, important for this study. This is because, as Pieterse (2010:8) stated, if we consider each theory as the different dimensions of development that form the total picture from a particular angle, then "the array of successive and rival theories offer a kaleidoscopic view in to the collective mirror." Hence, the Gestalt of development can be used to refer to improvement across the natural, economic, social, cultural and political conditions (Peet and Hartwick, 2009:3). In this study, "political development would be associated with democracy in its various forms; economic development with planning for

improving the standard of living; social development with people's basic needs, such as food and shelter, health care, education and employment; and cultural development with the fostering of collaboration, solidarity, selflessness, political consciousness, and social responsibility" (Chilcote, 2003:1).

1.2.3 Gender, Peace and Development: Theoretical Insights and Conceptual Linkages

Gender perspectives on development and peace are beginning to be recognized as offering new and unique contributions to the great debate on the nature of "society", "development", and "peace". Papers have been written, books and articles have been published, but most of these scholarly works focused on specific aspects of "gender" roles in peace and development. As a result, as with most other subjects, the issues are more complex than depicted and, hence, elicited a consensus among specialists.

The main theoretical explanation for the relationship between "gender" and "peace" argued that it is in the nature of women to be more peaceful. While some of these theories relied on biological differences and women's reproductive roles in explaining female's pacifism, others took a more constructivist version that emphasized the gender identity and widespread norms about gender equality. Fukuyama (1998), for instance, referred to neo-Darwinist research to suggest that males are genetically predisposed to violence; whereas, Hilhorst and Frerks (1999) took a more constructivist approach, arguing that boys and men are socialized to be tough and warlike, whereas girls and women are socialized to empathy and subordinations.

Furthermore, in line with the view of Hilhorst and Frerks (1999), Gilgan (1982: 37) argues that women tend to see the world as a web of relationship, which is the basis for their nurturing roles, their passion for affirming life, and their opposition to wars. According to her, women perceive the world differently from men, while men tend to have an 'ethic of justice' which emanates from the premise of equality, women, on the other hand, tend to have an 'ethic of care' which rests on the premise of non-violence-that no one should be hurt (*ibid*). Hence, Pietila (1982: 12) claimed that though women are occasionally violent, women have never institutionalized violence and, hence, "the idea of killing another human being is extremely alien to women". In the same vein, Ferris (2005:4) concluded that, although the potentials for violence presents in both men and women, women's violence is unstructured and anarchic and, thus, aggressors have always been men. Consequently, 'femininity' is linked to non-violence, emotion, and harmony, and 'masculinity' to aggression and reason (Caprioli, 2003; Hilhorst and Frerks, 1999; Melander 2005). In a manner consistent with this assumption, Reardon (1985:12) summarized the relationship between patriarchy and militarism as "authoritarian patriarchy, which seems to have emerged with the major elements of 'civilization'-human settlement, organized agriculture, the state and male domination-invents and maintains war to hold in place the social order it spawned".

Hence, in her discussion of the UNESCO's Women and Peace Program, Breines strongly emphasized gender equality as a precondition for "a culture of peace" (Breines 1998, cited in Pankhurst, 2004: 147). Indeed, Brenies claim of gender equality as a precondition for peace has a conceptual support from the very notion of "a culture of peace". As pointed out in sub section three of this chapter, apart from its influence as a manifestation of subjective culture, gender equality is also embodied explicitly in two of the four orthogonal objective indicators of peace (LD and N), and implicitly in the remaining two structural dimensions of "a culture of peace"(VI and SUVM). In short, despite the differences in approach, both the biological and constructivist versions on the relationship between "gender" and "peace" concluded that

although women could play a role in maintaining the war system and in transmitting cultural values that make war more likely, they are relatively more peace loving than men. Hence, both versions agreed that regardless of whether women are more peaceful by nature or by socialization, states would be more peaceful with increased political representation of women.

The literature on "development", has on the other hand, overlooked "gender" insights in its mainstream discourse until recently. Prior to 1970s, it was thought that development process affected both women and men in the same way. Hence, productivity was equated with the cash economy and so most of women's works were ignored (Momsen, 2010:11). Nonetheless, Bosrup (1970) in her landmark book *Women's Role in Economic Development* challenged this assumption, by revealing that women are not always beneficiaries from the increment of the household's head income, and that women were increasingly losing status. Thus, the view that development did not automatically eradicate poverty through trickle-down effects became vivid and apparent (Momsen, 2010:11).

Three fundamental themes can be drawn from the entire archaeology of the literature concerning "gender" and "development". The first is the realization that all societies across time and space have established a clear-cut division of labor by sex, even though what is considered as a female or a male task varies cross-culturally, from society to society and sometimes from community to community (Boserup, 1970; Bossen, 1989; Hess and Ferree, 1987; Momsen, 2010:11). Second, the literature has shown that in order to comprehend gender roles in production, understanding gender roles within the household is essential. Hence, "the integration of women's reproductive and productive work within the private sphere of the home and in the public sphere outside must be considered, if we are to appreciate the dynamics of women's role in development" (Momsen, 2010:16). And, finally, the literature uncovered that development has differential impacts on men

and women, and men and women contribute to the development process differently (*ibid*).

Generally, as Reardon (1993:6) stated in Women and Peace, 'development', the international code word for overcoming poverty and attaining economic viability, is inextricably related to "peace" and "gender equality". Hence, the full and equal participation of women in civil and political affairs is necessary since both 'peace' and 'development' require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all walks of life (*ibid*:9). As such, the 1980 World Conference of the UN decade for women: equality, development and peace, in Copenhagen concluded that "progress towards any of the three main objectives has a beneficial effect on the others, and consequently that it is only under conditions of peace that it is possible to move forward to the full implementation of the other two objectives of the decade" (UN, 1980, cited in Reardon, 1993:8).

1.3 Empirical Studies on Gender Equality, Peace and Development

Only a relatively few studies linked "gender equality" directly to "peace" and "development". Regarding the link between gender and peace, Regan and Paskeviciute (2003) found that a pair of states that have low birth rates and a high percentage of women in parliament are less likely to become involved in a military dispute with each other. Similarly, in the light of "democratic peace" thesis, which argued that democracies do not fight one another, Fukuyama (1998: 27) observed that developed democracies also tend to be more feminized than authoritarian states, and "it should, therefore, surprise no one that the historically unprecedented shift in sexual basis of politics should lead to a change in international relations". This observation is in line with Regan and Paskeviciute's (2003) and Caprioli's (2003) findings, which showed that increased gender equality results in a less belligerent foreign policy, as

women are considered less aggressive and driven by values such as interdependence and egalitarianism.

In the same vein, in the study of internal conflict, Caprioli (2005) seeks to determine whether gender inequality is also a meaningful predictor in intra-state conflict. In her study, she hypothesized that "gender inequality" should have a dual impact on intra-state conflict. First, as a manifestation of structural and cultural violence, it can produce heightened social violence, and second, it facilitates a nationalist call to arms. According to her findings, gender inequality increases the likelihood that a state will experience internal conflict. Hence, Caprioli (2005) discovered that states with high fertility rates and low female labor force participation, taken as a proxy for gender inequality, are twice as likely to experience domestic conflicts as low fertility ones. According to Bannon (2005:57), 88% of the PRIO/Uppsala- coded internal conflicts are within states with a fertility rate over 3.0.

Moreover, recent survey data in western countries showed a consistent pattern of women rendering less support than men to militaristic policies, to wars, and to capital punishment (Ferris, 2005:4). The surveys uncovered patterns of women's preferences for "environmental protection, for social policies of education and health, and for peace initiatives" (*ibid*).

Concerning the role of gender to the peace process in Ethiopia, a relatively very few studies were conducted. Tolosa (2010), for instance, in his study portrayed the significant role that Ethiopian women have in preventing, halting and handling conflicts, as well as in conflict resolution and peacemaking, with a specific reference to women based institutions in west Arsii Oromo. Similarly, Teemet (2009) assessed the role of gender construct to conflict resolutions in Ethiopia, with specific reference to the Nyangatom *Woreda* of SNNPRS. In her findings, she indicated the pseudo and superficial attempts of the local peace committee to portray gender equity, without touching any of the dynamics of gender interaction, as

a cause for the relatively low success story of such institutions in their peace making and conflict resolution endeavors.

Moreover, the study conducted by IIRR (2009) uncovered the indispensible roles that Ethiopian women have in resolving conflicts and in making and building peace. The study portrayed women as "natural peace makers" through their use of appeal to motherhood, negotiation and diplomacy, political marriage, etc. The IIRR's (2009) findings further pointed out gender inequality as an obstacle for the peace building and the peace making processes in Ethiopia through two different but interrelated ways. The first way is through socializing boy-children with heroism, strength and aggression and girl-children with peace, submission and beauty (IIRR, 2009: 42). This socialization, apart from widening the gender gap, also strengthens a 'war culture' and the perception of conflict as socially acceptable by equating it with heroism (*ibid*). And, second through women's discrimination and exclusion from decision-making and governance process inhibits their participations and contributions to peace related initiatives (*ibid*).

The relationship between "gender equality" and "development", on the other hand, is not clear cut. Whether "gender equality" is good or bad for "development" is still somewhat disputed in the literature. However, several studies found a growth reducing effect of gender inequality.

Dollar and Gatti (1999) and Tzannatos (1999), for instance, discovered that denying educational opportunity to girls reduces the average human capital and, hence, not just growth directly, but indirectly through lower investment and lower fertility rates. Similarly, Momsen (2010:9) concluded that societies that discriminate on the basis of 'gender', both at the national and sub national scale pay a price in more poverty, slower growth and a lower quality of life, while gender equality enhances development. Thus, despite differences, various studies based on the experiences of different states and regions, proved that "gender

equality" enhances economic development and prosperity, and economic prosperity, in turn, helps gender equality though some gender gaps are restraint to change. According to these studies, "gender equality" and "development" reinforce each other, and "development" could narrow the gender difference in wages, but not necessarily the gender gap in other areas like political representations (Momsen, 2010; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Bannon, 2005; Fetenu, 1997).

The few empirical studies conducted on "gender" and "development" in Ethiopia indicated the growth spoiling effects of the deep-rooted gender inequality. Specifically, the findings of IIRR (2009: 43) showed the negative effect that the cultural resistance to the concept of female education has on the development process of the country. Similarly, Assefa (1996) found the gender disparity in education, caused by extra work burdens shouldered by females, unsafe roads to and from schools due to high incidence of gender related violence, etc., as a major source of obstacles to the country's economic growth and development. Basically, Pankhurst (1992), in her study on Gender, Development and Identity: An Ethiopian Study claimed that the socially constructed gender based division of labor and the super/subordinate gender relations is the source of poverty in Ethiopia. Moreover, the reports of MEDaC (1999) and CSA (1999) pointed out socio-cultural and economic discriminations of women in Ethiopia, exacerbated by the overall poor economic situation in the country, as a ruthless shatter in women's opportunity for personal growth, education and employment in the short run, and for national economic growth and development in the medium and in the long run. Hence, the reports depicted a vicious cycle in which historical, cultural and religious factors, together with the poor economic conditions in the country constructed a deep-rooted gender inequality which, in turn, deepens and produces further poverty, impoverishment, economic insecurity, vulnerability and poor social service provisions, etc., that affects the entire population nationwide, but place a disproportionate burden on women (CSA, 1999; MEDaC, 1999).

Generally, as can be seen from the various empirical studies conducted on 'gender' and 'peace' in Ethiopia, almost all of them assessed the roles that Ethiopian women have in conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution and, hence, in bringing a negative peace. In the same vein, the empirical studies pertaining to 'gender' and 'development' in Ethiopia investigated the costs that socio-cultural and economic discriminations of women in the country incurred by the women themselves and the national development endeavors, without sufficient empirical evidences of the role(s) that gender equality could have in promoting such endeavors. Hence, women's contribution to the process of engendering positive peace, whether gender relations could be taken as a meaningful indicator or predictor of either internal peace/conflict or economic development/growth, its role either in bringing "a culture of peace" or in justifying and maintaining structural and cultural violence, as well as, its contribution in fostering the development process, seems the forgotten areas untouched by previous writers and researchers. Hence, this study attempts to fill the gap in the peace and development investigation of gender relations in Ethiopia, with a specific reference to the Awra Amba community.

1.4 Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted in Awra Amba community of Amhara National Regional State (ANRS), which is one of the nine regions of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). The region is bordered by four regional states (Tigray in the North, Oromia in the South, Afar in the East, and Benshangul-Gumuz in the South West); and North Sudan in the North West (ANRS BoFED, 2010). With an estimated population of about 17.2 million as per the 2007 census, the region is composed of eleven zones, 113 *woredas* and 3,216 *kebeles* (Ibid). Bahir Dar is the region's capital.

Fogera *Woreda*, where the study community is found, is bordered on the south by Dera, on the West by Lake Tana, on the North by the Reb River, which separates the place from Kemkem, and on the East by Farta (CSA, 2008; FWAO, 2010; FWARDO, 2010; see Appendix III) and it is approximately 625 kilometers North West of Addis Ababa. The capital town of the *Woreda* is Woreta, which is located some 58 kilometers North of Bahir Dar. The *Woreda* embraces 29 *kebeles* with an area coverage of about 117,414 hectares of land (Eguavoen et al, 2011). Awra Amba Community, the study area, is situated in Turigne village of Woji-Arba-Amba *Kebele*, which is some 68 kilometers away from Bahir Dar via the Woreta-Debre Tabor road (ORDA, 1999; in Seid, 2008; Halpern, 2007). The study community is bounded by a chain of small mountains and hills, and the total expanse of the sub-watershed of the area is estimated to be 668 hectares. Out of this, 591 hectares of land are used for cultivation, 22 hectares for grazing, 17 hectares for forest, and 38 hectares of land for settlement and homestead activities (ORDA, 1999; in Seid, 2008:49). According to the conventional agro-climatic classification, the Awra Amba community can be characterized as *wäyna däga* (mid-land). Rice, *Teff*, Corn, sorghum, cotton and sesame are the major cash crops (CSA, 2008; FWAO, 2010; FWARDO, 2010).

The Awra Amba community is an agricultural cooperative village in Fogera *Woreda* of Amhara National Regional State. In Amhara region, the overwhelming majority (87.4 percent of the population) resides in rural areas and is engaged mainly in agriculture (ANRS BoFED, 2010:4). The region is vast in terms of area coverage and it is endowed with a diverse ecology. Consequently, agriculture in the region remains as the dominant economic sector for it is the major sources of food, raw materials for local industries and export earnings (*Ibid*). In Awra Amba community, however, the contribution of agricultural activities to the community's economic sector is very low due to the small size of farm land, which is about 17.5 hectares of rangeland provided for settlement (IIRR, RNE and IGS, 2009:1).

Location Map of Fogera Woreda in South Gondar Zone of Amhara Region

Fogera *Woreda*
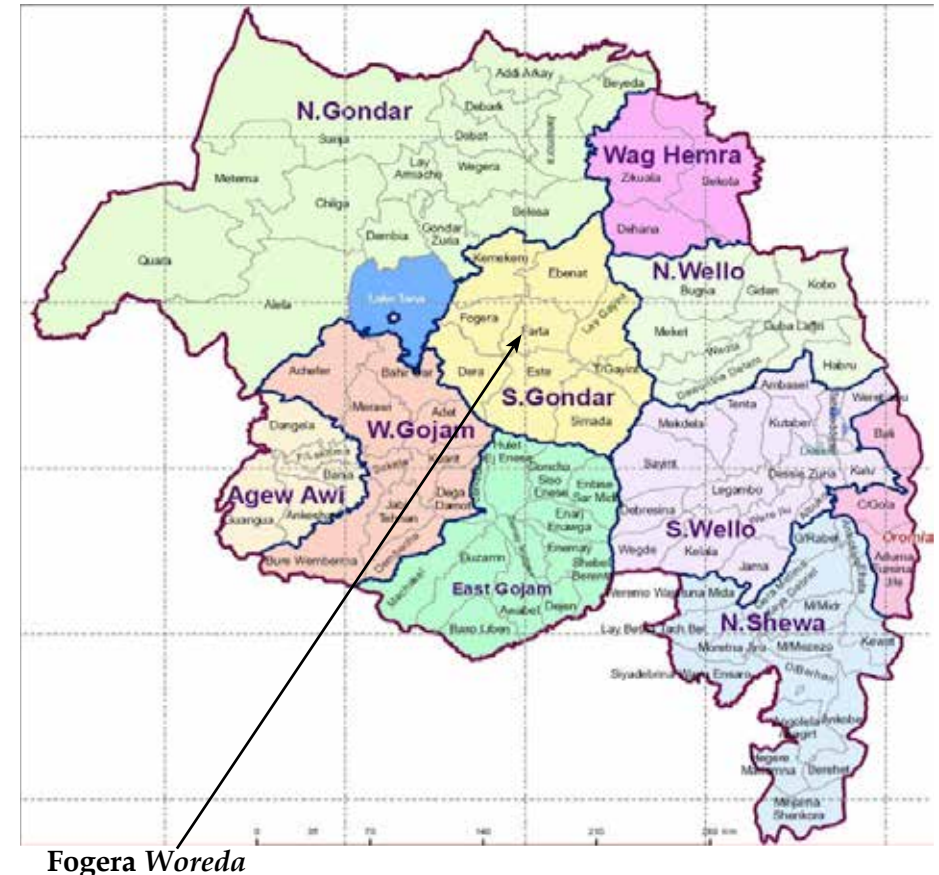
Source: Ethiopia Demography and Health (http://www.ethiodemographyandhealth.org/Amhara.html)

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

2.1.1 Cultural, Socio-Economic and Administrative Features of the Awra Amba Community

2.1.1.1 Philosophical foundation and cultural Transformation.

The Awra Amba community has its own distinct founding philosophy and cultural values, beliefs and principles. Most of these values and principles are the results of cultural transformation or revitalizations of the conventional "Amhara way of life". According to Seid (2007: 69), in most areas of the ANRS, social relationships are rigidly defined and cultural traditions are static in which an individual may not perceive himself/herself as an individual. Consequently, individual freedoms are subordinate to the interest of the family, the religion or the community.

Accordingly, with a desire to change these and other cultural values and traditions, the founder of the Awra Amba community came up with a new philosophy, which is a base for most of the basic cultural values, beliefs and principles in the study community. Members of the study community believe in the supremacy of humankind and entertained a 'humanist philosophy' like its African counterpart, i.e., Ubuntu . According to the leader of the community (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011), difference is the essence of being a human, and being a human is the greatest good, the unifying force that should transcend   all differences so as to harmonize people in their day-to-day interactions. Therefore, the leader of the community continued, regardless of sex, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, etc, everyone should be treated as equal for the mere fact that he/she is a human being, and individuals should have the freedom to choose and entertain various views. But, as of the leader of the community (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011), people should always recall that they all are members of the same species and, thus, whatever differences in terms of ideas, views or opinions, they should be ready to discuss cogently, rather than furiously, in order to agree and convince one another.

Thereupon, according to the rules and regulations of the community, regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc, all human beings should be treated alike and respected since they all are brothers and sisters by the mere fact of being a human (ACRRPC, 2009:8). Most of the cultural values and principles in the study community are, indeed, derivatives of this grand philosophy. The founding philosophy in the community can, thus, be considered as the pillar in which all other shared cultural values, beliefs, and principles are built around. Some of the basic cultural values and principles of the Awra Amba community that arose from this philosophy are briefly highlighted below.

First, in the Awra Amba community, all human beings, in general, and men and women, in particular, are treated as equal. The elimination of all forms of gender based discriminations is, therefore, the basic cultural principle in the study community. To this regard, an elder informant (SICA5, Awra Amba, November 2011) argued that, "all human beings are equal. There is no such thing as female tasks and males tasks. Both sexes can and should perform activities based on mutual understandings in their efforts to satisfy basic needs". Similarly, the rules and regulations of the Awra Amba community, prepared by the ACRRPC (2009: 8), stated that apart from biological differences (exclusive to biological reproduction, child-bearing and breast-feeding), every other task

is common in which women have equal rights to participate and engage in. The rules and regulations, further, stressed that without demarcating and labeling tasks as male or female domains, both men and women should share work in the public as well as in the private spheres on a strict basis of ability and efficiency based division of labor (*ibid*).

Second, marriage in the study community is contracted based on the free will of the two partners. Moreover, partners should be above the age of 18 and marriage in the community is contracted without any cost of whatsoever. Thus, the culture of the study community condemns early marriage, arranged marriage, polygamy, and all forms of harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation and others (ACRRPC, 2009: 8-10). Third, begging, cheating, lying, unplanned wastage of time, prostitution, crime and provocative behaviors are highly denounced in the culture of the study community in the presence of which greatest goods like trust, harmony, mutual respect, peaceful co-existence, development and social justice are hardly possible (ACRRPC, 2009: 11-13). Fourth, members of the study community believe that it is the concerted effort of human beings that make everything possible in this world and God and governments do only have supportive roles. As a result, members of the study community argued that all days are similar and have equal importance if people would work on them. For instance, according to the leader of the community, the production process and productivity depends upon our efforts and other factors of production like labor, land and capital, but not on the will of God. This challenges the traditional and illogical perception that God ordered people not to work on some specific days... God is always willing for everyone to work hard and to reap the fruits as per the efforts he/she exerted (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011).

Fifth, children in the culture of the study community have all the rights enshrined in the 1995 FDRE constitution. Moreover, with the premise that children are huge potent forces in a society that

could determine the fate of the future, they are motivated to be independent thinkers and to come up with new ideas and concepts. Sixth, the cultural principles of the study community emphasized the rights of people with physical disabilities, as well as those of elderly people. According to members of the community, such people should be treated with respect and should be supported by other physically able members of the community. To this regard, the leader of the community (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "the logic behind the full-fledged support, respect and treatment of elderly people lays on the fact that these people have done their own share during their working ages, hence, they have to be acknowledged rather than being left as helpless and vulnerable".

Last, but not least, is the rights of women for paid maternity leave (for three months) and their inalienable rights to use family planning methods of whatever sorts (ACRRPC, 2009: 8). According to the flyer published by the ANRS Culture and Tourism Office, in collaboration with Action Aid Ethiopia (n.d.), women in the study community, apart from a paid leave, are also entitled to get additional support from the community's social security fund in time of maternity.

3.1.1.2 Demographic Characteristics and Education

According to the Awra Amba community information center, the total number of households in the community is 123, with total household members of 431 in 2010/11. Out of the total 123 households, 47 are headed by women and 76 are headed by men. With regard to the sex distribution, of the total 431 household members, 209 (48.5%) are male and the remaining 222 (51.5%) are female. Demographically, out of the total household members, 245(56.84 %) are active labor forces (between 15-64 years old), 22 (5.1%) of them are elders (>65years old), and the remaining 164(38.05%) are children (<15 years old). This implies that the

active and productive labor force composition in the study community exceeds the non-productive labor forces by 13.69%. In other words, the labor dependency ratio in the Awra Amba community is 76 percent. This is to mean that for every 10 working adults, there are 7.6 people that need to be supported, be it through social security or child care. Accordingly, this figure of dependency ratio (though quite large) is lower than the ANRS average figure of 87 percent (based on the 2010/11 statistics of BoFED, 2011) at the same year. Moreover, the average household family size in the Awra Amba community is 3.5, which is again lower than the ANRS average figure of 5.1 (BoFED, 2011) by 1.6 in the same year. From this, it can be inferred that there is a better awareness and practice of family planning in the study community. The following table (Table 3.1) indicates the community's population size by sex and age.

Table 3.1: The Awra Amba Community Population Size by Sex and Age

Sex	Population Size by Sex and Age Group			Dependency Ratio
	< 15 years old	15-64 years old	> 64 years old	
Male	82	117	10	0.78
Female	82	128	12	0.73
Total	**164**	**245**	**22**	**0.76**

Source: The Awra Amba Community Information Center, November 2011

Regarding education, unlike other rural neighboring communities, all members of the Awra Amba community attach a higher value and importance to education for a rational thinking and for the technological and economic advancement of their community. Cognizant of this, the community set up an education committee composed of five members responsible for handling, running, and supervising educational affairs of their community.

As the information gathered through secondary sources (Halpern, 2007, Merhatsadik, 2009, and Seid, 2008) indicated, currently all adult members of the community can read and write through a basic literacy campaign waged some years ago. Moreover, unlike other rural areas of the ANRS, children starting from the age of 3 spend their time within local educational institutions. Thus, as I observed during the fieldwork, there is one pre-school (Kindergarten), where children learn alphabets, about human nature, moral and cultural values and principles of their community, etc., until the age of 7 (SICCA6, Awra Amba, November 2011) in Awura Amba Village. There is also a primary school (grade 1-8) built by the *Woreda* education bureau. Furthermore, the local community established one computer center, a secondary school (9-10) and two libraries (one small, another big) entirely built and financed by members of the community (SIWOW1, Woreta, December 2011). These institutions provide educational services to students from Awra Amba community and other students from surrounding areas (SICCA1,Awra Amba, November 2011).

It is striking to note that the Awra Amba community devoted more than 4 hectares of land for educational facilities from its total small landholding size of about 17.5 hectares (SICCA2, and SICCA6, Awra Amba, November 2011) as a manifestation of the higher value attached to education and their love of wisdom. Furthermore, students in the Awra Amba community are encouraged and motivated to be independent thinkers, to raise and drop ideas critically and to come up with new concepts.

As a result, children in the Awra Amba community have relatively better missions, visions, targets and ambitions as they shoulder big responsibilities like inventing or creating something that could benefit their country, in general, and their community, in particular. Concerning this, a boy informant from the study community

(SICA7, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "[i]n our community, we are sent to school not simply to read and write, but to contribute something valuable and new. From the beginning, our parents clarify for us the very reason why we are sent to school… thus, we work hard, to the fullest extent of our potentials so as to meet the expectations of our parents and of our community". Besides, as I observed, the education committee, by officially posting students rank semi-annually, motivates students in the study community to develop a positive competitive attituse. Generally, as the information collected through interviews (SICCA2, SICCA6, SICA3, and SICA18, Awra Amba, November 2011), FGDs (GFA, and GMA, Awra Amba, November 2011), and Document Analysis (ACRRPC, 2009, Seid, 2008, and Unpublished Research Project of Fogera *Woreda* Culture and Tourism Office, 2011) indicate, that education is considered as a "source of income" and a major factor in the development endeavors of the Awra Amba community. The following table

Table 3.2 depicts the number of students in the community by educational level and sex.

Educational Level	Sex		
	Male	**Female**	**Total**
Pre-School	8	8	16
Primary Education (grade 1-8)	65	55	120
Secondary Education (grade 9-12)	24	11	35
Tertiary Education (Diploma and Degree)	8	2	10
Graduates from Colleges and Universities	5	8	13
Total	**110**	**84**	**194**

Source: The Awra Amba Community Information Center, November 2011

3.1.1.3 Economic System, Sources of Income, and Income Distribution

The study community practices, more or less, a socialist socio-economic system in which resources are collectively owned and work is collectively organized. According to informants (SICCA6; SICCA2; and SICCA1, Awra Amba, November 2011), this is due mainly to the community's small landholding size, which is a total of 17.5 hectares. Moreover, as stated above Awra Amba community devoted a quarter of its total land mass (>4hectares) for educational facilities and school related infrastructures (SICCA6; and SICCA8, Awra Amba, November 2011). This leaves a total of only 13 hectares of land including the areas where members' houses, pensions, warehouses, guest houses, etc are built upon. Hence, if we divide even these 13 hectares of land to the total population of the community, they will get an average of 0.03 hectares of land, which is highly insignificant for private farm activities.

Consequently, the study community introduced the socialist economic system as a way out of the problems created by the scarcity of farm lands. The major economic activities in the study area are collectively planned out and organized under the umbrella of the development committee. Hence, members are assigned to tasks that best fits their ability by the fieldwork facilitator's committee.

Regarding the major sources of income, the off-farm activities take the larger share of the study community's GDP. Members of the Awra Amba community engages in diverse economic sectors, which according to an informant from Fogera *Woreda* Economic Development Office (SIWOW3, Woreta, December 2011), includes trading and cottage industry, service sector (Hotel and Tourism), transportation sector (cargo transport) and agriculture in their proper order. As the three FGDs confirmed, the off-farm income generating activities are the most important means of livelihood

for all household members of the community. Interestingly, the market access that the study community enjoyed over the past few years and the introduction of modern weaving and spinning machines in the study area compounded the income that members of the community generate from their cottage industry.

Moreover, according to an informant from Fogera *Woreda* Culture and Tourism Office (SIWOW1, Woreta, December 2011), the sustained growth of tourists flow (both indigenous and foreigners) over the past decade, enormously contributed to the improvement in member's living standards and per capita income in three ways. First, the sustained growth in the flow of tourists increased the income that members of the community earn from entrance fees and hotel services. As the data obtained from Fogera *Woreda* Culture and Tourism Office indicates, the Awra Amba community, for instance, generates over 330,000 *Birr* from this sector in the year 2010/11. Second, the flow of tourists in the study area also contributed to member's economic benefits by increasing the sales of their products produced by the cottage industry. Thirdly, apart from being a source of income, the flow of tourists also play a significant role in the social development of the study area through the donation of books and other educational materials. Therefore, as the informant from Fogera *Woreda* Culture and Tourism Office strongly emphasized, it seems implausible to treat the current economic achievements in the study community in isolation from the service sector.

Furthermore, as indicated earlier, resources in Awra Amba are collectively owned and run by the community's development committee. According to an informant from this committee (SICCA7, Awra Amba, November 2011), income gathered from members collective effort are distributed at the end of each fiscal year on the principle of "from each according to his/her ability, and to each according to the net profit available". As I observed during my 21 days of field stay in Awra Amba community, members use a noble auditory system during the sale of products. Apart from

sales persons, there is an auditor at the gate of each shop. While I bought a scarf produced by members of the cooperative, what I observed was quite amazing. Every product has a fixed price tag attached to it and, to my surprise, product buyers are not allowed to detach the price tag before they leave the shop. Such tasks are reserved for the auditor waiting at the gate of the shops. Hence, by collecting price tags immediately from sold products, the auditory system in the study area makes the process of auditing quicker and balance sheet preparation easier.

Generally, as diverse data sources from the field revealed that at the end of each fiscal year, income in the study community is distributed in the following manner:

I.   A balance sheet is prepared to calculate the net profit and this balance sheet is posted for the public so as to foster accountability and transparency.
II. The income distribution is calculated as per households registered as members of the cooperatives. Other members of the household, except the husband and the wife, are not considered in the income distribution.
III. The net profit accumulated at the end of each fiscal year is distributed equally to all members of the Awra Amba Agriculture and Handicraft Multi-Purpose Cooperatives. Except married couples, and unmarried adult members of the cooperatives, other family members are excluded from distributions. Households with large family sizes, the weak and elderly people, etc, are not eligible for any additional money from the cooperative's income distribution. Nonetheless, every Tuesday members of the community collectively work and the revenue obtained from it is deposited in the study community's social security fund. Hence, weak and elderly people, large family sized households, women during maternity, etc, are entitled to special aid from this fund (SICCA1, Awra Amba, November 2011, and GCCA, Awra Amba, November 2011).

3.1.1.4 Administrative Structure, Leadership and Membership

In the Awra Amba community, the local administrative system comprises of thirteen different committees that are entrusted with a host of activities in the community. Endowed with clearly defined power and authority, the communal leadership in the area is undertaken by these committees. According to a female informant (SICA3, Awra Amba, November 2011), these committees have mandates to make certain decisions concerning members of community as a whole. They are also responsible to lead community discussions and to act as spokesperson in matters dealing with neighboring communities and visitors.

Hierarchically, the administrative structure is composed of one executive committee-i.e. the development committee, and twelve other sub-committees The Awra Amba Community Rules and Regulations Preparation Committee (ACRRPC, 2009:5), set up firm regulations that obliged all of the sub committees to be accountable to the development committee. That is, on the one hand, all sub communities have a vertical relationship with the executive development committee and are responsible to report to it on a regular basis. On the other hand, the twelve sub-committees have horizontal relationships with each other and are autonomous in their own jurisdictions. Moreover, there are also two intermediary committees in the study area with a mandate to control and to supervise the activities of the main executive committee and the weekly development committee (GCCA, Awra Amba, November 2011, ACRRPC, 2009) (see Figure 4.1 below).

With regard to the distribution of power, each committee comprises of different members who, according to the Awra Amba community committee member informants (SICCA3 and SICCA5, Awra Amba, November 2011), assume power and authority on the basis of popular and democratic elections

held every three years. The office term for all committees is 3 years, and ideally every member of the Awra Amba community has a chance to assume power and responsibility. But, according to a male informant (SICA2, Awra Amba, November 2011) and Focus group discussion participants (GMA, Awra Amba, November 2011), practically individuals are elected on the basis of their merits like education (at least those who can read and write), skills (like management and interpersonal skills), exposure to the regional city and other towns, previous experiences as committee members, etc. Additionally, there is no re-election limit and anyone who secures the required amount of votes (simple majority or fifty plus one) can assume power and authority repeatedly (GCCA, GMA, and GFA, Awra Amba, November 2011).

Figure 3.1. Organizational structure of the Awra Amba Community
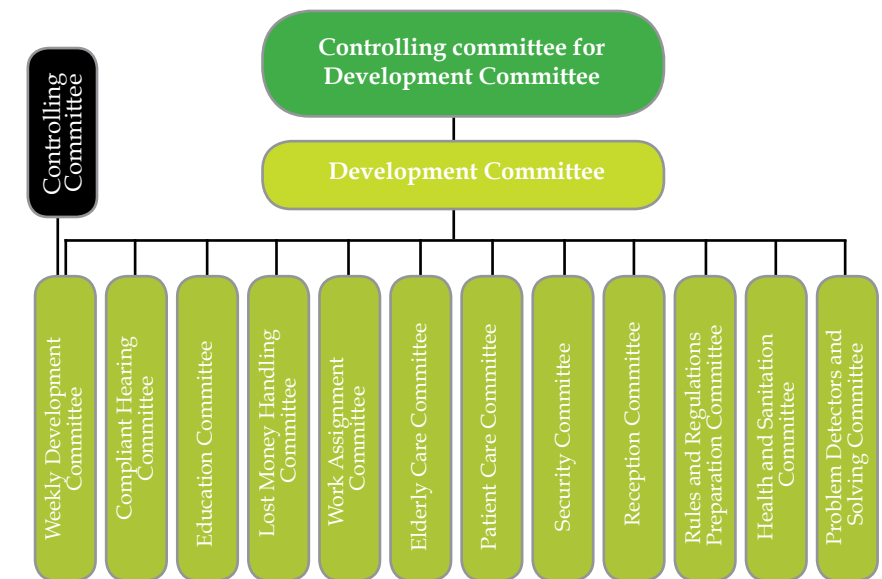
Source: Awra Amba Community Rules and Regulations Preparation Committee (ACRRPC), 2009:3

Furthermore, the administrative structure in the Awra Amba community is peculiar in the sense that it embeds the features of the two prominent types of 'modern' indirect forms of rule within the context of direct democracy. First, as indicated in figure 4.2 below, as in the presidential system of governments, voters directly and separately elect members of the different committees with a clearly defined term of offices. Hence, there is a clear separation of power between and among the different committees. Second, like the parliamentary form of governments, all committees are ultimately accountable to the general assembly, which is equivalent to the parliament in parliamentary form of governments. With this regard, a male committee member informant (SICCA1, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "although the different committees are assigned with power and authorities to undertake different activities, ultimate and real power reside in the hands of the general assembly". Additionally, as confirmed by the leader of the community(SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011) and focus group discussion participants (GCCA, Awra Amba, November 2011), the general assembly that officially meets once in a year but, which can hold extraordinary meetings as the need arises, has a power to recall all committees and to dissolve them.

Thus, similar to practices in parliamentary governments, the general assembly in the study community can cause a censure motion or can exercise a vote of no confidence over any of the committees before the expiration of their term of office when it loses a confidence. It can pass such decisions when there is a proved incapacity on the part of committee members, or cases of corruption and other allegations. Moreover, like a direct form of democracy, the general assembly in the Awra Amba community is composed of all voters/ all adult members of the community. Thus, like direct form of government, each and every major issue is thoroughly discussed and decided at the communal level through the direct participation of all adult members. The following figure (Figure 4.2) shows the administrative structure Awra Amba community.

Figure 3.2. The Administrative Structure of Awra Amba Community
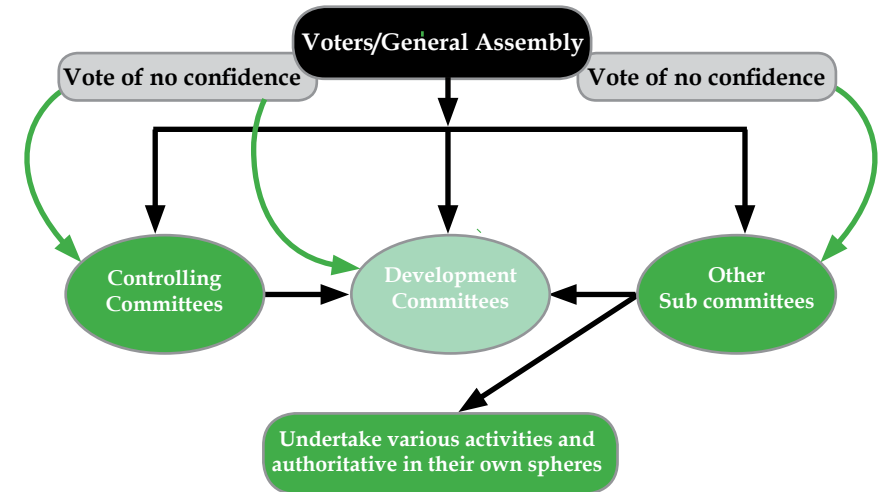
Source: Developed by the Researcher based on Primary Data Sources

There are two types of membership in the Awra Amba community: (a) Membership to the Awra Amba Community Agriculture and Handicraft Multi-Purpose Cooperative, and (b) membership to the Awra Amba Community New Chapter Cultural Building and Development Multi-Purpose Association. The first type is purely an economic membership that dominates and determines the economic life of members through collective resource ownership, collective work and equal distributions of income at the end of each fiscal year. In short, members of the Awra Amba community who live elsewhere, as well as children and teenagers below the age of 18, are not eligible for this type of membership.

The second type of membership, i.e., membership to the Awra Amba community, on the other hand, is, in principle, open to all human beings who live on earth. With this regard, the community leader said "unlike membership to the Awra Amba cooperative, the only precondition for being a member of the community is peacefulness" (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011). Similarly,

another informant from the community's reception committee, (SICCA6, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "any non-violent human being of whatever sex, race, ethnicity, nationality, etc, can become a member of the Awra Amba community so long as he/she is ready to live according to the values, principles and regulations of the community".

3.1.1.5 Peace and Stability

Scholars in the field of peace and conflict studies claimed and dealt with conflict as inevitable social phenomenon caused by a web of structural, proximate and triggering causes. Hence, the acceptance of conflict as unavoidable social phenomenon seems the common denominator in any in any academic discourses of peace and conflict studies. Nonetheless, in a manner that refuted the widely held assumptions by the various conflict theories, conflict of whatever kind, at least in its manifested form, never erupted within the Awra Amaba community. As the information gathered from interviews and focus group discussion indicated, almost all members of the community believe that conflicts are neither inherent in human beings nor inevitable social phenomena. With this regard, the focus group discussion with female participants (GFA, Awra Amba, November 2011) confirmed that "it is the extreme position that individuals hold and their reluctance to solve problems through discussions that make conflict frequent to the extent we are deceived to assume it as inherent and inevitable in our social interactions". Similarly, the leader of the community claimed that:

> Conflicts of whatever kind are the results of our failure to recognize and to appreciate differences as the essence of humanity. Conflicts are frequent, not because they are inevitable social phenomenon, but due to our immature and uncivilized views… we are the species who invented war and conflicts and, hence, also the species who are capable of inventing peace

through tolerance, rational thinking, round table democratic discussions, etc. (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011).

As described above, members of the Awra Amba community view peace and conflict as events determined and engendered by the supposed rational subjects-i.e. human beings. For members of the study community, the premise that conflicts are inevitable social phenomenon, by no means, holds water. Rather, the failure to understand human nature and to appreciate differences made human beings the authors of various catastrophic conflicts that turns the world into blood baths since time immemorial. Therefore, the research participant members of the study area believe that human beings can also be the authors of peace, if they could manage to have a one hundred eighty degree tack against their conflict breeding views and attitudes.

Consequently, members of the Awra Amba community consider and treat even the slightest dispute as serious issue that could jeopardize the community's internal peace if not dealt properly. As a result, they practice informal conflict prevention mechanisms and formal institutions established for this purpose. According to the information obtained through interviews (SICA2, SICA3, SICA9, SICCA2, SICCA6, SICCA1, and SICCA7, Awra Amba, November 2011), FGDs (GCCA, GMA, and GFA Awra Amba, November 2011), and secondary sources (Merhatsadik, 2009, and Seid 2008), the informal preventive mechanisms involve discussions between the disputing parties or individuals (negotiation) and the involvement of any neutral third party as a facilitator (mediation). With this regard, research informants (SICA6, and SICA4, Awra Amba, November 2011) and focus group discussion participants (GCCA, Awra Amba, November 2011) explained that whenever a dispute arises between two or more individuals, any individual that finds himself/herself near to the place where the parties are disputing, has a responsibility to participate as a neutral facilitator until the individuals arrive

at some agreements. Similarly, a female informant from the community's compliant hearing committee notes that:

> … [I]n our community, each and every member strongly believes in discussion to solve any disagreement, and everyone is ready to accept the 'truth' in such discussions regardless of the status/position, sex or age of the person who suggested it. Moreover, the involvement of any individual as a facilitator who found himself/herself immediate to the disputing individuals is a common tradition in the Awra Amba community. Such a mediator is always considered as neutral, and facilitates discussions until the 'truth' that the disputing individuals or parties, each claimed and entertained, out righted and convinced the other(SICCA7, Awra Amba, November 2011).

As the information obtained from the three focus group discussions confirmed, such preventive techniques are also used to solve disagreements between and amongst children in the study community.

In addition to these informal preventive mechanisms, there are formal institutions under the label "Compliant Hearing Committee" and "Security Committee". According to the community's rules and regulations published by ACRRPC (2009), these two committees were initially established with a mandate to deal with disputes or disagreements unresolved through the preventive mechanisms. Nonetheless, according to members of the compliant hearing committee, so far, none of the disputes or disagreements in the study area transcended the preventive mechanisms to fall under their mandates. Moreover, the absence of any security threats emanating from within the study community redefined the mandate of the security committee to fix its eyes on security threats against the study community that emanates from without. Concerning this, the chairperson of the security committee explained that:

> … although the committee [security committee] was originally established to deal with both internal and external security threats that could affect the well-being of the Awra Amba community, our task now became to keep the community from external security threats, mainly due to the total absence of any potential or actual security threats emanating from within. (SICCA3, Awra Amba, November 2011)

In the final analysis, interestingly, in a region where conflicts of different types and a host of crimes of different magnitudes are still common, there were and are no conflicts, crimes, or even the slightest of clashes in the Awra Amba community recorded either at the *Kebele*, *Woreda*, or regional level. Hence, the study community can be characterized as one of the most stable in which peace is the summum bonum, the greatest good. The various national and international prizes that the Awra Amba community received like the Blue Ball from the government of Holland, the UN Interfaith-Peace Award, and others that I observed in the community's library during the fieldwork are, indeed, testimonies for this.

2.2 Gender as an Arch over: Gender Relations, Peace and Development Processes in Awra Amba Community

2.2.1 The Contributions of Gender Relations to the Peace Process

As is well known, considerable efforts has been waged by the international community, the UN system, development organizations, NGOs, and women themselves for the promotion and protection of women's rights and to ensure cross-cutting gender equality in all spheres of activities. Besides, a number

of international declarations, plans of action, strategies and legal instruments have been instituted as tools to ensure gender equality. Nonetheless, as women's involvement and share in the key decision making processes and other areas in most societies is uncovered, women's marginalization and subordinate status in the political, economic and cultural spheres, seems a global trend that transcends class and geographic boundaries.

In contrast with the above prevailing wind, the full and equal participation of women in all matters that affect their life is, in fact, the most shining achievement registered by the Awra Amba community. In the study community, the existing gender relation is characterized by the following features.

2.2.1.1 Equality between Men and Women

In the Awra Amba community, men and women are considered as members of the same species and hence, as naturally equal. In this regard, an interview with the community leader reads as follows:

> [B]oth men and women are equally human beings. Neither of them are more a human than the other . . . the number of women and men in this world is also proportional. Furthermore, naturally, there is no man without a woman and vice versa. So, naturally, men and women are inseparable and they are naturally equal by the mere fact that they both are human beings, …SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011).

Hence, as can be inferred, as one manifestation of the study community's grand 'humanist philosophy', the gender relations, in the area advocate equal rights, benefits, and opportunities for both genders. Consequently, men and women are entitled to the same package of rights and have equal opportunities, access to and control over resources. Moreover, marriage in the Awra Amba community is contracted based on the free will of the two

partners, and arranged and early marriages are highly denounced. In relation to Galtung's violence (V) and ABC triangles, these, in turn, have contributed enormously to the peace process in the study area.

First, equality between men and women, as the core of the gender relations in the area engendered "a culture of peace" by working on the cultural (C1) angle of the 'V' triangle. This is through: (i) changing cultural resistances to the concept of female education, resistances against family planning methods, and by abrogating cultural justifications for early and arranged marriages. As indicated in the literature review, the various studies conducted by UNCEF (1991), MEDaC(1999), IIRR(2009), Assefa (1996), Pankhurst (1992), and several others, shows that in the rural parts of Ethiopia, girl-children starting from the age of 5 shoulder edifice of responsibilities and are forced to marry early, which together with the widely held cultural justifications, shatters women/females educational opportunities. Such justifications are built in the linguistic resources and expressed through proverbs in Ethiopia such as "a learned girl and a flying chicken do not go far", "the wisdom of women and the lights of stars do not take you far", "a woman may be fertile, but not knowledgeable" etc. (Jeylan, 2009:53).

In contrast with other areas in Ethiopia, the central thesis of the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community extended an equal educational access and opportunities for girl-children and boy-children. As indicated in table 4.2, the total number of male and female students in the study community is nearly proportional. Additionally, as indicated in its rules and regulations, marriage in the study community is contracted only when the girl is above 19 years old and the boy is above the age of 20, given that the two partners are willing to contract such a relationships (ACRRPC, 2009:9). Accordingly, girls and women have freedom of choices as boys and men and the existing gender relations characterized as such, eliminated cultural justifications for early and arranged marriages.

Furthermore, women within the existing gender relations of the study community have inalienable rights to use any family planning methods. As indicated in the cultural values and principles of the study area, women have such rights, even when necessary, without the knowledge of their husbands. According to the leader of the community (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011), this is due to the direct and immediate effects of too many pregnancies upon women, unlike its indirect and long term consequences upon men. Thus, this right, besides fostering women's achievements of control over their lives, also dismantled cultural resistances against family planning methods. In short, the existing gender relations in the study area worked against cultural resistances, in general, and resistances against the concept of female education, and family planning methods, as well as, against early and arranged marriages, in particular, which brings change on the "C1 " aspect of the "V" triangle.

The first feature of gender relations in the study community has also worked on "C1" by means of: (ii) eliminating/changing cultural justifications for superior/subordinate gender relationships both at the home and outside. Apart from the practical manifestations of deep-rooted gender inequalities in the day-to-day activities, linguistic resources are also used as a cultural justification to perpetuate a master-slave type of relationships. This is again evident in the various Ethiopian proverbs like ". . . even if woman works hard and is wise, the man makes decision and gets credit for it", "a woman may make good porridge, but cannot make a good speech", "when a woman rules, stream runs uphill", etc. (Jeylan, 2009: 56-58).

In sharp contract to these, the existing gender relations in the study community changed the "C1" aspect of the "V" triangle through the elimination of cultural stereotypes about man and manhood from its foundation, which are employed for the discursive constructions and reconstructions of gender roles and identities. Consequently, women play crucial roles in the leadership,

and decision-making processes of the various committees of the community in which they are members and also chairpersons. In this regard, a female informant (SICA22, Awra Amba, November 2011) said "we elect those of our members, who can read and write, who have good management and interpersonal skills, and who have exposure to Bahir Dar and other towns for our public relations as members and chairpersons of the various committees regardless of their sexes".

Table 3.3: Sex Composition of the Different Committees in the Awra Amba Community

Committees	Members		
	Male	Female	Total
Controlling committee for the development committee	1	2	3
Development committee	6	3	9
Controlling committee for the weekly development committee	1	2	3
Weekly development committee	2	3	5
Compliant hearing committee	2	1	3
Education committee	3	2	5
Lost money handling committee	2	1	3
Work assignment committee	1	2	3
Elderly care committee	2	3	5
Patient care committee	1	2	3
Security Committee	3	--	3
Reception committee	1	2	3
Health and sanitation Committee	2	1	3
Rules and regulations preparation committee	11	4	15
Problem detectors and solving Committee	1	2	3
Total	**39**	**30**	**69**

Source: The Awra Amba Community Information Center, Nov. 2011

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Hence, in all committees of the study community, women are represented and in some committees, women even significantly outnumber the men. As indicated in Table 4.3, the total male-female composition of the various committees in the study area is nearly proportional. As such, the existing gender relations also called-off women's dependence and inferior status through their economic and political empowerments and freedom of choices.

Moreover, as a practical manifestation of equality (among) human races, equality between men and women in the study area also: (iii) changed other widely-held cultural views used as a justification for inequalities of whatever sorts or justifications for "we" against "them". The 'humanist philosophy' of Awra Amba that promoted practical equality between men and women has also virtually eliminated such features of a culture of violence that advocates inequalities between and among human beings of various races, ethnicities, nationalities, etc.

Equality between men and women as the core of the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community also enhanced the peace endeavors in the area by working on the "A" aspect of the 'ABC' triangle. This is both through the change that it induced in the "C1" of the 'V' triangle and through its direct work on it that brought about a change in community's perceptions and outlooks. As indicated before, the existing gender relations in the study area have produced a change on communal perceptions through the dwindling of cultural stereotypes about man and manhood, and cultural prejudices about women and womanhood.

Most importantly as the practical manifestations of the study community's grand philosophy, the existing egalitarian gender relations changed members' world and communal views. This stands in sharp contrast to the negative attitudes and emotions that could possibly escalate conflict as a derivative of contradiction. In other word, the existing gender relations in the study area play a constructive role in the peace process by /eliminating conflict-

breeding views, to use Galtuing's term, expressed through 'Dualism-Manichaeism-Armageddon' formula. The change in the 'A' aspect of the ABC' triangle, in turn, breeds a change in the remaining two angles of the triangle and also reinforced the change induced on 'C1" of the 'V' triangle.

2.2.1.2   Efficiency Based Division of Labor

As pointed out above in connection with in the basic cultural values and principles of the Awra Amba community, the division of labor in the area is based on ability, efficiency and mutual understandings. The absence of a gender based division of labor, both at home and outside of the home environment, is the other central characteristic feature of the existing gender relations in the study community. The contribution of this feature is also a two ways. First, it has an undeniable impact on the structural ('S') angle of the 'V' triangle and accordingly, the division of labor in the existing gender relations engendered "a culture of peace" in the study area, through the change it breeds on the very structure.

Consequently, each and every member in the community has the right to engage in any economic activity so as to earn their own income. As such, women in the study community are not economically dependent upon their husbands and their contributions to the household's expenditure and the community's economic gains are as huge as their men counterparts. To this regard, a female informant (SICA10, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "I have an equal opportunity to participate in the economic activities of the community and I also get a fair share, as equal as my husband gets, from the community's income distributions. So, I and my husband support our family, without being dependent upon one another". Similarly, a widowed informant (SICA14, Awra Amba, November 2011)told the researcher that, "I had no fear of losing my sources of income when my husband passed away, because I was not, at all, economically dependent upon him".

Thus, in the Awra Amba community, women satisfy their economic needs, not as dependents on their husbands, but as independent workers on their own rights. As such, the local economic structure extended equality of participation and responsibilities to men and women, both at home and outside, as well as, equality of opportunity and equity in access to and control over resources to all members of the community. Besides, as indicated earlier, the political and social structure in the study area extends the same rights and opportunities to all members of the community, irrespective of sex and status or position.

Therefore, the ability and efficiency based division of labor, as the other central feature of the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community, eclipsed the patriarchal social organization, both at the household and at the community levels, that privileged men as superior 'economic providers' of the family. The existing gender relations in the study area, instead, forged desideratum of social, political and economic structures based on democracy, open discussions and equality in all spheres as opposed to a hierarchical structure that breeds violence in a multitude of ways. It also strongly fostered the peace process through the creation and maintenance of structures that guarantee equal life opportunities to all community members. This, in turn, besides the inevitable change that it breeds in the remaining two angles of the 'V' triangle, triggered a change in the 'C' aspect of the 'ABC' triangle, since most of the time; contradictions are triggered by structural causes.

Second, the division of labor and gender relations in the study area, guided by discussion and the principle of mutual interdependence also promote the local peace process, by minimizing/eliminating the 'C' of the 'ABC' triangle. This is, again, both:(i) through the structural adjustment/change that it brought on the 'V' triangle and the subsequent absence or minimization of structural causes of conflict, and (ii) through its strict principle of mutual understandings. The former, together with the study community's

priority to common goals as opposed to individual interests, eliminated possible structural economic-induced contradictions, and minimized other possible incompatibilities of goals triggered by the social and political structures. The later, on the other hand, minimized/eliminated contradictions that otherwise would be triggered due to misunderstandings and other possible differences.

Thus, apart from ability and efficiency, the division of labor is strictly guided by the principle of mutual understandings. Men and women share activities both inside and outside of the home environment on the basis of this principle. To this regard, while explaining the household expenditure patterns, a female informant during the semi structured interview (SICA18, Awra Amba, November 2011) said, "I buy food grains, butter, oil and other food items. If I ask my husband to buy this or some other items and products for household consumptions, there is no problem. The income we earn is ours, a common property for our common consumption".

To put it aptly, apart from the division of labor, household expenditure in the study community is also based on mutual consent of couples. This principle again, in addition to begetting a change in the 'C' of the 'ABC' triangle, also served the purpose of containing any possible tension from escalation. Moreover, by avoiding the root-causes of any conflict, the prevalent gender relations eliminated the remaining two derivative angles of the 'ABC' triangle, and also reinforced the change induced on the 'S' of the 'V' triangle so as to engender "a culture of peace" in the study area.

2.2.1.3 Motherhood/Nurturing Roles

As primary care givers, parents teach children and young members the value and principles of their community. In most societies boy-children and girl-children are socialized, to be tough and warlike,

and to empathy and subordination, respectively. Thus, parental perceptions served as a base for their nurturing roles. Similar to any other societies, in Awra Amba community, parents assume, as primary care givers and informal educators, the role of teaching their children about the cultural and moral values and principles of the community. Parents in the community train children about ethics, the nature of human beings, how to treat human begins, differences, the value of discussions and the force of truth to resolve disagreements triggered by differences of whatever sorts, etc,. So, children in the Awra Amba community learn about peace and non-violence, to uphold 'truth' and discussions in resolving disagreements, etc, which has a paramount importance to the peace process in the study area through its positive impacts on the 'B' and 'A' angles of the 'ABC' triangle.

Concerning the 'B' aspect of the 'ABC' triangle, an official informant from Fogera *Woreda* Culture and Tourism Office, for instance, put forward the following point:

> In other areas [societies], for instance, children might demand different things from a car driver like a plastic bottle or others, and if they do not get what they want and ask, they responded violently by throwing a stone against the car or the driver, ... but, in the Awra Amba community, such acts are unthinkable since, in the first place asking material things from someone else is seen as not different from begging, which is a cultural taboo in the community and second, responding in a violent manner is something that is completely strange for children in the community (SIWOW, Woreta, December 2011).

As can be seen from the information cited above, effective nurturing in the study community eliminated the physical act of violence, expressed outwardly through behavior, from the 'ABC' triangle and substituted in its place a non-violent and democratic

discussion as a derivative of any possible contradictions. Similarly, nurturing in the existing gender relations of the study community has also changed the conflict breeding 'A' of the triangle. In this regard, informants during the semi structured interviews (SICA19 and SICA23, Awra Amba, December 2011) and focus group discussion participants (GMA, Awra Amba, November 2011) claimed that negative attitudes and emotions, towards others manifested through gesture and facial expressions like 'gazing at others', are also strange to members and such acts are treated as not different from physical acts of violence. Accordingly, as can be ascertained, motherhood/nurturing roles in the existing gender relations of the study community changed conflict escalating 'B' and 'A' of the 'ABC' triangle. This, in turn, besides working on the remaining angle of the triangle, also breeds a change on the 'C1' and direct violence (D) angles of the 'V' triangle.

Generally, as the discussion uncovered, existing gender relations in the study area have immensely contributed to the peace process in the community in a complex and multifaceted ways. This is through the elimination of the entire angles that could possibly trigger and escalate conflicts from both the 'V' and the 'ABC' triangles. Hence, in this manner, the existing gender relations in the study area have created a positive and negative peace and, consequently, forged "a culture of peace" in the Awra Amba community. The culture of peace in Awra Amba, where gender equality is an explicit and implicit component in the objective orthogonal factors of a culture of peace, in turn, perpetuated the pertinent gender relations in a way positive to repeat the same process so as to foster the vicious peace breading cycle. In general, the contributions of the existing gender relations to the peace process in the Awra Amba community are summarized in the following figure.

Figure 3.3. The Role of Gender Equality to the Peace Process in the Awra Amba Community
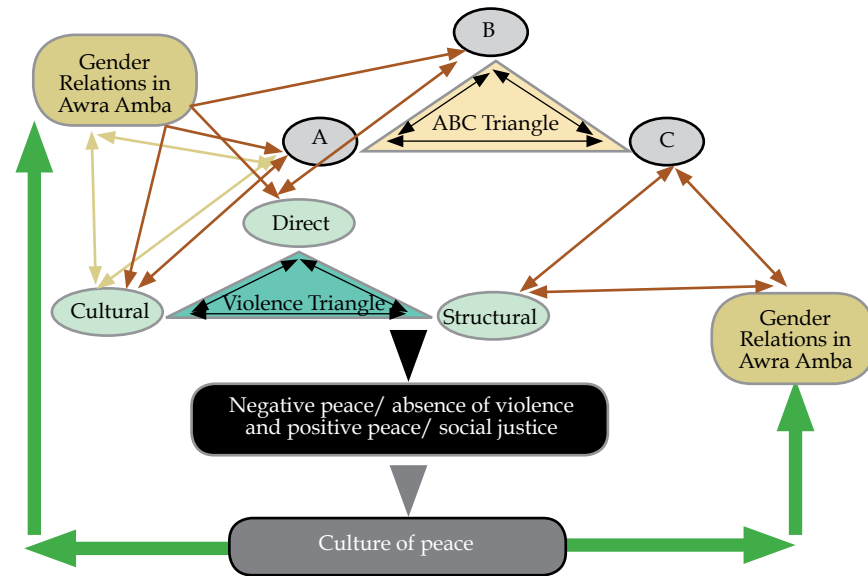
Source: Developed by the Researcher based on the Reviewed Literature and Primary Data Sources

2.2.2 The Role of Gender Relations in Awra Amba Development Endeavors

With regard to the development sphere, the Awra Amba community has registered remarkable successes in the recent past. While comparing their current living standard and per-capital income with their economic status some six years back, every member of the community talks about their economic success with a strong motto that "it is possible to register remarkable and sustainable economic growth from scratch". According to a male Official informant from Fogera *Woreda* Economic Development Office (SIWOW3, Woreta, December 2011), once the study community

introduced modern weaving and spinning machines, in cooperation with Bahir Dar University Institute of Technology, members of the community showed a highly remarkable improvement in their living standards and per-capita incomes (see Figure 4.4. below).

Thus, amicable gender relation in Awra Amba played prominent roles in the development endeavors of the community, both directly and indirectly. The indirect contribution is through the promotion of "a culture of peace" (see Table 4.4 below) which laid a fertile ground, to the development process for its success and sustenance, as discussed before. Besides, existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community contributed to the development efforts of the area, directly through the inclusion of the other half of the population and by rendering educational access to women/ females. As indicated before, the ability and efficiency based division of labor in the study area guaranteed women's rights to participate in every types of work, ended rural confinements to the domestic sphere alone. Moreover, girls and women in the area have equal access to education and other resources and services.

Additionally, women in the study area have no extra domestic work burden to shoulder. This equal share of activities between men and women at the household level helped women to be more productive in the outdoor activities and, thus, mounted their contributions to the growth and development efforts in Awra Amba. The involvement of women in the different economic activities of the community and their equal educational access and opportunities, increased the average human capital of the study area as well. As a major factor of production, the increase in the average human capital and productive labor forces wherefore fuelled the local growth and development process.

Gender relations in Awra Amba also played a direct role in fostering the development process through women's economic empowerment. Again, as briefly discussed before, in Awra Amba women are economically independent, as they generate

their own income from their community's share and private income generating activities. In this regard, the testimony of a male informant from the study community (SICA15, Awra Amba, November 2011) underlined; "our women have equal access to income. They also have an equal share of household resources and are equally responsible for household expenditures". Hence, the economic structure in the community has crumbled down the patriarchal social organization, both in the private and public spheres.

While comparing the status of women in the study community with their situations in the surrounding areas, the leader of the community (SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 20110 stated, "women in the surrounding areas, if not oppressed by their husbands, are oppressed by their own limited knowledge and poverty. But, women in the Awra Amba community are free from such oppressions for they have an equal access to education and also for they are not dependent upon their husbands". Further, he adds, economic development entails much more than growth for it concerned with the way output is distributed and income gaps are minimized. Indeed, in a situation where the remaining half of the population remains under abject poverty, it would be chimeras to talk about development.

The symbolic gender relations in Awra Amba community assisted the development process therein by putting an end to women's inferior economic positions and, consequently, through their liberation from economic dependence, poverty and impoverishment. According to Seid (2008: 106), in 2006/07, for instance, the average annual female headed household's income in Awra Amba was 2,439 *Birr* and the total estimated average income of households was 3,748 *Birr*. This income includes the equal share that marriage partners earned from the community's annual income distribution and the income generated from homestead economic activities, which was an average of 1004.83 *Birr* per annum (*Ibid*).

Table 3.4. The Awra Amba Community from the Vantage Points of the Four Objective Indices of the "Culture of Peace"

Indices	Components	The Existing Conditions in the Awra Amba Community
LD	Social Development	• All members of the community can read and write • More than ¾ of men and 2/3 of women are literate, which is the reverse of the regional figure in which more than 3/4 of men in the ANRS are illiterate. • Living standards and per capita incomes in the community are relatively higher than the regional average, which according to Seid (2008:67) is more than 1000 *birr* against the regional standard of 840 *birr* in 2005/06.
	Democratic Development	• Participation in every activity is open to all members of the community. Members participate in voting and decision making activities of the various committees, as well as, exercise real power through the instrumentality of the general assembly. • There is a protection and respect for human rights (children rights, elderly rights, women rights, etc) as guaranteed through the rules and regulations of the community(ACRRPC, 2009:8-13).
	Gender Equality	• Men and women in the community are treated as equal. • Women in the area have equality of participations, responsibilities and opportunities in every activity. • Women in the study area are fully recognized in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the community.
VI	Income Inequality	• Income and resources in the study area are distributed at the end of each fiscal year on an equal basis to all members according to the procedures discussed under the economic system of the community.
	Homicide rate and Violation of Human Rights	• There is no homicide or attempted homicides in the study community (the homicide and attempted homicide rate in the community is 0 against the regional figure of 6,973 recorded by the ANRS Prison Administration office in 2009/10 alone (BoFED,2010/11)). • There is no any type of recorded conflict and Human Rights violation in the study area (again, with this regard, the regional figure published by ANRS Administration and Security affairs bureau indicates 151,352 resolved conflicts for the year 2009/10).

SUVM	Military Act	• Members of the study community never used military means as a tool, either for internal or external issues or disagreements. • Internal and external disagreements are resolved through Gandhi's way of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Satayagrha (truth force).
N	Tolerance	• Mutual Understandings, respect, tolerance, non-violence and gender equality, etc., are the ultimate goods that members of the study community uphold as shared cultural values and principles.

Source: Developed by the researcher based on the Reviewed Literature, Secondary Data Sources and Primary Data Sources

Thus, as can be seen from the figure above, the Awra Amba community narrowed the gender gaps in terms of wage/income. Additionally, as per the various studies, early marriage induced health complications-cum- divorces, compounded by women's economic dependence, is the deteriorating factor in women's economic status through prostitution, HIV/AIDS infections and poverty (UNCEF, 1991, MEDaC, 1999). Nonetheless, in the Awra Amba community, the economic independence of women made the effect of divorce non-economic. Divorce in the community occurs only for reasons justifiable beyond doubts such as health problems (diseases) that might cause severe pains during sexual intercourses, infertility, when either of the couples failed to obey the rules and regulations of the community, and due to persistent disagreements unresolved through discussions (ACRRPC, 2009: 10).

Therefore, the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community built a double fence around women for their protection against vulnerabilities, impoverishment and poverty. Accordingly, the economic empowerment of women in the community made the development process substantive. This was realized by addressing problems of distributions and equality of benefits to the various segments of the population in the study community.

Furthermore, gender relations in Awra Amba also candidly propelled the development process through the involvement and participation of women on an equal basis in initiating, formulating and implementing development plans. To this effect, women in the Awra Amba community are represented in the main Development Committee, as indicated in table 4.4, that supervise and control the implementations of development and other related plans in the area. Besides, women exert great influences on development and other big schemes in the general assembly of Awra Amba, where their total number slightly exceeds the total number of men and almost all the major issues that affect the members of the study community are discussed and decided. This helped the community to realize an inclusive development process and to forge a culture of peace.

The growth and development process, in its turn, reinforced gender equality in the study area by way of narrowing/eliminating the gender differences in terms of wage. As indicated in the figures above and the procedures of income distribution, women and men of Awra Amba earn, almost, an equal share from their income generating economic activities. This, in turn, helped in abrogating VI, and fostered LD, which is another necessary component and objective indices in "a culture of peace". To sum up, gender relations has had a significant impact on the development process in the study area, as summarized by figure 4.4 below.

Generally, the gender relations in the Awra Amba community is, characterized by equality of opportunities, participation and responsibilities and the full recognition of women in all walks of life, together with their achievements of control over their lives and others. These conditions propelled the peace and development efforts in the study community. Equal involvement and participation of all members, thus, makes the community versatile in various activities, in general, and in the peace and development spheres, in particular.

In short, the existing gender relations in the study community is, truly, an arch-over that connects the two greatest goods in the Awra Amba community that creates, recreates and constantly maintains the 'triple desideratum' gender equality peace and independent in the study area. Hence, comprehending the peace and development processes in the study community without the lenses of existing gender relations would be futile and, indeed, the lessons from Awra Amba indicate that any explanation of the peace and development endeavors in any community that missed the existing gender relation therein is hardly possible and highly incomplete.

Figure 3.4. The Contribution of Gender Equality to the Development Process in the Awra Amba Community
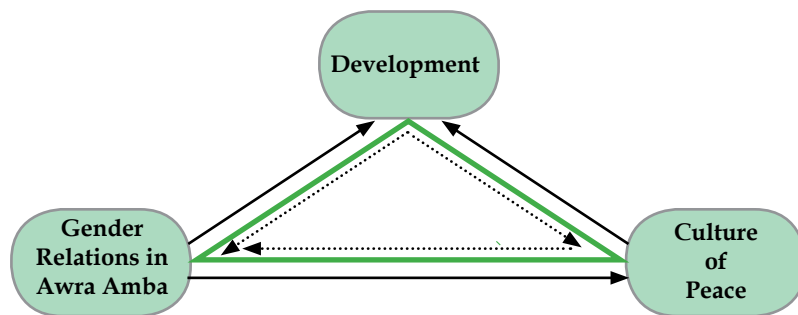
Source: Developed by the researcher based on primary data sources

2.3 Cultural Values and Principles as a Panacea to Local Peace and Development

In the Awra Amba community, apart from the egalitarian gender relations, cultural values, beliefs and principles contributed significantly to the community's peace and development endeavors. The economic system in the community, work ethic and other business related variables, administrative and/or governance process, the various social institutions rules and regulations, the communication media and formal and informal education, etc., have made undeniable contributions to the peace and development efforts in the Awra Amba community. Therefore, this section briefly examines additional cultural factors that have significant bearings upon the peace and development process in the Awra Amba community.

2.3.1 Cultural Values, Beliefs and Principles

Being a reflection of the dominant subjective cultural dimension, cultural beliefs, values and principles played a double role in the peace and development processes of Awra Amba. While, the first role is indirect, through shaping the patterns of gender relations as explained in the previous section; the second, which is the focus of this section is its direct role. Major cultural values, beliefs and principles in the study area, like; human rights and social justice, trust, harmony and mutual respect, and truth, love, non-violence, and peaceful co-existence together with their normative moral standard- "we should do to others what we would want others to do for us", served the purpose of peace and development by laying a fertile ground in that area. First, trust, harmony and mutual respect, as shared cultural values, forged a strong social cohesion in the Awra Amba community, in which members have an intimate relationship with one another. This, together with members, stands for their common benefits/interests in which individual gains are satisfied through the maximization of common goals, eliminated physical violence from the 'tools chart' as a means to secure goals.

Second, cultural values like truth, love, non-violence, and peaceful co-existence reinforced by the community's moral standards- "do as you would be done by", have made significant contributions to

the internal and external peace processes in Awra Amba. Of course, members strong belief in and practice of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and *Satyagrha* (truth force) in resolving disagreements, helped the peace process by closing the room for fatal clashes and by neutralizing negative attitudes and prejudices expressed through hatred. Concerning this, informants stated that embarrassing others, gazing at others, etc., are all strange incidents in the Awra Amba community, which are considered as no different from physical acts of violence (SICA20, and SICA23, Awra Amba, December 2011). The community valued non-violence and truth, and negative attitudes, let alone fighting, are quite unusual in the study area. These cultural values that hinged on Gandhi's vision of peace are also the reasons for the present day Awra Amba community's relatively peaceful co-existence with the neighboring communities. In this regard, the founder of the community; Zumra Nuru, narrated the manner that members of the community responded to external attack some years back as follows:

> [O]ne day, our neighbors crossed over to our territory and came to attack us, fully armed and determined to turn our small village in to dusts. We did not know how exactly to respond to their attacks, but we surly knew that their violent threats of attack should not be responded violently . . . No! No! . . . Violence only breeds violence and it is only through love that one day 'truth' could get the opportunity to be revealed. So, I thought for a moment and decided something, which was a bit funny . . . what I did, was that I went to the shop and bought a ball! Then we all- girls, boys, men, women-mixed and began to play football. Honestly, we had never played football before, but that was the only thing that flashed into my mind faced as we were with this grave threat. By our very act, the people that came to attack us get confused and they seemed to be thinking, 'we are coming to attack them and how dare they play football!'. Then, they became suspicious

that there should be something or somebody behind our confidence and, thus, managed to observe us without performing any act. This continued for three consecutive days until they became hopelessly confused, and for being suspicious, decided to leave us doing the thing that we had done for three days. . .(SICCA2, Awra Amba, November 2011).

2.3.2 The Economic System, Work Ethics and Good Governance

The socialist economic system in the area accompanied by member's work ethics and other business variables also greatly contributed towards the current economic achievement in the study community. The economic system, besides eliminating economically induced possible contradictions from the ABC triangle through collective resource ownership and common goals, its principles regarding division of labor played indispensable roles in the Awra Amba community's development endeavors. The ability based division of labor guided by the principles of efficiency and mutual understanding, together with the industriousness of community members are, hence, other key factors for the current economic achievements of Awra Amba. Members of the Awra Amba community have a strong zeal for improving their living standards. As a result, they work 7 days a week, day and night, without the celebration of any holiday or ceremony (including marriage and funeral ceremonies). For instance, according to the ANRS, BoFED (2010) the regional data indicate that 13 days per month and more than 156 days per annum are nonworking days in the region. But in Awra Amba, each and every single day is a working day and they attach an equal value for each day.

Moreover, the labor dependency ratio in the study community, which is relatively lower (76%) against the regional figure (87%), together with the community's study based market involvement

and their functional specialization also contributed for their current achievements. In this regard, an official informant from Fogera *Woreda* Economic Development Office (SIWOW3, Woreta, December 2011) said, "like any other big corporate, the Awra Amba community undertakes formal and informal 'studies' about the profitability of a given business, the cost of producing a given product, their comparative advantages in producing goods and services, market needs assessment, etc., before they enter into the market". This seems to explain their current functional specialization, which is quite different in a region where agricultural activities remain the prime sources of livelihood.

Democratic development, good governance and strong social institutions also played substantial roles in the peace and development processes of the community. The political structure in the area allowed for the participation of all adult members in election, decision-making and leadership activities. Besides the protection of human rights and equal treatment of all ideas, regardless of the status of the person who proposed them, strict check and balance, power rotation, and rule of law, members freedom of choice (over marriage, work and mechanism) and transparency and accountability of the various committee members, etc, all served the purposes of peace and development in the study community.

Furthermore, the presence of democratically elected social institutions with strong and binding rules and regulations drafted and unanimously agreed upon by all community members of the community also significantly contributed to the study area's peace and development efforts. These rules and regulations, approved by the ANRS Justice Office in 2009, are composed of detailed ways on how income is distributed, criteria for economic membership (membership to the Awra Amba Cooperative), the benefits/income that members who left such membership before the end of the fiscal year could get, treatment of deviants (advising, ostracizing and expelling in ascending orders), etc. Thus, the

establishment of formal and informal governance institutions boosted local peace and development process.

2.3.3 Education and Communication Media

Moral and ethical education that students learn starting from their early childhood, both informally from their parents and formally starting from pre-school (Kindergarten) has also played crucial roles to the peace process in Awra Amba. In this regard, an Official informant from Fogera *Woreda* Education Bureau said, "…in the Awra Amba community, children starting from the age of three, spend their time together in pre-school… Class starts and ends with the slogan posted above the black board… the slogan is mainly about the values of peace and hard-work… so in this way, the children learn about peace and industriousness starting from their childhood" (SIWOW4, Woreta, December 2011). As I had observed, the slogan is posted everywhere including the kindergarten, in the primary and secondary school classrooms, in the library, etc., which stated, "እኛ ታዳጊ ህፃናት የስውን ገንዘብ አንነካም፤ ወድቆ ብናገኝ ለባለቤቱ እንመልሳለን፤ በመተባበር እና በመተጋገዝ እናመርታለን፤ የሰላም ኑሯችን ይለመልማል፦", Literary, means "we, the children and teenagers of Awra Amba do not steal, if we find lost property of others, we will return it to the owners, we will effectively produce through our collective and group efforts, and our peaceful co-existence will prosper".

Moreover, primary and secondary school students learn moral and ethical values of their community once every two weeks by the community leader, Zumra Nuru. Concerning this, a young girl informant (SICA11, Awra Amba, November 2011) discussed in the interview that "…in addition to the formal civic and ethical education lesson, we also learn moral and ethical values of our community on a biweekly basis. This helps us to know more about human nature, what we ought and ought not to do in our day-to-day interactions, about the horror of conflicts, the value of peace, hard work and the strength of love, etc… This motivates us to be

visionary, to care for one another, to tolerate differences and to live in harmony and mutual trust, …".

Therefore, moral and ethical education strongly contributed to the peace and development endeavors of the study community by indoctrinating values that (i) fostered the development process by encouraging the futures of the community:(a) to work together, (b) to come up with new ideas and concepts, and (c) to develop a positive sense of competition with each other. Moreover, moral and ethical education (ii) supports the peace process in the study area by changing:(a) the two derivatives of 'ABC' triangle, through nurturing the young generation in the community so as to uphold values like non-violence, love and mutual trust, and (b) the three angles of the violence triangle that worked one against the other to breed a vicious cycle of violence. Thus, moral and ethical education significantly contributed to the peace and development process in the study community by molding attitudes and behaviors towards work, differences, belief etc.

In addition to education, communication media (both printing and broadcasting) also played significant roles to the peace and development efforts of the study community. In relation to the development process, such media contributed to the community's annual revenue, (i) by increasing the annual flow of tourists and, thereby, income from hotel and tourism, through the promotion of the community's cultural values and principles, and (ii) by facilitating better market access to the goods and services produced by members of the community. Similarly, the communication media also have significant roles for the study community's current relative peaceful co-existence with the surrounding communities. Particularly, their programs and reports about the community's economic success, their clarifications concerning the visions and values of the study community, etc., triggered a change in the attitudes of the surrounding communities as well.

The cultural promotion of the study community, championed by the medias changed the former hostile attitudes of surrounding communities that arose from misunderstandings. Consequently, neighboring communities now developed a relatively peaceful relationship with the study community and, even, become consumers of the goods and services provided in the area like shop, milling and grinding machine, etc.

Generally, as the discussion unveiled, many of the factors that contributed for the construction, reconstruction and maintenance of the existing gender relations in the study area are also the common denominators to the peace and development efforts in the Awra Amba community. Indeed, the different variables discussed under this section offer a kaleidoscopic view in any attempt to explain and to analyze the driving forces behind the peace and development processes in Awra Amba community.

Thereupon, factors including, but not exclusive to, the economic system, work ethic, the governance process and moral and ethical education (both formal and informal), each shaped and guided by the shared cultural values of the study community, can be considered as valuable pieces of the total picture. These factors help to comprehend and to analyze the peace and development process in the study area. This shows that almost all of the shared cultural values, beliefs and principles that members of the Awra Amba community entertained are, indeed, panaceas for the actual and potential problems in the community. To sum up, neutralizing the hard rocks of resistance, cultural values and principles are also the ubiquitous spring board for the creations, recreations, and continuous maintenances of the 'triple-desiderata' in the study community, i.e., 'gender equality', 'peace' and 'development'.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

3.1.1 Summary of Major Findings

It is obvious that peace and development as processes count on a multitude of variables for their achievements and sustenance. The peace and development efforts in a given country or society can be either marred by or pitched in depending on the manner that a web of factors play and interplay in the processes. Gender relations, being determined by and reflected through the socio-cultural structure of a given society, are the major course changing variables in the peace and development endeavors.

As stipulated in the first section of chapter four, the political structure in the study community that embeds an indirect forms of government in a direct form of democracy and the study community's membership, which is open for all non-violent human beings are some of the unique political features that candidly characterizes the Awra Amba community. Similarly, the development of a socialist type of economic system, work ethics, bewildering auditory and income distribution procedures, and the gender relations with its core of equality between men and women in all walks of life constitute the socio-economic and cultural structures that distinguish the community from most other communities in Ethiopia.

Concerning the peace process in the Awra Amba community, the impacts of gender equality can be summarized in two ways from the prism of Galtung's 'V' and 'ABC' triangles. On the one hand, features like equality of accesses, opportunities, participation and responsibilities between men and women, voluntary marriages

and women's inalienable rights to use family planning methods, and women's political empowerment and their proportional representations in the various social institutions of the study community, simultaneously, worked on the 'C1' and 'A' angles of the 'V' and the 'ABC' triangles, respectively. Consequently, gender equality in the study area eliminated cultural justifications that are systematically built into linguistic resources to perpetuate a hierarchical social organizations, cultural resistances against the concept of female education and family planning in particular.

At the same time, gender equality in the study area also worked on the 'A' aspect of the 'ABC' triangle by way of changing perceptions, outlooks and cultural values that depict the world in a 'Dualism-Manichaeism- Armageddon' formula of conflicts and a culture of violence. Accordingly, the existing gender relations in the study community forms another triangle together with the changed 'C1' and changed 'A' of the 'V" and the 'ABC' triangles, respectively.

On the other hand, other central features of the existing gender relations in the Awra Amba community such as women's economic and political empowerments and the ability and efficiency based division of labor guided by the principle of mutual understandings worked on the 'S' and the 'C' dimensions of the 'V' and the 'ABC' triangles. Wherefore, such features throw the patriarchal organization out in the domestic, as well as in the public spheres of the study community.

As such, the existing gender relations in the study community forged a desiderata social structure based on democracy, discussions, and equality between and among all members of the study community. Hence, the gender relations in the study community replaced the 'S' of the 'V' triangle by social, economic, and political structures that are established to guarantee equal opportunities and, consequently, equal life chances for all members of the community. The result is that the change on the 'S' has begotten a change on the 'C' of the 'ABC' triangle for 'C' is but the 'Gordian Knot' of the 'S'. Moreover,

gender relations in the study area, with its crux of the principle of mutual understandings in the ability and efficiency based division of labor, directly worked on the 'ABC' triangle at the hand of by minimizing any possible conflict breeding contradictions, in general, and eliminated the possibility of economic induced contradictions, in particular. Hence, here again, the existing gender relations in Awra Amba community constituted another triangle together with the changed 'S' and changed 'C' of the 'V' and the 'ABC' triangles that effectively triggered a change in the remaining angles of the two triangles.

The second contribution of gender relations to the peace process in the Awra Amba community is through motherhood/nurturing roles. As I have argued above, the informal moral and ethical education that children learn from their parents enormously supported the peace effort in the study community by way of changing the conflict escalating 'A' and 'B' angles of the 'ABC' triangle. Uncovered through the discussion, boy-children and girl-children in the study community are socialized to empathy, love and nonviolence alike. Hence, the roles of motherhood/nurturing in the existing gender relations fuelled the peace efforts in the study area by way of the changes it has begotten on the conflict escalating 'A' and 'B' of the 'ABC' triangle.

With regard to the development process, I have argued that in the Awra Amba community, gender equality propelled the development process both through forging "a culture of peace" and, directly, by way of rendering equal educational access to all members of the community. Women's inclusions in the planning and implementations of the development process on equal basis with men increased their economic empowerments. Such direct means, besides addressing the problems of output distribution and income gap for which the development endeavor is concerned, accelerated economic growth in the study area by increasing the average human capital in the production process.

3.1.2 Conclusion

Of course, the existing gender relations in Awra Amba enhanced women's educational, economic and leadership opportunities, in particular, and the communal peace and development endeavors, in general, through the creation and continuous maintenance of economic and administrative structures that guarantee equal opportunities to all members of the community. As a result, women in Awra Amba are represented in the main Development Committee that supervises and controls the implementations of development and other related plans. In general, the local economic and administrative structures promote equitable gender relations in division of labor based on ability and efficacy, access to and control over educational opportunities and economic resources and power. Accordingly, the existing gender relations foster development by rendering equal opportunities for all members of the community.

Apart from gender relations, other major factors including, but not exclusive to, the study community's economic system, work ethics, the governance process, the presence of social institutions with strong and binding rules and regulations, and moral and ethical education; each being determined, influenced, and guided by the shared cultural values and principles of the study community are also valuable pieces that render a kaleidoscopic view in any attempt to explain and analyze the peace and development process in the community. As such, the shared cultural values and principles of the study community are panaceas for the construction, reconstruction and maintenance of the 'triple desideratum' in the Awra Amba community.

Overall, gender relations in the Awra Amba community have played paramount roles and made significant contributions in the peace and development efforts therein. The result of this analysis indicate that genderequality is, forthrightly, an arch over that connects the two greatest goods-i.e., 'peace' and 'development' in

the study community. The economic development and the culture of peace, engendered and fostered through gender equality, in turn, improved the situation of women and reduced the gender gaps in the Awra Amba community. As such, comprehending the peace and development process without the practical lens of gender relations in the Awra Amba community seems almost impossible and highly incomplete.

In the final analysis, as the discussions based on the experiences of the Awra Amba community were unveiled, besides an advocacy of gender equality in its own right, the advantages of gender equality are manifold so long as the peace and development processes are concerned. In a nutshell, equality of participation and responsibilities, at the individual level, increase women's bargaining position in the household (Tzannatos, 1999), and at the communal level, their equity in access to and control over resources and equality of participation, opportunities and responsibilities in the economic and political life is not only advantageous to the female population, but also to the society as a whole. For these reasons and to speed up the peace and development processes, the state at the national level needs to actively pursue and soundly implement policies that both guarantee gender equality in the truest sense of the term and provide public goods such as sufficient education, not only for young girls but also to adult women across the length and breadth of Ethiopia.

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SECTION 5

The Status of Gender Equality and Its Implication for Peace:
The Case of Berek Wereda of Oromia Regional State

Worku Tariku

Abstract

This study aimed at analyzing the status of rural women in having access to and control over household resources and their decision making power in Barak Wereda of Oromia Regional State as compared to legal instruments adopted to minimize gender disparities. The study considered both national and international policy frameworks. The normative framework constitute the FDRE constitution, the 1993 national policy on Ethiopian women, as well as the UN convention on the illumination of all forms of discrimination on women. The study mainly focused on household's attitude towards gender roles, access to and control over households resources, decision making at household level, participation of households in community affairs and decision making at community levels and how gender inequalities negatively affect peace in the study area.

The research employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data. Quantitative data were collected from 319 participants through using questionnaires. The qualitative methods applied were interview with relevant Wereda offices, focus group discussion with rural women and the researcher's own observation. A triangulation method was used in data collection, data presentation and in analysis of findings in order to increase the reliability of the research.

The literatures consulted indicated that, in Ethiopia in general and in the study area in particular, gender relations are characterized by an unequal balance of power between men and women. The findings of the study are also in agreement with the literatures. It revealed that women have access to household's resources to a greater extent. However, women have a lower status in societies in terms of control over resources, decision making in family affairs and participation in community matters, which implies gaps exist between the policies and their practical implementation on the ground.

The findings of this study indicated that traditional belief systems, the traditional unjust patriarchal gender relations, lack of awareness, lack

of control over resources and low income levels are the major factors, which declare women unequal to men. The results further showed that gender inequalities in the study area resulted in intra-household conflict, violation of women's right, and breaking the family relations. The study also indicated that these inequalities restricted women participation and created social instabilities which imply that gender inequality and lack of peace are connected.

List of Acronyms

Art.	Article
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalist
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAD	Gender and Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
IPPF	International planned Parenthood
KI	key Informant
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NAP-GE	National Action Plan for Gender Equality
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organization
NPEW	National Policy on Ethiopian Women
OSSREA	Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Right
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNWA	United Nations Women Approach
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAO	Women's Affairs Office
WB	World Bank

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the Study

Throughout history, there has never been a time or a place where women have enjoyed complete equality with men (Neft and Levine, 1997).Gender inequalities in basic rights and access to and control over resources reflect that disparities exist all over the world and no woman in the developing regions has equal rights with men (WB, 2001). These gender differences are reflected in decision making over family and community affairs, owning, controlling and inheriting resources.

In the Ethiopian context, there are predominant social and religious norms which declare women's inequality with men. These factors should be seriously considered to improve gender relations and enhance the formulation of policies and their implementation so as to effectively address gender inequalities. Even though rural women's contribution is significant in agricultural production and in domestic food processing, they had and still have a lower status in economic, social and political aspects and they are subordinate to men. During the imperial regime, both the "*rist*" and "*gult*" land tenure systems discriminated against women's property rights and less concern was given to women's rights of access to and control over land and resources (Hanna cited in Hadera, 2002). Before the 1974 Revolution, women's organized activities were run mainly by non-governmental bodies, such as the Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association, the Ethiopian Officer's Wives Association, and the Ethiopian Female Students' Association (WAO and WB, 1998). These associations were, however, limited in scope, and existed only in the cities. They had little or no impact on government policies, laws, regulations or development programs (*Ibid*). Following the revolution, however, women made some gains in economic and political arenas. According to the information obtained from

the internet (www.mongabay.com), the Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association (REWA) took an active part in educating women. It encouraged the creation of women's organizations in factories, local associations and within the civil service. Some women participated in workers organizations, peasant associations and *kebeles*. On a more positive note, the *Dergue* regime could claim success in increasing literacy levels among women. The enrollment of women in primary and secondary schools increased from about 32 percent in 1974/75 to 39 percent in 1985/86, although the rate of enrollment of urban women far exceeded the rate for rural women (*Ibid*). However, there was little improvement in the actual lives of Ethiopian women, whether in the social, economic or political sphere, especially for those women who lived rural areas (WAO and WB, 1998). Generally speaking, gender relations were/are characterized by an unequal balance of power between men and women in Ethiopia, both during the previous regimes and the current government.

To enable women and girls to take an equal place with men, international and national legal instruments have been put in place. The international legal instruments governing gender issues include, *inter alia*, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW (1979), UDHR (1948) which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status, and the Beijing Declaration and Women's Platform for Action (1995). CEDAW expressly requires states to take actions to prevent and to combat discrimination committed by third persons. For example, Article 2(e) of the CEDAW requires states to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise. The Convention underlines the equal responsibilities of men with women in the context of family life (Article 16). It also stresses the social services needed - especially childcare facilities for combining family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life (Article 11).

The other milestone to enhance gender relations, which came into being as a result of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, is the Beijing Platform for Action. The Platform is an international political program facilitating the implementation of women's rights and equal opportunities for women. It calls on governments, international organizations and international and national NGOs to take relevant action.

At a national level, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) adopted the National Policy on Ethiopian women in 1993 to facilitate conditions that are conducive to minimizing the gender gap between men and women so that they equally participate in political, economic and social aspects. In addition, the FDRE constitution grants equal rights to men and women. The constitution declared the principle of equality under Art 25 and it addresses gender equality. The constitution requires that all persons shall be entitled to equal and adequate guarantees without distinctions of any kind. To ensure the equal participation of women in the political and social life, the constitution confirmed the right of women to full consultation in the formulation and execution of national policies under Art 35.

Despite recently introduced policy instruments and legislative commitments designed to serve women's interests, the status of women in Ethiopia was reported to have been fundamentally unchanged (Abraham, 2006). This implies that gaps exist between the legal provisions and their implementation on the ground. The existing gap implies the extent to which women's rights are neglected in access to and control over resources, as well as in decision making.

Gender equality is considered as one of the fundamental rights for all human beings and therefore should be a cornerstone for sustainable peace (UNFPA, 2011). But in most cases, men and women do not enjoy equal rights and opportunities in various spheres of life. The traditional cultural practices have distinctively stipulated and assigned specific roles to men and women through socialization, as not being purely discriminatory but the fulfillment of roles and responsibilities required of each individual for the survival and success of homes and societies (Bwakali, 2005).

Yet, a thorough examination of these practices by the current standards renders them discriminatory. For example, socializing boys to be strong, hardworking and wise so as to be able to care and support of their families and socializing girls to be hardworking but submissive, so that they could get good husbands to care for them; in a way robbed them of the initiative and creativity to be self-reliant and independent. This socialization over the course of decades in turn had resulted in women's limited access to resources which, in turn, put them in a weaker position. This means women are not in a position to make decisions on matters that affect their life.

In addition, the fact that men usually make decisions on family and community matters implies that women assume a lower status in a society. In fact, it is not uncommon for people to assume that moves towards gender equality are neither essential, nor urgent in peace building. This paper, however, suggests that the moves towards gender equality are central to the moves towards peace.

1.2 The Nexus between Peace and Gender

Some studies support the peacefulness of societies with less gender discrimination. However, large bodies of literature on inequalities deal with ethnic and religious polarization or economic inequality as sources of violence, ignoring gender inequality as the other sources of violence against women. The literature review revealed that a great number of researches have been undertaken on women's roles and gender relations in family and community

affairs. However, little has been studied about the relations between gender inequality and lack of peace.

The term peace is mostly equated to negative peace i.e. the absence of war and/conflict. However, negative peace is not a useful way of conceiving of peace, in spite of its widespread acceptance amongst governments and international agencies. Such a vague notion does not lead to a clear understanding of what it is that people are trying to promote or achieve in peace building.

All forms of structural inequalities and major social divisions must be removed, or at least minimized to have positive peace, which is to mean that major causes of potential conflict should be removed to achieve positive peace. The key distinction from negative peace is that all forms of structural inequalities and major social divisions are removed, or at least minimized, in positive peace, and, therefore, major causes of potential conflict are removed.

In the context of our discussion, violence is mostly thought of in two ways: first, as direct physical violence. The absence of such violence has been called negative peace. Second, there is a much broader range of violence, including structural, symbolic and cultural violence (Hageman-White, 2001). According to Johan Galtung structural violence exists whenever the potential development of an individual or group is diminished – for example by uneven distribution of power and resources (Galtung 1972, cited in Confortini, 2006). The absence of these more indirect, non-physical types of violence is a precondition for realizing comprehensive visions of positive peace.

Peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men. The nexus between the two can be indicated by using Clasen's "Gendered Peace Index" (Clasen, 2006). The Gendered Peace Index measures the degree of peacefulness of a society based on a process-orientated conception of peace. This means that peace is not a given status or a defined aim, but has to be continuously created through social processes that are open to change. Clasen defines

three conditions for positive peace, which represent a progression from negative peace (i.e. the absence of war) to a culture of peace. Firstly, a secure physical existence for all men and women forms the minimum requirement for peace. This can be measured by a balanced sex-ratio, a low degree of domestic violence and a low degree of public violence. Secondly, the possibility to live a good life must be secured. This can be measured by the degree of gender justice in a society in terms of life expectancy, literacy, schooling, fertility and economic and political participation of women. Thirdly, a plurality of lifestyles and roles forms the last major step towards a culture of peace. This can be measured, for example, by looking at the discrimination of minorities in a given society.

For the purpose of this thesis, the first and the second arguments are very important. It must be noted that it is the traditional patriarchal gender relations that exacerbate domestic violence. Many consider unjust patriarchal gender relations to be a root cause of violence (Reardon 1985; Holland 2006; Peterson/Runyan, 1993). The gendered orders of violence are built through institutions such as the state, the military, the bureaucracy, the educational system and the family (Enloe, 1990). This shows that there is unequal relationship between men and women, boys and girls at all levels. Gender relations within a family are the main concerns of this thesis. This unbalanced gender relations within families is not limited to physical violence against women. It also hinders them not to become fully involved in the matters that concern their lives. For example, women in rural parts of Ethiopia, in most cases do not become involved in decision making processes on matters of reproduction, resources like cattle and agricultural and livestock products. Men and women have different rights and responsibilities in the use and control of agricultural products including livestock resources as well as in decision-making. Such differentials are defined not only by the types of animals but also by the tasks that need to be performed around them. Relatively smaller animals, like poultry, are under the domain of women since they can be kept near the homesteads. On the other hand, it has

been observed in several countries that men are responsible for the larger animals, which include cattle and draught oxen (UNECA, 1991).This observation also holds true in Ethiopia.

Although there may be gender differentials in responsibilities when it comes to production activities around the household, it is clear from the literature that the domestic activities are entirely shouldered by women. Women are responsible for food provision, childcare and household care. In general, labor that consumes much time and labor are rarely shared by men.

When it comes to decision making powers at family level in Ethiopia, in most cases, men are decision makers regarding household resources like livestock, agricultural products and income that is generated from these resources. Some scholars explain the individual's power and influence within the household in terms of their earned income. Women's decision-making power is directly proportional to their earning power, i.e. they have a better standing and say within the household when their contribution to the income is greater. This may be manifested, according to them, in having more powerful women (in terms of decision-making) among the poorer rather than the more prosperous households. From the ongoing discussions, it can be realized that access to and control over household resources form the basis for decision-making.

Women's dependency on men may result in their loss of control over factors of production and eventually the product itself (Tsion and Ayalnesh, 1992). Thus, access to and control of factors of production is an important aspect that has to be closely analyzed when interventions are planned. The simple involvement of women does not necessarily imply gender equality, just as ensuring equality in access to resources does not, by default, ensure control over resources. It, hence, becomes important to analyze gender equality in terms of access to, use and control of resources as well as benefit sharing.

Generally speaking, in order to have a peaceful society, first women should be free of physical violence. Second they must live a good life. According to Clasen (2006), these are the prerequisites for peace to happen. If women are to live good lives, they must have access to and control over resources and be able to decide on these resources. The achievement of peace is inseparable from overcoming social relations of domination and subordination; genuine security requires not only the absence of war but also the elimination of unjust social relations, including unequal gender relations.

1.3 Feminist Theories

Feminism is not a single, easily expressed idea. It has different meanings and interpretations for different groups. Although feminist theories are diverse, their unifying feature is a common desire to enhancing the social role of women. The underlying themes of feminism are, therefore, first, society is characterized by sexual or gender inequality and, second, that this structure of male power can and should be overturned.

A feminist perspective systematically links the domestic and the international realm and addresses unjust gender relations as a root cause of violence (Tickner, 1992). For the purpose of this study, three contrasting feminist traditions can be identified. The first is liberal feminism which began in the 18th and 19th centuries. Throughout its history the liberal feminist movement has been and continues to be focused on eliminating female subordination rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints blocking women's entrance to and success in the public world. They tended to understand female subordination in terms of unequal distribution of rights and opportunities in society (Heywood, 2002).

Liberal Feminism is a form of feminism that works towards the equality between men and women. It generally works in the form

of politics and legal constitution. It works for gender equality and the assertion that women can have the ability to achieve equality. They mainly focus on reproductive and abortion rights, sexual harassment, voting, education, "equal pay for equal work," affordable childcare, affordable health care, and bringing to light the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women. Liberal Feminism differs from other types of feminism because it works to politically change legal standings.

Radical feminists, on the other hand, believe that gender divisions are the most fundamental and politically significant cleavages in the society. They stress that all societies are characterized by patriarchy. Radical feminists, therefore, proclaim the need for a sexual revolution to restructure domestic and family life. As the name indicates, it demands the fundamental change of the existing gender relations. Radical feminists are highly extremists. They portray men as 'the enemy of women' and proclaim the need for women to withdraw from male society in the form of lesbianism.

Socialist feminism focuses on both the public and private spheres of women's lives and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. Socialist feminism is a dualist theory that broadens Marxist feminism's argument for the focuses o role of capitalism in the oppression of women and radical feminism's theory of the role of gender and the patriarchy. Socialist feminists reject radical feminism's main claim that patriarchy is the only source of oppression of women.

Socialist feminism gets some of its ideas from Marxism; specifically a historical materialist point of view, which means that they relate their ideas to the material and historical conditions of people's lives. Those conditions are largely expressed through capitalist and patriarchal relations. However, they reject his idea that class and class struggle are the only defining aspects of understanding the current situation.

Taking the above mentioned limitations of liberal feminists and radical feminists into account, the researcher will use the assumptions of socialist feminist theories to understand the reality on the ground. This is because socialist feminism focuses on both public and domestic spheres of women's lives. This is in line with this study as it also focuses on the family level to deal with women's access to resources and on the public sphere to examine their participation level in decision making at community level.

1.4 International and National Policy Frame Works

International law has framed gender equality as part of a global concern about human rights and basic freedoms for social, economic and political rights. By ratifying the treaties, the state parties commit themselves under international law and are obliged to respect, protect and actively guarantee these human rights. The UDHR adopted in 1948 and other conventions that have since developed have paid attention to addressing gender equality.

The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 (entered into force in 1981) by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes as discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. The Convention defines discrimination against women as "... any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

A further milestone was the outcome document of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Platform for Action. With its 12 strategic areas of critical concern, the Platform is an international political program facilitating the implementation of women's rights and equal opportunities for women. It calls on governments, international organizations and international and national NGOs to take relevant actions. The Declaration identifies violence against women as an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. It includes a focus on combating violence against women as one of its strategic objectives and on promoting the status of women.

Ethiopian government issued, in 1993, the National Policy on Ethiopian Women with the aim of assisting women in the attainment of gender equality throughout the country. This policy document further outlines the numerous strategies for its implementation and the duties and responsibilities of the Women's Affairs Office (WAO), now the MoWA, and Women's Affairs Bureaus (TGE, 1993). However, the policy was found to be ineffective in addressing women's needs.

To identify factors that have negatively affected the effective implementation of the policy, the World Bank together with the women's affairs office, carried out a study in 1998. As per the study, the regional governments were found to be lacking in the necessary capacity to ensure the effective implementation of the policy (WAO and WB, 1998). The second problem was linked to the top-down approach and hierarchical structure of the NPEW, which failed to take into account the real concerns of women at grass root level; were not demand-driven; and were found to be lacking in transparency or accountability to the people (*Ibid*). Additional problems identified by WB / WAO evaluation were the prevalence of cultural practices that denied women their inherent right to land; the denial of justice and the right to a fair trial and the lack of grass roots women's organizations (Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003).

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

2.1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. In this chapter, the data gathered from the study participants were analyzed and discussed. The chapter mainly discussed the gender relations in Berek *Wereda*. It analyzed the place of gender inequality in the study area. The chapter begins with the analysis and discussion of gender issues, which include the gender division of labor, access to and control over household resources in the study area, level of awareness, and attitude of the respondents towards gender roles and women's decision making at family and community levels, the major causes of gender inequality and its impacts on peace in Berek *Wereda*.

2.1.1.1 Household's Attitude towards Gender Roles

For many years, men and women have had different roles and responsibilities. Gender relations are characterized by an unequal balance of power between men and women. This is true both in domestic and public spheres. At the household level, men and women perform different activities. Domestic sphere is usually left for women, especially in the rural parts of Ethiopia. In a similar fashion, women take care of the entire household activities in Berek *Wereda*. They also help men in agricultural activities. Though women participate in field works, men do not share

domestic activities with them. This public-domestic divide has been almost accepted as if it were naturally given. Thus, people in the area believe that this cannot be reversed. The following table indicates the attitude of the respondents towards gender roles in households in the study area;

Table 3.1: The attitude of the respondents towards gender roles

Men's and women's attitude	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
I believe boys should first get the chance to go to school because girls should help their mothers at home. Girls are not good at learning. I It is good if they are married as they may give birth at home.	Male	62	20.26
	Female	53	17.32
I believe girls should first get the chance to go to school.	Male	0	0
	Female	0	0
I treat them equally.	Male	86	28.1
	Female	100	32.68
I do not have children.	Male	2	0.65
	Female	3	0.98
	Total	306	100
Men and women should have different roles because God created us for different purposes.	Male	82	26.8
	Female	60	19.61
I believe men and women should equally participate in all matters.	Male	68	22.22
	Female	96	31.37
	Total	306	100
Being a man, I do not get involved in domestic activities because of culture and the influence of others.	Male	90	29.41
I am involved in domestic activities.	Male	60	19.61
Being a woman, I would not be happy if my husband got involved in domestic activities.	Female	77	25.16
I would be happy if my husband got involved in domestic activities.	Female	57	18.63
I feel nothing.	Female	22	7.19
	Total	306	100

Source: Field Survey, November, 2011

Table 3.1 indicates the attitude of respondents on gender roles. Non participant observations revealed that men and women generally assume different roles in the study area. Quantitative data collected on respondent's perception towards gender roles indicated that among 306 respondents, 20.26% of men and 17.32% women believe that boys should get the first chance to go to school. They constitute 37.58% of the total respondents. They were asked why they give priority for boys. They responded that girls would help their mothers at home. They also assume that girls are not good at education and would not be successful in the end. The other reason for such perception is that both men and women fear if girls are not married early, they give birth at home, which is a great shame for their parents. It has been observed that it is very difficult to break this traditional belief system which has affected the thinking of men and women in the *Wereda* as they are not even willing to listen to us when we go to *kebeles* to create awareness (KI, interview, November, 2011).

Further, 28.1% of male respondents and 32.68% of the female respondents have positive attitude for both girls and boys. 1.63% of the respondents responded that they have no children.

Findings on the other roles that men and women play revealed that 26.8% of male respondents and 19.61% of female respondents firmly believe that men and women should have different gender roles and responsibilities as God created human beings for different purposes. Those survey respondents who think this way are of the opinion that men and women do not have equal capabilities and

talents. Thus, women are capable of performing domestic activities because domestic works are relatively easier when compared to field work. In terms of knowledge, the respondents believe that the knowledge and skills of women are not appropriate for activities that men perform. (FGD-4, FGD-7, FGD-15,FGD-17,2011).

The other justification for unequal treatment of girls and boys, according to the information obtained through focus group discussion, is related to marriage. When boys are ready for marriage, they would not leave the parents' home i.e. they stay at home after marriage. They help their parents even after marriage. Thus, parents assume that girls are not theirs after marriage.

In connection with this, parents also see their female children as sources of income and wealth. When girls get married, the husband and his family are expected to give some amount of money and cattle. Hence, if girls are educated, they may not be married. If they are not married, their parents are going to lose out on the properties mentioned above.

As can be observed from the table above, out of the total sample households, 68 male respondents (22.22%) of the total respondents and 96 male respondents (31.37%) believe in the equality of men and women, irrespective of their sexes. They responded that men and women should equally participate in economic, political and social matters of their respective *kebeles*.

According to focus group discussions and informal discussions held with different people in the study area, even some of the people in their respective *kebeles* who are aware of gender equality are not free from violating the rights of their wives. In addition, as the majority of women do not want to disclose the violations of their rights, men have continued in abusing women's rights (FGD-4, 2011, FGD-10, 2011). Hence, focus group discussants are of the opinion that women themselves are part of the problem.

One of the objectives of this study is to find out if men have begun to involve themselves in domestic activities traditionally left for women, and if not what factors play roles in this regard. Out of 150 male respondents that were included in the study, 90 of them (29.41%) of the total respondents or 60% of male respondents do not involve themselves in domestic activities. The reasons for not becoming involved in such activities are almost the same for all of the respondents. Traditional belief systems, which have passed from generation to generation, have contributed a lot, according to the respondents. FGD-1 is one of the participants in focus group discussions held in Dibdibe-kike *kebele* with men. He was asked why men in general do not become involved in domestic spheres in the study area. He preferred to tell his own story.

> I am usually elected as community leader. Because of this, I am well known at kebele level. Because of my exposure, I usually get a chance to meet the Wereda officials who come to our kebele to create awareness on gender issues. They usually tell me that I have to fight against traditional belief systems that hinder gender equality. Because of this I am well aware of the issues. As a result, I gradually began to help my wife who has been living with me for almost 20 years. I know she is not happy with my plan since she has never seen men who help their wives in domestic work. But I did that purposely to teach my wife and the people around. Most of the time, I fetch water from the river by donkeys. But gradually my status began to decline. I know to what extent I had been respected previously. Now, I have lost that respect and have begun to be excluded. But I will continue on in doing this until the people in my village change their attitudes. It takes time and requires great effort to stop this line of thinking.

This case story tells us that much has to be done to break the attitude of the society in the study area. This in turn implies that women's workloads have not yet decreased. Women do not rest the whole day long. The focus group discussion held with rural women who live in Tulu Korphecha *kebele* proves the above argument.

FGD-7 is one of the 7 female participants in the focus group discussion. She is 53 years old. She lives with her husband and has 8 children. She told me what she does throughout a day.

> I have three female children and five male children. My two daughters were married. The other one is a student. She does not help me much as she always goes to school. The male children were also married. So, I am the only one who takes responsibility for feeding the family .I usually wake up early at 6 am. I make coffee for the family. It takes me about 2 hours to finish the coffee. Then, I go to river or stream to fetch water. This also takes about 2 hours. Next, I prepare dung and collect firewood. Again, this would take about 1 and a half hour, on average. At 11.30 am, I begin to prepare lunch for the family for about 1 and a half hour. At 1 pm, we have lunch and drink coffee for the second time. At this time, my husband might be at the fields working or at community affairs such as resolving conflict, which is something that is common in our area. Thus, I am expected, along with my children, to participate in agricultural activities such as harvesting, weeding and threshing. I continue doing this up to 5 pm. When I come back home from the fields, I and my daughter prepare supper and make coffee until 9pm. I repeat this every day. Therefore, I do not have time to go outside to participate in social and political matters. My husband does not help me because he knows well the influence that comes from the community. I also dislike his involvement in domestic works because in our culture the domestic sphere is left for women.

From the above discussion, it can be roughly concluded that women tend to work longer hours. They work 15 hours a day on average. This implies that not only women's workload have not been decreased but also prevented them from participating in community affairs. The major factors, as I have tried to discuss earlier, are generally related to traditional belief systems that the society has developed in the past. In this regard, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women states that "States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women" (Art. 5, sub Art. a). This shows the existence of gaps between the provision and the practices on the ground.

However, it should not be totally concluded that women do not have roles in exacerbating the problems in this regard. Surprisingly, out of the total sample household respondents, a significant proportion of female respondents do not like their husband's involvement in domestic work. They constitute 25.16% of the total respondents and represent 49.36% of female respondents, which means women themselves are part of the problem in the study area. On the other hand, 18.63% of the respondents, who are females, would be happy and about 7.19% of female respondents, out of the total, are neutral. This means that these women do not force their husbands to be involved in domestic work. They also do not have any objection to their partner's involvement if they are willing to do so.

Table 3.2. Household level division of labour (activities)

Activities	Who does the work	Percentage
Food preparation	Male spouse	1.31
	Female spouse	90
	Female children	8.69
	Total	100
House cleaning	Male spouse	0
	Female spouse	82.32
	Female children	17.68
Fetching water and collecting fire wood	Male spouse	2.56
	Female spouse	79.8
	Total	100
	Female children	14.11
	Male children	3.53
	Total	100
Child carrying	Male spouse	1.56
	Female spouse	68.07
	Female children	26.14
	Male children	4.23
	Total	**100**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2011

The study examined the involvement of household members in domestic activities. The findings of the study indicated that 90% of women engage in food preparation. Only 1.31% of men respondents help their female partners in this regard. Female children engage in food preparation. Nearly 82.32% of female spouses clean their houses with no involvement from men at all. Female children also help their mothers in cleaning the house. However, the engagement of female children decreased from time to time as they go to school these days.

Fetching water and collecting firewood are also the responsibilities of women. About 78.8% of the labor in carrying out these activities is provided by women. The rest is covered by female children, male children and men who constitute 14.11%, 3.53% and 2.56%, respectively. Similarity, 68.07% of women are responsible for child carrying. Female children also play greater roles (26.14%). This also disagrees with the CEDAW. The Convention advocates, in article 5, ''a proper understanding of maternity as a social function", demanding fully shared responsibility for child-rearing by both sexes. In line with this, it is stated that "to ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases" (article 5, sub article b).

Insignificant proportion of male children and men, 4.23% and 1.56%, respectively, engage in child carrying when women go to the market, fetch water and collect firewood. But the convention demands that both men and women are equally responsible for taking care of their children. From the data presented above, it can be observed that the traditional division of labor has not been changed so far. Women are still mainly responsible for domestic tasks.

Table 4.3. Household members division of agricultural activities

Who does the work	Percentage				
	Husband	Wife	Male children	Female children	Total
Land preparation for crops	90	5	5	0	100
Seed preparation	78.6	21.4	0	0	100
Sowing	89.22	0	11.78	0	100
Weeding	28		33	23	16
Applying pesticides	81	0	19	0	100
Harvesting	60.77	13.27	20.06	5.9	100
Threshing	51	9	33	7	100
Selling grain	59.56	41.44	0	0	100
Buying and selling animals	96.51	3.49	0	0	100
Milking animals	0	86.34	0	13.66	100
Milk processing	82.5	17.5	0	0	100
Selling milk products	0	99.11	0	0.89	100
Dung preparation	0	90	0	10	100

Source: Field Survey, November, 2011

NB: The figures in the above table represent percentages

When it comes to involvement of household members in agricultural activities, men usually perform the majority of the work. Table 4.3 indicates that 90% of the land preparation for crop is the responsibility of men, who are also assisted by their wives and male children in the field. Men prepare the land and follow the production process until the grain is harvested. Women and female children also take part in crop agriculture in some activities. It is only in applying pesticides and sowing seeds that women do not participate as indicated in the table above.

Even though men do not become involved in domestic activities, which are considered as duties of women, the study findings indicated that women actively participate in agricultural activities such as land preparation, seed preparation, weeding, harvesting, and threshing.

On the other hand, milking cows, milk processing and dairy products are the duties of women and girls. This implies that the tasks that were previously considered women's tasks are still under the domain of women. The buying and selling larger animals is still controlled by men (96.51%). Very few women have taken up this activity (3.49%). Even then most of the women that are allowed to purchase and sell larger animals are widows.

The results of the study showed that in female headed households, the female spouse is responsible for the major activities. The widows are assisted by their male children until these males are married. After the marriage of male children, it has been observed that the female spouses employ labor to implement activities that are otherwise attended by the husband. The purchase and the sale of larger animals, which are the responsibility of men in the male headed households, is mainly the responsibility of females in the female-headed households.

In short, labor division follows the traditional pattern in the study area. Domestic jobs which are generally perceived as "women's jobs" still receive little attention from men. In contrast, women perform a number of tasks at home. In addition, they also engage in certain agricultural activities.

2.1.1.2 Access to and Control over Household Resources

Table 3.4. Status of household members access to and control over household resources

Household resources	Percentage					
	Husband	**Wife**	**Both**	**Husband**	**Wife**	**Both**
House	0.0	0.0	100	47.71	16.67	36.6
Household items	2.61	13.4	83.99	41.5	13.07	45.43
Land	10.46	4.9	84.64	43.79	11.44	44.77
Grain	10.77	6.29	82.94	41.33	12.63	46.04
Vegetables	1.31	13.07	85.62	6.67	53.9	39.43
Dairy cows	4.28	12.09	83.63	42.9	17.04	40.06
Dairy products	1.96	54.25	43.79	1.34	95.36	3.3
Cattle	18.56	9.04	72.4	77.33	2.69	19.8
Sheep	29.77	2.9	67.33	79.96	3.44	16.6
Poultry	1.63	59	39.37	4.3	89.6	6.1
Training	87.3	10.1	2.6	89.11	7.7	3.13
Credit	10.55	3.34	86.11	93.34	0.96	5.7
Income generated from:						
Grain	10.7	5.2	83.83	34.5	4.57	60.93
Dairy products	2.67	58.3	39.03	91.54	3.44	5.02
Cattle	21.37	7.3	71.33	85.6	10.4	4
Sheep	33.34	3.8	62.86	86.7	6.34	6.96
Poultry	2.3	65	32.7	5.6	88.8	5.6
Vegetable	4.5	14.5	79	7.68	55.57	36.75
Hide and skin	89.3	1.96	8.74	98.11	1.3	0.59

Source: Field Survey, November, 2011

NB: the figures in the table above represent percentages

One of the main four components of Harvard analytical framework that is used to analyze gender equality at household level is the state of access and control profile (Habtamu, 2009). This is used to examine who controls the use and benefits of resources. In line with this, the study identified the status of both gender in their relative access to and control over household resources.

The survey results on access to and control over specified resources indicated that men and women have access to these resources. However, a closer examination revealed that men enjoy better access to some of the resources. The reverse is also true i.e. in some cases women enjoy better access to some other resources. The principle is that resources belong to both the husband and wife. This trend has been observed on certain resources though there are areas whereby women have lesser access to resources.

Quantitative data collected on access to resources reveal that both the husband and wife have equal access to the house they live in. Qualitative information obtained through focus group discussions in the three sample *kebeles* reflected that even upon separation, the wife claims the house and it can be equally shared between the two (FGD-5, 2011, FGD-10, 2011, and FGD-14, 2011). Another focus group discussion held with other women groups, however, reflected that upon divorce women do not usually live in the house they shared because they fear that their husbands would beat them (FGD-8, 2011, FGD-11, 2011). Since they do not want to live in a hostile environment, women either go to their parent's homes or to nearby cities and/or towns. About 47.71% of the male participants exercise control over their houses. 16.67% of the participants responded that they decide on the issue of the house they live in. The rest 36.6% of respondents claim that mattes related to house are commonly decided.

On the issues of household items which include axe, stove, the materials used to fetch water; almost both the husband and wife have equal access (83.99%), which means they can use these resources commonly.

In terms of control over these resources, men control 41.5% while women have only 13.07% share in control of the household resources. The information obtained from focus group discussions generally revealed that there are household items like axes which cannot be lent to the neighbors without the permission of the husband (FGD-2, 2011). There are also certain materials like, pail, vat, frying pan, pan, cutting board etc. which are exclusively controlled by women and cannot be lent without the permission of females. About 45.43% of the household resources are controlled commonly by both men and women.

Findings on the access to and control over land indicated that more or less men and women have equal access to land(84.64%); and 44.77% of the matters related to land is commonly decided. About 41.5% of the sample households responded that land is controlled by wives. It is interesting to realize that among survey respondents who responded that land is controlled by the wife, the majority of them are female headed households.

Quantitative data collected on the access to and control over agricultural out puts indicated that 82.94% of the husband and wife have common access to grain, 85.62% access to vegetable,83.63% access to dairy 78.79% access to plough oxen, 72.4% access to cattle, 67.33% access to sheep, 39.37% access to poultry, 2.6% access to training and 86.11% access to credit. The percentages above clearly show that on many resources both men and women have mutual access to different agricultural outputs (resources). Men have almost exclusive access to some resources. These include, for example, training to which women have less access (2.6%), whereas men have more access to training (87.3%). Further information was obtained on this issue through the focus group discussions with rural women which indicated that if there are training opportunities, women are not informed by their husbands (FGD-9, 2011, FGD-19, 2011). Thus, it can be observed that women have low access to information as they do not usually participate in public issues.

On the other hand, men have less access to poultry (1.63%), and dairy products such as butter and cheese (1.96%). A closer examination revealed that men do not usually ask and even talk in some households about milk products as this holds great shame for them. As a result, women have more access (59%) to poultry and 54.25% access to dairy products.

It can be observed from table 4.4 that the traditional general patterns of resource control still prevail. Women exercise control over dairy products (95.36%), poultry (89.6%), and vegetables (53.9%). Similar traditional trends can be observed in the resource control patterns by men. They generally control large animals like plough oxen (68.99%), and other cattle (77.33%), sheep (79.96%), training (89.311%), and credit (93.34%). At this point, it is interesting to explain how this works. Women have traditionally had a lower say regarding the above mentioned resources. For example, if the issue of selling or purchasing large animals arises, women leave the decisions for men. This is the result of the customary belief system. Male focus group discussions and non participant observations revealed that if women go to the market to sell or purchase sheep or other large animals, no one buys from her or sells her the sheep or the animals; as the buyers suspect that she might have stolen the animals from her husband. This is mainly because participating in such activities (sale of large animals) was never the domain of women (FGD-6, 2011).

When it comes to control over benefits such as training and credit, women are often largely excluded. In the case of credit, for example, it is men who sign to take the credit, but the credit is jointly repaid. The information obtained from the *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office further reflected that in some cases, women are informed later after the credit is collected by the husband (KI-3, 2011). This stems from customary beliefs of general roles allocated.

Men and women have more or less equal access to and control over income generated from agricultural products, which includes

income from livestock. In some cases, they have different access to and control over income. As already cited above, both men and women have access to grain (83.83%), vegetables (79%), cattle (71.33%), and sheep (62.86%). In terms of control over these resources, variations have been observed in percentages. The data indicated that men usually exercise control over income generated from grain (34.5%), cattle (85.6%), and sheep (86.7%), hides and skins (98.11%), while women have much lesser say on these resources.

Control is mainly reserved for the wives on incomes generated from dairy products (91.54%) poultry (88.8%) and vegetables (55.57%).

2.1.1.3 Decision making at the Household Level

Table 3.5. Degree of resource related decision making at household level

Activities	Decision makers		
	Male spouse	Female spouse	Commonly decided
Deciding on the type of grains to be produced	67.63	12.34	20.03
Type of crop to be consumed	16.31	78.43	5.26
Type of the crop to be sold	59.73	3.87	36.4
Sale of animal products	5.17	11.44	83.39
Purchase of agricultural inputs	90.1	0.63	9.36
Sale of grain	13.12	8.89	77.99
Sale of vegetables	4.59	49.54	45.87
Types of livestock to be purchased	86.23	11.69	2.08
Sale of poultry	2.98	93.51	3.51
Sale of cattle	87.22	11.33	1.45
Sale of sheep	78.98	7.32	13.7
Deciding on the number of children	ND	ND	20.23
Deciding on the marriage of children	5.31	3.15	91.54
Taking credit for common purpose	88.24	6.34	5.42

Source: Field survey, November, 2011

NB: The figures in the above table represent percentages
ND: Implies no decision

Men and women have different sources of income, as they engage in different economic activities. Women usually earn less money, which results in their dependency on men, which can negatively affect their decision making power.

Quantitative data collected on men's and women's involvement in decision making on the amount of agricultural products to be produced reveal that 67.63% of the sample households responded that the husband decides by himself, 20.03% women decide jointly with their husbands and the rest 12.34% decisions are made by female spouses.

Meanwhile, data collected on the type of crop to be consumed by the household reflects that 78.43% of the decisions are made by female spouses, 16.31% of them are decided by the husband and 5.26% of decisions are jointly made by the husband and wife. Out of the total survey respondents, 59.73% responded that male spouses decide on the type of crop to be sold, 36.4% of them decided commonly and 3.78% decisions are made by the female spouses. Whereas 11.44% of the women decide on the sale of animal products, the share of the husband is 5.17%. The rest 83.39% of the decisions are made commonly.

Decisions related to the purchase of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, special seed, and pesticide control are almost always reserved for men (90.1%), while 9.36% of the decisions are commonly made. Women's share is only 0.63%. Men usually make decisions on the types of livestock to be purchased (86.23%), sale of cattle (87.22%), sale of sheep (78.98%) and taking credit for common purposes. Women, on the other hand, are better decision makers on the sale of poultry (93.51%), and the sale of vegetables (49.54%). The sale of animal products, in general, is jointly decided. About 83.39% of the households commonly decide on the sale of animal products, including dairy products. Men are active in selling hides and skins. Thus, it can be said both of them have equal shares in this regard. The sale of grain is also a matter of common decision (77.99%). About 91.54% of the households commonly decide on the marriage of children. In fact, children do not take part in the decision making process regarding their own marriages.

In general, men usually decide on agricultural products like deciding on the sale and purchase of larger animals, purchase of agricultural inputs, type of crop to be purchased or sold, and taking credit for common purposes. By contrast women are more involved on matters regarding the types of grain to be consumed by the household, sale of vegetables and sale of poultry. Some matters related to sale of hide and skins, sale of grain, and deciding on the marriage of children are issues of joint decisions.

The issue of specifying the number of children is not a matter of discussion in the study area. Only 20.23%, among whom the majority are young, newly married respondents talk about this matter. The rest responded that they never talk about how many children they should have. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, children are seen as property of and gifts from God. Thus, they do not want to interfere in God's affairs. Second, talking about the number of children and trying to use pregnancy control is a taboo. According to the key informant interview, both men and women believe that marriage grants men unconditional sexual

access to their wives; they cannot refuse sex to their husbands. Indeed, both men and women believe that women's role is to satisfy all the needs of her husband - a man must get whatever he wants (KI-2, interview, 2011).

The study examined the extent to which women are involved in decision making processes, as well as matters that are purely the domain of either of the spouses. In this regard, some differences have been observed in female headed households and male headed households. Female spouses are the sole decision makers in almost all matters in female-headed households. In contrast, joint decision making has not reached the required level in male headed households. It has been observed from the quantitative data that there are many issues on which men make almost all decisions. There are also certain matters, which are reserved to be decided by women.

Qualitative information was obtained from the focus group discussions held with rural women on their involvement in decision making on land. It reflects that women in the male headed households have little say on the types of crops to be produced, types of crops to be sold or purchased and on the purchase of specific agricultural inputs (Women FGD, 2011). One of the discussant further explained that women in the area are not consulted on matters related to land (FGD-13, 2011). For example, she said that the husbands rarely discuss leasing out land even though they know that land is commonly owned.

2.1.1.4 Participation of Households in Community Affairs and Decision making at Community Level

Table 3.6. Level of household's participation in community matters and community decision making

Activities	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
I always participate in community affairs, like meetings.	Male	80	26.14
	Female	46	15.03
I sometimes participate.	Male	53	17.32
	Female	46	15.03
I rarely participate.	Male	12	3.93
	Female	28	9.15
I never participate.	Male	5	1.63
	Female	36	11.77
	Total	306	100
I give opinions in meetings.	Male	49	16.01
	Female	41	13.4
I do not give opinions at all.	Male	17	5.56
	Female	83	27.12
I present my problem.	Male	32	10.46
	Female	13	4.25
I influence decision making.	Male	26	8.5
	Female	12	3.91
I usually take leadership roles.	Male	26	8.5
	Female	7	2.29
	Total	306	100
I participate in kebele administration system as a leader or committee member.	Male	106	34.64
	Female	35	11.44
I never participate in the administration system.	Male	44	14.38
	Female	121	39.54
	Total	**306**	**100**

Source: Field survey, November, 2011

The overall data reveal that decision making at household level still follows along traditional patterns. Matters that are related to household, poultry and dairy products, child carrying are entirely women's duties. The data also confirmed that the other activities outside of the home are generally decided by men. To better understand the extent to which women have been empowered in Berek *Wereda*, it is important to consider decision making not only at the household level but also at community level.

As indicated in table 4.6 above, quantitative data collected on women's participation in community affairs indicated that 26.14% of the respondents who constitute 53.33% of male respondents always attend meetings, while 15.03% who constitute 29.49% of the total female respondents attend meetings.

Among those who responded that they sometimes attend meetings, 17.32% of the total respondents (35.33% of male) respondents are men, whereas 15.07% of the respondents (29.49% of female) are women. As indicated in the table, only 5.56% of males rarely or never attend meetings, while 20.92% rarely participate or do not participate at all. Various reasons have been identified as to why women do not take part in community affairs. According to the key informant interview, women's low participation in community activities and community decision making process is mainly attributed to the burden of household chores, which means that they do not have the time to participate in community affairs (KI-3, 2011). The interviewee further explained that this low participation is due to cultural reasons which do not allow women to go outside of their home. The majority of men participants believe that, women should not attend meetings as they have many responsibilities at home.

The data collected through the questionnaires showed that 16.04% men and 13.4% women who participate in meetings give opinions at the meetings. It can be observed from the figures that the percentage of women who give their opinions is less than the

percentage of the men participants. A large proportion of women (27.12%) of the total respondents do not give any opinions at all. By contrast, only 5.56% of men do not give their opinions at meetings. Thus, it can be observed that the level of women's participation is lower than that of the men's in Berek *Wereda*.

The level of participation can also be measured in terms of problem presentation. The percentage of women who explain their problems in meetings is less than that of men, 4.25% and 10.46%, respectively. On the other hand, most women attend meetings without influencing decisions or taking on leadership roles. Only 3.4% and 2.29% of women influence decision making and take on leadership roles, respectively. By contrast, men are in a better position to influence decisions (8.5%) and to take on leadership roles (8.5%) as compared to women participants.

The focus group discussions revealed that women are not expected to speak in meetings as this is culturally forbidden and is seen as shameful to her husband (FGD-1, 2011, FGD-13, 2011). As per the discussions, if women have something to say, they are expected to convey the message through their husbands before the meeting or when they are in the meeting. So, the above discussion indicates that women's participation in community affairs is lower when compared to men's. This too contradicts the UN convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Article 4, sub article2 (f) of the convention demands women's participation in all community activities.

Women's low level of involvement can also be explained in terms of their level of participation in *kebeles* administration system as leaders or committee numbers. Only 11.44% of women participate in *kebeles* administration system as leaders or committee members. This shows the very low level of women's participation when compared to 34.64% men, who are actively involved in such affairs.

Survey findings further reveal that 39.54% of women (of total respondents) have never participated in the administration system of their respective *kebele*. This constitutes 77.56% of women who filled in the questionnaire. The figure shows to what extent women are marginalized and excluded from participating in community issues. Their exclusion and marginalization reflect the dominance of patriarchal cultures in the study area, which put women in subordinate positions. Nonetheless, it cannot be concluded that all the 77.56% of women have been excluded as there are also 14.38% of men who never participated in administration system at *kebeles* level. This can be attributed, for example to a lack of interest. What can be surely concluded is that the number of women who participate in *kebeles* administration system is relatively lower than the number of men participants. Findings further indicated that low access to information and cultural pressures affected women not to take part in community affairs.

This study applied the Harvard analytical frame work to collect data at the community level (at *kebele* levels). The researcher applied three main components i.e. the activity profile to examine who does what, access and control profile to know who has access to and control over household resources and the influencing factors that affect gender relations. However, the Harvard analytical framework does not include about who decides on what. Thus, the study applied the women's empowerment framework, which introduces five hierarchal levels of equality that evolve from welfare to access, conscientisation, and participation and finally control.

As it was defined in the first chapter, welfare refers to women's material welfare relative to men in terms of having equal access to resources and benefits, examples being income and medical care. This study identified that women have unequal access to income and medical care except in some cases.

Women do not have equal access to factors of production such as land, and benefits such as training and credit when compared to men. This shows that there is a discrepancy between the legal provisions and the practical situation in the study area. The UN CEDAW states that women have the right to obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency. Women are also less aware about gender roles.

The women's empowerment framework considered participation at household and community levels. Accordingly, the study identified that women's participation in decision making at household levels and at community level is very low. Though women are involved in decision making on certain issues, men mostly dominate the decision making process in the households. Men also dominate women in exercising control over resources and in control over and benefits.

2.2 The Nexus between Gender and Peace

Generally speaking, gender and peace are highly related to each other as explained in the literature review chapter. Gendered socialization processes are fundamental to war and peace. UN Security Council Resolution 1325(2000) recognizes that peace cannot be sustained unless women have an equal and active role in formulating political, economic and social policies. Without women's full participation in peace processes, there can be no justice or sustainable development in the reconstruction of societies. Therefore, empowering women to participate in the peace processes is essential to create sustainable peace. They cannot contribute in this regard if their equality is not ensured. Ensuring the equality of men and women and the protection and promotion of human rights of women are essential to sustainable democracy,

and to security and stability. Active participation of women in economic development process, reducing poverty, improving health and sustaining environment would lead to improved human security. This is to mean that improving women's status and conditions leads to stabilized society which implies peace. However, as long as power imbalances and unequal distribution of resources between men and women remain unaddressed, there can be no lasting peace. Divorces that result from domestic violence against women break down families and causes social insecurity. This study indentified that Berek *Wereda* has been suffering from gender inequality, which has also negatively affected peace in the *Wereda*. The study attempted to examine whether this gender inequality has been improved in the past five years in the study area. The majority of the sample households responded that gender inequality has not been improved in the past five years as it is indicated in the figure below.

Figure 1. Status of g   last 5 years
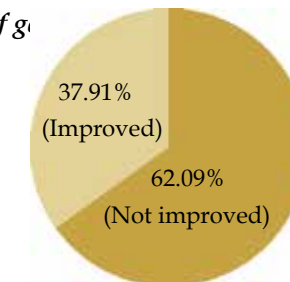
Source: Field survey, November, 2011

The above figure indicates that out of the total sample households, 62.09% responded that gender inequality has not improved over the last five years. On the other hand, 37.91% of the sample households believe that gender inequality has been improved.

The respondents attributed the low status of women to men's negative attitudes towards women, lack of awareness, and women's lack of confidence to expose men, low level of income, and cultural pressures.

Table 3.7. The nexus between gender inequality and peace.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
It is violation of women's right	9	4.74
Loss of confidence	20	10.53
Restricts their participation in economic, political and social spheres	60	31.58
Results in intra households conflict	61	32.11
Breaks the family and causes social instability	42	33.11
Total	190	100

Source: Field survey, November, 2011

The above table indicates how gender inequality affected peace in Berek *Wereda*. Accordingly, 32.11% of those who responded that gender inequality has not been improved also indicated that gender inequality resulted in intra household conflicts. About 31.58% of them further responded that gender inequality restricted women's participation in economic, political and social issues that may affect their lives. Meanwhile about 22.11% of the respondents explained that gender inequality resulted in breaking up families and finally causes social instability. The rest 10.53% and 4.74% of the respondents explained that gender inequality results in women's loss of confidence and violation of their rights, respectively. Hence, based on the above responses and situational observation, it can be said that there is a connection between gender inequality and conflict. In this sense, the study identified the intensity of intra-household conflicts.

Table 4.8 .The intensity of intra-household conflict

Violence	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Have you ever been in conflict with your husband/wife?	Yes	192	62.75
	No	114	37.25
	Total	306	100
Causes of the conflict	Drinking	60	19.61
	Lack of trust	30	9.8
	House management	30	9.8
	Lack of control over resources	40	13.07
	Lack of awareness	32	10.46
	Total	192	62.75
Mechanism of conflict resolution	Traditional(by elders)	197	64.38
	By discussion	106	34.64
	By Court	3	0.98
	Total	306	100
I consider such practice as	Correct	38	12.42
	Wrong	268	87.58
	Total	306	100
Are there divorce cases in your area?	Yes	149	48.69
	No	157	51.31
	Total	306	100
Causes of the divorces	Disagreement on personal issues	100	32.68
	Lack of trust	60	19.61
	Beating	82	26.8
	We got married without our consent	64	20.91
	Total	306	100

Source: Field survey, November, 2011

The above table displays to what extent women's human rights are violated in the family. Survey respondents were asked whether or not they have experienced conflict in their families. According to the survey result, 62.75% of the sample households have engaged in conflict. While another 37.25% of them do not usually engage in such intra-household conflict. The figures imply the extent to which women's rights are greatly abused or violated, which means women are not physically secure. Intra-household conflicts usually involve beating women in the study area. This can be linked to Clasen's first precondition of peace which requires a secure physical existence for all men and women. According to Clasen, this can be measured by a balanced sex-ratio, a low degree of domestic violence, and a low degree of public violence, which is the minimum requirement for peace as it has been discussed in the literature review chapter above.

The interpersonal conflicts between husband and wife have different factors. Among those who have responded that they have experienced interpersonal conflicts, 31.25% of men (which constitutes 19.61% of the total respondents) beat their wives as a result of drinking. This is not only the violation of women's rights but also negatively affects the household income.

At the beginning of this chapter, it was indicated that 8.12% of men's income is spent for recreation, which is explained in terms of drinking. This in turn leads the members of the family to poverty. About 9.8% of those who engage in conflict responded that their conflict is caused by a lack of trust.

Information obtained from the focus group discussions further revealed that the majority of women in the area are married without their consent (Women FGD, 2011). The parents are still the decision makers on the issue of marriage. This is against the UN Convention on gender equality which states under its article 16, sub article 1(a-d), that "States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and, in particular, shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: the same right to enter into marriage; the same right to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent; the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution."

All the female participants exposed that all of them have passed through the tradition whereby women do not have the right to freely choose their spouse. They responded that some of the girls are not allowed to know/see their future husband before marriage. According to the female focus group discussions (2011), after entering into marriage in this way, they do not trust each other as they did not know each other before marriage which becomes the cause of distrust.

On the other hand, about 9.8% of the survey respondents mentioned that their conflict is generally related to different issues on house management. As it was already discussed above to a greater extent, women do not control their own resources. This is the other reason for the interpersonal conflict between husbands and wives. About 13.07% of those who are engaged in conflicts responded that the cause of their conflicts emanates from lack of control over resources.

A lack of awareness also plays a role in this regard. About 10.46% of the respondents said that their conflict results from a lack of awareness. What makes this intra household conflict even worse is that it is hidden in nature in the sense that all the abuses of women's human rights are not reported to the police or to the courts. Only a very low proportion of the sample households, (0.98%) take their cases to the courts. The reasons for such silence are mainly related to fear. Women believe it is "normal" or they fear that making it public will result in further harm to them. FGD-16 is a female FGD participant who lives in Dabe Muda *kebele*. She is 37 years old. She was asked if she reports violation of rights by her husband to the police or to the courts. At the beginning she hesitated but finally agreed to tell her story.

My husband is not hard working. I tell him to work hard to change our life. He always drinks and beats me rather than going to the field working. He has another wife in another *kebele*. I know this very well. Due to this we do not trust each other. The result is always disagreement and conflict. The next day, we would take our case to the nearby elders "Jaarsa Biyyaa" to solve our problems. We are expected to invite the elders so that they see our case. We have to buy two or more litters of alcohol, which costs at least 60 birr. We do this at least once in three months. But minor disagreements and insulting, which are not exposed to our neighbors, are always there. I do prefer not to take my case to court. I fear that the next day my husband will beat me. I must leave my family to do so. But I do not want to break up my family either. Second, I believe that I will not get an immediate solution from the courts. Men usually consider women as inferior in this area. Since women accepted this as a fact, we often do not expose them (FGD-1, 2011).

The above discussion indicates the degree of violations of women's rights in the family. Although the degree varies, almost all the focus group discussions held with rural men and women in the study area revealed that they have experienced inter personal conflict with their husbands/wives.

Quantitative data collected from the respondents are also in agreement with the information obtained through the focus group discussions. About 64.38% of the survey respondents use traditional conflict resolution mechanism .i.e. they solve their problems by elders. This does not concern women. Women are not involved in traditional conflict resolution process. This implies that women are excluded from social affairs in many cases.

On the other hand, about 34.64% of the respondents solve their problems by discussion. Only 0.98% of the sample households responded that they report their problems to the police or to the courts.

The fact that conflicts are traditionally handled is good in the sense that it reduces the costs of conflict resolution and saves time. However, it prevents women from exposing domestic violence. Like most other members of the community, elders lack the knowledge and awareness about the law and its enforcement. In addition, elders are also the products of their society, which has influenced them in terms of culture, customs/traditions and social norms and forces them to give decision in favor of the husband. According to the local culture, women are not expected to take their cases to the courts in the presence of elders because elders must be respected. If a women did so, she would be excluded from the community as her assertion will be presented as violation of cultural norms (KI-1, 2011, FGD-20, 2011).

Even though the majority of the respondents believe that beating women is wrong, they are not free from committing such kinds of crimes. Surprisingly, some proportion of survey respondents (12.42%) believe that beating women is correct. The information obtained from the focus group discussions further revealed that beating women is correct because women tend not to respect their husbands if they are not beaten (FGD-17, 2011, FGD-18, 2011). This indicates the extent to which this perception plays in exacerbating women's rights violation. This in turn leads to personal and social instability. About 48.69% of the survey respondents responded that there are divorce cases in their respective *kebele*. They indicated that disagreements on personal issues (32.68%), lack of trust (19.61%), beating (26.8%), and marriage without consent (20.91%) are the major reasons for such divorces.

Generally speaking, perception and traditional ways of handling conflict have played a great role in exacerbating violations of women's human rights, which implies policies and conventions on the paper are not properly implemented on the ground in the study area. Traditional ways of division of labor have not been improved. Thus, men usually work in the fields while women take

care of the household activities. Breaking such traditions, have proved to be a big challenge.

If women's rights are violated, they will lose confidence to fully participate in political, social and economic activities. If women do not engage in socio-economic and political affairs, it means there is inequality which may lead to intra household conflicts. In line with this, gender inequality has resulted in intra-household conflict which shows the nexus between gender and peace. Gender inequality has negatively affected peace in Berek *Wereda*. Because of unequal distribution of income, rights and benefits, women may lose confidence which means they are not encouraged to participate in their own affairs. This in turn leads to a situation where in women and in fact the whole society lives in poverty and under development. The result of all those issues can be hopelessness, a sense of unfairness and lack of social justice which provides a fertile ground for further conflict at regional level; this loophole can be exploited by individuals and groups with the desire to cause conflict at regional or country level.

In addition, there are divorce cases which force women to emigrate to nearby cities and towns where they can also be exposed to sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV/AIDS. This in turn leads to social instability, which implies an absence of peace and stability.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.1 Conclusion

This study was conducted with the objective to indicate the magnitude of the gap between legal instruments, in relation to gender equality, and their implementation on the ground in Berek *Wereda* and to show how this affects peace in the study area. To achieve this objective, the study covered major issues of interest and analyzed them. These include; the attitude of men and women towards gender roles, the dynamics of the intra-household division of labor, men's and women's access to and control over household resources and benefits as well as participation of men and women in decision-making at the household and community levels.

The study indicated that men and women have different roles and responsibilities in the study area. In line with this, the literature reviewed reveals that having access to and control over resources and benefits like income and other opportunities lead women to gain a higher status in the family and in the society. After all, it is only when women are released from heavy and time consuming domestic work that they can participate in the national development efforts on equal terms with men and go on to experience the benefits of their participation.

Though, a number of treaties on the protection of women were drafted since the Second World War, and proclaim equal rights for men and women and ban discrimination on the grounds of sex, women's equal right have not yet been ensured in most settings. International women's rights have not yet become

effective domestic norms. The current study analyzed the status of women in Berek *Wereda* against the UN CEDAW (1981), the FDRE Constitution (1995), and the NPEW (1993). However, assessment of the conditions of rural women in the study area indicated the existence of huge gaps between these legal instruments and their implementation on the ground to successfully address existing community gender biases on women's access to and control over household resources and their decision making.

This investigation has identified factors that affect women's involvement in community activities including decision-making and their access to and control over household resources. The major factors identified by the study include; the traditional belief systems that treat women as inferior in the society, the traditional unjust patriarchal gender relations, lack of awareness, lack of control over resources, low level of income, and women's lack of confidence to disclose men's domination and violation of rights to the organs which are in charge of implementing the legal instruments on gender issues. These in turn resulted in domestic violence, unequal relationship between the two sexes, and forced them to assume different roles and responsibilities. These gender differences have led men and women not only to have different rights of access and control over household resources but also different spheres of decision making power in Berek *Wereda*.

The findings of the study showed that even though men and women have access to resources, men enjoy more access to some of the household resources and to the income generated from these resources. A closer examination identified that there is huge gap between men and women in terms of control over resources. For example, women do not exercise control over many resources except in the cases of dairy products (95.36%), poultry (89.6%) and vegetables (53.9%). When it comes to the control patterns of men, they generally control large animals like plough oxen (68.99%), and other cattle (77.33%), sheep (79.96%), training (89.311%), and credit (93.34%).

It has been observed from the quantitative data that there are many issues on which men exclusively give decisions. The study also identified that women's participation on community matters is still very low in the study area. Therefore, it can be concluded that the traditional control pattern still prevails. The patriarchal system in which men are the sole decision makers has continued to exist in the study area. Women have lower status and little say, both at family and community levels. Because of this, they have become subordinate to men.

According to the findings of this study, implementation of the legal instruments on gender relations in the study area has not fully achieved policy aims in women's access to and control over resources system. It is only if these legal instruments remove the existing barriers that hinder women's equal access to and control over resources that their participation at all levels can be ensured. Only when this happens can it be said that the instruments have been effectively implemented and have achieved the policy aims.

This study further indicated the link between gender inequality and absence of peace. The nexus between negative peace and gender inequality is explained in terms of the prevalence of intra-household conflict. The results of the study showed that 62.75% of the households have experienced intra-household conflict, which implies the nexus between gender inequality and negative peace. As it was discussed in chapter two, positive peace requires that all forms of structural inequalities and major social divisions are removed, or at least minimized, and therefore major causes of potential conflict are removed. The absence of structural violence which is indirect, non-physical violence is a precondition for positive peace. In this sense, this study concluded the prevalence of discrimination against women and their exclusion from participation in community matters and decision making at home as well as controlling property in the family. These are the potential causes of future conflict if not properly addressed. This implies the nexus between gender inequality and lack of positive peace.

3.1.2 Recommendations

This study clearly showed the existence of gender disparities in controlling household resources, in decision making and in participating in community affairs in Berek *Wereda*. The study also identified the contributing factors to gender inequality in the study area which need to be removed on order to ensure gender equality. To this end, the following recommendations present options for policy implications and practical interventions by the stakeholders so as to improve the implementation of the legal instruments, and thereby women's statuses in the area. Hence, based on the study findings, the following basic recommendations are forwarded.

Creating sustainable awareness and carrying out advocacy programs: addressing socio-economic issues like customs and traditional belief systems is a precondition to ensure women's equal access to and control over resources as well as to promote their participation in their own affairs. Therefore, mechanisms should be designed to gradually change the traditional biased attitudes and practices that hinder women's participation and owning and controlling resources through advocacy and awareness creation programs. *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office, NGOs working in the *Wereda* on gender issues, schools and parents should play critical roles in changing the attitudes of the society in the study area.

Families have to teach their children about gender equality: because men's deep rooted negative and biased attitude towards women is the major factor contributing to gender inequality in the study area. This is not something that can be changed overnight since it is the outcome of a socialization process. In the process of bringing up children, parents expect boys to learn and to become self-reliant, while girls are expected to become good wives, obedient and dependent as a result of socialization process. Thus, it is recommended that parents, particularly mothers, should teach their children about equality at anearly age. Parents should treat their children equally.

This study recommends exposing domestic violence. According to the findings of the study, most of the domestic violence and violation of women's rights are hidden. Women do not want to tell about abuses of their rights to a third party because they are not sure that the same action will not be repeated the next day. Women are not willing to disclose this issue even to their neighbors, let alone reporting it to the courts or to the police. Thus, it is recommended that continuous awareness creation has to be conducted. It is important to teach women and the neighbors so that they can expose the injustices done against women in the family. To this end, the *kebeles*' administration systems, community leaders and the *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office should take on the responsibility of teaching the society and of exposinf violence against women as they are closer to the people.

It is recommended that small legal institutions be established at *kebele* level so that women can have access to legal services. Women have to get legal advices in their areas as they cannot go beyond their localities as a result of low income levels. This can be achieved by training community leaders and women's representatives in their respective *kebele* so that they can look at the case or take it to the court on behalf of women. In addition, it is recommended that small legal funds be established for poor women who need legal services. The *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office should take the responsibility of providing sufficient and regular short term training for those who are in charge of providing legal services at the *kebele* levels.

According to the information obtained from the *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office, the major obstacle to effectively implementing government policies on women is a lack of sufficient budget. They do not regularly visit the people in the *Wereda Kebeles*, due to a lack of adequate budget. Thus, the *Wereda* Women's Affairs Office and other organs must be adequately funded by the regional and federal governments so that they achieve their objectives and effectively implement policies, and other legal instruments in

Berek *Wereda*. The Women's Affairs Office of the *Wereda* should be committed to carrying out its mandates effectively. Furthermore, proper evaluation and monitoring systems need to be put in place.

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