Ethiopian Village Studies

(Designed and edited by Philippa Bevan and Alula Pankhurst)

Adado

Gedeo

researched by

Ayalew Gebre, Abeje Berhanu and Amaha Kenenie

(Field managers: Bereket Kebede and Shukri Ahmed)

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All the reports in this series have been constructed from a number of sources:

- A background paper on aspects of the local culture in which the Peasant Association is located, based mainly on secondary sources;
- Some rapid assessment material collected in the PA by site managers and enumerators whose chief business was administering 3 rounds of a household economic survey which covered a whole year of economic activity;
- A field visit to the site by an anthropologist who took a draft village profile for correction and supplementation. In a few cases the profiles were not ready before the filed visit was done, but the same questions were followed up;
- A questionnaire completed by the enumerators at the end of the survey;
- A community economic survey administered by the site managers.

A large number of people has been involved in the construction of these profiles. Most important are the people in the villages who answered questions, raised issues we had not thought of, and provided hospitality for our fieldworkers. The site managers, enumerators, and anthropologists played a vital role, but are too numerous to mention by name here; the names of some are on the title pages of the profiles. Etalem Melaku-Tjirongo and Joanne Moores constructed the majority of the first drafts of the profiles. Sandra Fullerton Joireman provided important assistance in the preparation of the final drafts. Backup in terms of translating, editing, word processing, mapmaking and general support were provided by Tina Barnard, Ziggy Bevan, Girma Getahun, Haile Redai, Sarah Smith, and Ruth Tadesse. Our economist colleagues at Oxford (Shukri Ahmed, Stefan Dercon, and Pramila Krishnan) and Addis Ababa (particularly Bereket Kebede, Getinet Astatke, and Mekonnen Tadesse) provided ideas and conversation from economics which stimulated our thought processes. The administration in the Economics Department at Addis Ababa University was extremely supportive.

Profiles are available for the following villages:

**Tigray:** Geblen
Harresaw

**Gojjam:** Yetmen
North Shewa: Debre Birhan environs

**Wollo:** Shumsheha

**Arsii:** Korodegaga
Gurage: Indibir Haya Gasha

**South Shewa:** Sirbana Godeti
Turufe Kecheme

**Gamo:** Do’oma
Gedeo: Adado

**Harerghe:** Adele Keke

Further information about the profiles can be obtained from:

Dr Philippa Bevan
Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD)
ESRC Research Group
3 East 2.10
University of Bath
Bath, BA2 7AY
UK
Email: P.G.Bevan@bath.ac.uk

Dr Alula Pankhurst
Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Addis Ababa University; PO Box 1176,
Addis Ababa,
ETHIOPIA
Email: pankhurst@telecom.net.et

Further information about the household survey can be obtained from:

Bereket Kebede
Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD)
ESRC Research Group
3 East 2.10
University of Bath
Bath, BA2 7AY
UK
Email: B.Kebede@bath.ac.uk

Dr Stefan Dercon
Centre for the Study of African Economies
Oxford University, Economics Department
Manor Road Building
Manor Road
Oxford, OX1 3UQ
UK
Email: Stefan.dercon@economics.oxford.ac.uk
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1. Locating the Site in Time and Space

Geographical Location and Population

Adado is located 386 km south of Addis Ababa in the Gedeo zone of Southern Ethiopia. The two nearest large towns are Bule at 10 km and Dila at 25 km. Dila is situated directly on the important new Nairobi-Addis Ababa road and is quickly becoming the most important centre of the Gedeo zone. At the time of our survey the total population of the town was 2851; 1455 male and 1396 female.

The Gedeo (often referred to in the literature as Darasa) are today considered to be a culturally and linguistically distinct group and the area in which they predominate has recently been designated as a zone with immediate state administration in Dila. The total population of the Gedeo zone is 841,447 of which 453,099 are ethnically Gedeo. The average household size in Gedeo was 5.78, and given the above figures, the approximate number of households in Gedeo zone would be 145,579. The area of Gedeo zone covers about 5,890.2 km, of which 1/5 is inhabited by the Gedeo themselves. The population density of the region is said to be one of the highest in the country at 175 persons per square kilometre. But the population is not dense in the middle elevation zones (between 5000 and 8000 feet).

The Gedeo are bordered by the Sidama in the East, the Alaba in the North, the Burji in the West and the Guji in the South. All of these groups, and the Gedeo, belong to the Eastern Cushitic speaking people, who traditionally occupy the upper reaches of the Rift Valley escarpment to the east of Lake Abaya in northern Sidamo.

Following the eruption of the Ethiopian Revolution in 1974, and in accordance with Proclamation No. 31 of March 1975, 9 peasant associations have been established in the area collectively known as Adado. These peasant associations are:

1. Adado
2. Kolisha and Kara
3. Agemssa
4. Dakuwa Ashera
5. Hoticha
6. Wochema
7. Dorro
8. Basura
9. Oselle Mejoo

The research community, the Adado PA, is bounded by Basura in the North, Kolisha and Kara in the South, Hoticha in the Southwest, Dorro in the Northwest and Oselle and Mejoo in the West. The population of Adado is 100% Gedeo and shares the same system of beliefs, customs, and values. They are a distinct and homogeneous cultural and linguistic group. All the nine Adado PAs are brought under one Agricultural Service Cooperative. The Adado Agricultural Service Cooperative was established in 1978. One Agricultural Development Centre and one Agricultural Extension Agent serve the 9 Adado PAs.

Adado is larger than surrounding villages. In 1992 there were 365 households (20 female-headed). The male population was 877 and the female 926. There were about 100 households without land.

Climate

The climate is considered to be moderate in Adado. Rainfall is not generally lacking in the region. The two major seasons are meher and belg. Meher which is the rainy and cold season ranges from Sene (June) to Tikmet (October). Although it is the time of the year when the area receives the greater amount of rainfall, the climate during this period is not terribly cold. The other major season, belg, stretches from Yekatit (February) to Miazia (April) and is a period in the year during which belg crops mainly maize are harvested. The climate of the area during this time is not generally cold. The rainy season in the area is not so severe as to cut off places from each other and prevent travel from one town to the next.

Production

The area is characterised by lush vegetation that permits the growing of the subsistence crop enset. It
is typically considered a "true forest" zone. Adado is located at around 7000 feet above sea level (it is a mountainous region). The ecology above 8000 feet is suitable for the cultivation of such highland crops as barley, tef and wheat. The local economy is based on the production of 2 main crops: enset and coffee. Enset is produced primarily for home consumption (10% is sold) and coffee is grown for mainly trading purposes (90% is sold). Other crops for consumption and trade include chat, sugarcane, maize, and barley. Adado is in a surplus area, but probably not a crop surplus area. The soil is lem (fertile) and the altitude weyna dega (low highland).

Barley was good this year (1993/4) while the worst meher in the last 5 years was 1990/91 because of too much rain. The best coffee harvest in recent years was in 1985.

Social Structure

The Gedeo are a homogeneous ethnic group speaking a language that has slight linguistic variations within the Gedeo zone. As oral tradition has it, the Gedeo trace their origin to a polygamous ancestor named Deressa. He is regarded as having fathered 7 sons, 3 by his senior wife and 4 by his junior wife. The sons were named Hemba, Logoda, Bakaro, Darasha, Hanuma, Doba, and Gorgosha. The 7 patrilineal exogamous clans of the Gedeo bear the names of these 7 sons of Deressa. Upon his death, the father, Deressa, divided Gedeoland among his seven sons. Each son received an equal share of the Gedeo territory. The basis of the social organization of these clans lies in territorial divisions expressed in rituals, and an institutionally-focused gada system known as hayuma. More important than these divisions are the two major social categories, the dalana (senior) and the balbana (junior). While the former presides over the administration of local disputes, the latter assists the former. Authority rests on local councils consisting of local elders mainly men.

Connected with this kinship organization, there has been a long standing traditional territorial structure called Sasseroga. Literally translated Sasseroga means three Roga which are named Sobho, Ributa, and Rikuta. Three of them together had one Aba Gada. In traditional Gedeo, therefore, the Gada system used to be the main source of socio-political and ritual leadership. According to the Gedeo Gada tradition, all member of the leadership from the highest office of the Aba Gada down to the lowest office of Hyiticha, assumed and maintained leadership roles for a term of 8 years at a ceremony called Balle. Specific roles were attributed to particular clans or sub-clans as a result of which only a given clan or sub-clan contributed members from its ranks for the role of leadership while other clans or sub-clans performed duties associated with ritual, traditional medicine, etc. Accordingly, the Aba Gada used to be chosen from the senior clans of Logoda and Hemba.

This shows that the traditional Gedeo Gada institution was hierarchically organized. At the top of the Gada leadership was the Aba Gada, whose primary duties and functions were more ritual than political. Besides this, however, the Aba Gada dealt with inter-clan and inter-ethnic conflicts, settled disputes, and heard appeals. Supernatural powers, it was believed, were also bestowed upon the Aba Gada. As a result, he could bless the people so that they would have good harvests, peace, and happiness, or he could pronounce a curse on those whom he did not favour, in which case it was feared that they would be hit by misfortunes. This belief obliged the members of the community to abide by the instruction of the Aba Gada and remain faithful to the Gada in power.

Next in the hierarchy to the Aba Gada was the Aba Roga. Three Roga existed each one of which had one Aba Roga for itself. The Aba Roga was supported by assistants and advisors called Hyiticha represented from each individual clan and sub-clan. At the Roga level, the Aba Roga was the final hearer of appeals and organizer of ritual ceremonies. A case was referred to the Aba Gada only when it affected the entire Gedeo community or something unusual (Mabaha) took place. The third level of the hierarchy was the Hyiticha. Each clan had its own Hyiticha who acted as a basic judiciary body. While an individual acted as a chief Hyiticha there were numerous lower Hyiticha assisting him, drawn from the other clans and sub-clans. The major functions the Hyiticha dealt with included settling disputes between members of clans, marriage problems, land issues, theft, assault, etc.

In Adado there are people returned from other parts of the country. They are mostly members of the demobilized army numbering between 300 to 400 men. Some of these cultivate the plots of land which they had left in charge of their wives and brothers. A number of the others, however, eke out
their living by tilling the land previously occupied by Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives and lately shared out to them when these cooperatives were dissolved. Other returnees to the PA include some who fled from the ethnic conflicts with the Guji in 1974.

**History**

Before the 1890s the Gedeo society, like other neighbouring groups, had a communal form of social organisation (that focused on *Hayuma*) with an isolated but self-contained form of clan membership and identification. The system was essentially based upon territorial organisation where land was the decisive factor in the lives of the Gedeo people. Land was owned collectively, and decisions as to the allocation of new lands to households was made by the council of elders, which was organised in each village. These councils were responsible for holding communal assemblies in every village, and the sites where these assemblies were held in each village were called *Songo*. As well, these councils mediated disputes, declared wars on enemy incursions, and initiated, when necessary, wider tribal intergroup cooperation as well. In addition, there were two spiritual leaders, *Aba Gada* (father of *gada*) and his assistant, the *Jellaba*, who were primarily responsible for performing the ritual activities of the Gedeo people.

With the introduction of the "patron-client" (or *neftenya-gabbar*) relations in most of Gedeo toward the end of the nineteenth century, many of the traditional institutions of Gedeo were relegated to a *de facto* position, and instead a *neftenya* system was put into practice. In this arrangement the Gedeo people were alienated from ownership of land and their produce, and were made *gabbar* for new settlers, mainly soldiers. Every Gedeo peasant was put at the disposal of *neftenya*, and the latter were entitled to receive usufruct rights over land and corvee labour. Between the Gedeo peasants and the *neftenya* were local tribal chiefs who were appointed as *balabbat* and their subordinates, *korro*. These two groups were made responsible for mediating contacts between the Gedeo people and the northerners, organising labour activities of *qudad*, and ensuring that taxes levied on each family were paid and collected on time. These people were allowed to own land as *rist* (inalienable land rights) in return for the service they were rendering.

However, the above does not apply to the people of Adado PA since they successfully resisted takeover by the *neftenya* and managed to hold on to their land. There were no local landlords and after 1975 there was no change in land distribution.

As new settlers entered the Gedeoland as soldiers and civil servants, the pressure on land, and the demand for incorporating forested and hitherto unoccupied lands increased. This was further reinforced by the growing interest of settlers in coffee production as a cash crop. As coffee production expanded into downslope areas (which were formerly owned by Guji as grazing lands), the traditional importance of *enset* was reduced, due to the allocation of more cultivable lands for coffee production. The *enset*-based communal social organisation had to gradually give way to individually-based forms of social organisation, with the declining importance of the traditional *Hayuma* and other ritual leaders. The role of these members of Gedeo society as arbitrators, land distributors and ritual leaders gradually diminished, and was replaced by a local judiciary system, northern administrators, and in some cases *balabbat*. In fact, downslope cultivation of coffee and consequently, the expansion of coffee markets at local and regional levels, made the Gedeo people mobile and individualistic in their value orientation.

As the Gedeo society entered the twentieth century, with the *neftenya* and *gabbar* arrangement, three features of changes within Gedeo can be identified. Firstly, as already mentioned, Gedeo territory expanded in size, and most of the incorporation of new lands enlarged the subsistence basis of Gedeo population and encouraged the growing of coffee in downslope areas. Secondly, the influx of northern settlers following *dejazmach* Balcha's occupation of Gedeo in 1895 increased pressure on the traditionally based *enset* economy which had to be mitigated through mixed coffee/enset cultivation in lowland areas. And finally, the establishment of a military garrison around Agere Selam and other local military centres necessitated improvements in road facilities, and this in turn created connections between local and regional centres of coffee marketing. As the economic value of coffee increased through rising prices at national and international levels, Gedeo became more central to the Ethiopian economy, leading to changes in the lives of ordinary Gedeo; though most of the incomes accruing from
the sale of coffee were appropriated by the class of neftenya, rather than by the Gedeo themselves.

Nevertheless, the greatest administrative pressure that brought about changes in the lives of the Gedeo was experienced during the 1920s when measurement of land through qallad (a rope or leather thong about 66-67 metres in length) was introduced by Balcha. The process of measuring land brought many hitherto unoccupied lands into the hands of the neftenya, and formerly forested areas which were under the control of the traditional authorities now came under the disposal of the neftenya. Thus, the ordinary Gedeo were forced to abandon their traditionally-inhabited areas of enset (as the new settlers claimed rist and maderia rights over measured lands), and eventually migrated toward the periphery in search of unoccupied and forested lands. This process of migration brought about assimilation of different clans, eliminated traditional no-man's zones and encouraged clearing of forested areas for the purposes of growing mixed coffee and enset. It also encouraged individualism, division of labour between upslope and downslope Gedeo cultivators, and above all it promoted secularisation (in the sense of modifying the traditional institutions to adapt to changing circumstances) of the traditional system of social organisation.

By the 1940s and 1950s the Gedeo intensified cultivation of coffee for cash production, and Gedeo's transition from enset cultivation to coffee increased the economic value of land. There arose the Gedeo's acute interest in the cultivation of more land for coffee, and this generated conflicts between the Gedeo and new settlers, as the latter struggled to bring new lands under their control. Therefore, from the early 1950s onwards, the gabbar-neftenya relations was set, and intensified. This had to be resolved through the destruction of settlers' houses and property, government buildings and public property and through the abolition of the gabbar system which was undertaken by the 1975 land proclamation. The proclamation was so radical that it completely altered the landlord-tenancy relations and made the Gedeo free land holders. Since then, the Gedeo have become owners of their land, labour, and their produce, mainly coffee.

During the Derg period, the Gedeo, like any Ethiopian farmers, were affected by such agricultural policies as the quota system and controlled pricing mechanisms, which discouraged coffee growers from freely marketing their agricultural produce on local markets. Other government measures, such as villagisation, cooperativization and recruitment of Gedeo for local militia and military services, became a disincentive to most of the development endeavour of the Gedeo people. Following the downfall of the Derg regime, the Gedeo have been treated as a psychologically, culturally and linguistically distinct group, in that Gedeo today is organised at the level of a zone with immediate state administration at Dila. Recently, the Transitional Government has increased the price of coffee (following the proclamation of the free market economy) at local, regional and national markets, and this measure is expected to motivate coffee growers, including the Gedeo people, to increase coffee production. An increase in the price of coffee would undoubtedly bring changes in the lives of the Gedeo people, and consequently improve their living conditions.

According to the community elders, Adado was the location where the first Gedeo clan settled in the distant past. Before its incorporation into the Ethiopian state, Gedeo society was administered by tribal chiefs. The earliest date remembered by a local elder was 1918, when a November epidemic killed thousands of people. Sometime between then and 1935 the following three events occurred: a desert locust destroyed crops, enset, coffee, barley and tobacco; a smallpox epidemic killed thousands of people; the Goder Zemacha campaign took place. Between 1935 and 1940 the Italian invasion meant exemption from taxes for local people. In 1941 Yefano Zemacha was the expansion of Amhara rule. Because local people were exempted from taxation during the Italian occupation, they were considered as traitors and evicted from their land by the Amharas. Between 1944 and 1959, after they had been evicted they organized to retain their land through court action and decided to withhold taxes from the new landlords. Finally, they managed to retain their land. However, their resistance was not welcomed by the government and the neighbouring landlords so they were deprived of the right to work outside the community. The community then became more densely populated as a result of people migrating out of fear of the intolerable feudal oppression in the surrounding area.

In 1959 the Michile War broke out. Although the war was not located in Adado itself, local people suffered when the neftenya passed through the community on the way to the war front. They looted property and killed a few people. The neftenya won the war, evicted native Gedeo and arrived again in
Adado. But they appealed to the Emperor through their delegates and decided to resettle some of their family in Uraga and Shakiso. Around 1974, because of the total anarchy created by the people's uprising against the Emperor, those who had been resettled in Uraga and Shakiso were evicted again by the landlords of the area. Once again Adado was crowded by the influx of evicted Gedeo. Later, they resettled in Gedeo zone at Sumero, but this location was unsuitable for the settlers, so some of them returned to Adado and others went back to Uragu and Shakiso.

Following the March 1974 land proclamation, most rural areas in Ethiopia were organized under PAs. But the Gedeo were denied this opportunity because the landlord, who had been opposed to the proclamation, was garrisoned in their woreda. Later they sent some community members to be trained in how to organize a PA and implement the proclamation. After they had been trained they came back and told the community to register their families in order to get 10 hectares of land. Due to the land scarcity, all members of the community registered including infants and gestating fetuses. But instead of getting 10 hectares of land, the government levied tax per person and they started to pay 120 birr for the land they had instead of the 3 birr they had been paying, excluding other taxation obligation imposed by the government.

In 1976 when the war started in eastern and northern Ethiopia, the government conscripted the productive workforce of the community through the use of force. To mitigate this, they started underage marriage. As a result, the following negative effects were felt in the community: a) population increase, b) deforestation as a result of increased wood demand to build houses for new brides, c) married women were then obliged to pay taxes when they were in fact still dependent upon their families, and d) due to this unbearable situation some of the community members committed suicide.

One of the problems encountered by the Adado farmers during the Derg regime was the forced collectivization whereby, in 1980, the people were made members of Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives against their will. When they refused to become members, their land was expropriated from them and given away to others who consented. The PC reached the malba stage; it was abandoned in 1990. Forest areas were also reserved for the producers' cooperatives, in which case forest land belonging to the people unwilling to join the cooperatives was transferred to become cooperative land. Coffee quotas were also set and imposed on farmers and there were local militia who checked that the quotas were met by each farmer. Thus, the farmers were obliged to sell their coffee at prices lower than the coffee crop deserved. The other problem of farmers during the Derg's time was the exorbitant land tax. Each farmer was required to pay up to 40 birr annually. Additional payments included those made toward the war effort, drought conditions, the local militia, etc. The land tax requirement did not take into account the problems the farmers suffered as a result of adverse conditions such as drought, crop disease, and so on. When a farmer failed to pay land tax due to these problems, his coffee and enset plants used to be sold by the PA leadership on the farm and the money was paid as land tax. When crops, mainly coffee, were stolen from the field, the non-cooperative members were mostly alleged to have stolen them and made to pay for what was lost. In addition, the cooperative members were highly favoured over the non-members as far as the provision of credit facilities, selected seed varieties, fertilizers, etc., were concerned.

There was no villagization or resettlement at the site. About 100 men were conscripted for the army and about 70 demobilized soldiers have returned to the PA. Two EPRDF fighters have also returned; they have received no special treatment.

Following the downfall of the Derg, the quota system has been removed and farmers are now free to sell their coffee at market prices. There are no more forest areas enclosed by the state for producers' cooperatives, and the practice of evicting the farmers from their land holdings under the pretext of afforestation has been totally halted. Instead, seedlings are now distributed to each farmer so he can plant and take care of them on his own plots of lands. Land tax has also been reduced to some extent and the maximum amount a household head pays at the moment does not exceed 25 birr. As a result, favourable conditions for the regular payment of land tax have been created. For instance, the taxes for 1995 were not collected on time. However, the farmers settled their arrears on their own initiatives so that they could have land tenure security. There has been no land redistribution under the TGE.

During the time of the Derg there was what was called the Kebele Leadership Committee which represented the government at the local level. Some of the responsibilities entrusted to this committee
were the collection of land taxes, the recruitment of national service conscripts, and monitoring the quota system. The traditional community leaders and elders did not play any role in such mainly political activities with their chief responsibilities being confined to conducting ritual ceremonies, arbitration and settlement of disputes, and performing other duties associated with the ritual and social life of the people. Pressures used to be brought to bear upon the local leaders with the ultimate aim of eroding their position and replacing them by the Kebele leadership. In 1984 people were forbidden to worship in Protestant churches and the church was turned into the PA office. The PA could force people to do many things during the Derg.

In the past there have been periods when the Adado people suffered considerable hardships. In 1967 the area was hit by severe frost which destroyed the crops, particularly coffee and enset. In 1968, 1974 and 1977 an epidemic caused great damage to the crop. This phenomena continues to be a serious problem and a major threat to high coffee yield. The years prior to 1967 are referred to by the local elders as a period of relative plenty and abundance.

2. Seasonal Activities and Events

The following calendars are included in the Appendix: crop activities; pests; rain; off-farm activities (men and women); livestock sales and diseases; fuel and water availability; consumption; the hungry season; credit needs (men and women); festivals; diseases; labour (men, women, girls, boys). There are some noticeable features. There are fewer agricultural activities between April and September and during this time some men migrate temporarily to Shakiso to work in the goldmines. It is harder to get fuel between June and October. From October to April (inclusive) people eat cowpeas, horsebeans, barley, maize and meat in addition to enset and cabbage, but in the remaining months they eat only enset and cabbage. The hungry season is in September. Men need to borrow in May and June.

A respondent reported the following farming activities:

- **September**: sowing barley
- **October**: weeding beans
- **November**: weeding coffee and enset
- **December**: harvesting barley, beans, maize, coffee
- **January**: harvesting coffee, hoeing for maize
- **February**: enset planting, hoeing and planting of maize, weeding coffee
- **March**: enset and maize planting
- **April**: planting coffee, gesho and eucalyptus trees
- **May**: weeding coffee, enset and gesho
- **June**: weeding coffee and enset
- **July**: sowing beans, weeding coffee and enset, planting coffee
- **August**: sowing barley, weeding maize

There are no clearly defined meher and belg seasons and the "meher" is not at the same time as the meher in other parts of the country. Sowing of the crops is started at an earlier period.

3. The Farm Economy

**Crops**

From at least the 1920's the following crops have been grown in Adado: enset, coffee, barley, cowbeans, tobacco, and linseed, although the last one was abandoned in 1983. Maize was introduced in 1935, wheat in 1955, and chat and sugarcane in 1953. Traditionally, the Gedeo are settled agriculturalists, growing mainly enset. This plant constitutes the principal staple food of the Gedeo
people, and grows in the middle elevation zone where the temperature is moderate and where there is sufficient rainfall. In spite of the expansion of cultivable land toward downslope areas, the growing of highland food grains (such as tef and wheat) on a larger scale has not been possible because the land is not suitable for these crops. About 21% of Gedeo farmers are engaged in crop production, 78% in mixed farming and the remaining 1% practice livestock raising. The preparation of soils for the cultivation of crops starts in early January to February. The planting of enset occurs in March, April and May, and the harvesting season occurs between November and January. Depending on the availability of rains, which are by no means scarce, maize is sown in February through March, whereas barley is sown in late April through May, and tef is grown during the big rainy season, June through August. Maize is grown with enset by intercropping and the luxuriant leaves of enset serve as a manure for maize. In Adado the agricultural produce known as meher crops are sorghum, barley, wheat, horsebeans, cowpeas and tef, while what they call the belg crop is maize only. The produce of both meher and belg crops for this production year are expected to be better compared with the previous year. The Table demonstrates the contrast between the size of land cultivated for each crop type for this year and the preceding. The area cultivated for belg crop which is maize has also increased. For 1992/93 the figure was 48 hectares and for 1993/94 it is 55 hectares.

**Meher crops**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crop Type</th>
<th>Area Cultivated (Hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992/93</td>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Tef</em></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/94</td>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Tef</em></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soil fertility began to decline around 1973 due to the unavailability of fallow land, the exhaustive tilling of the land and deforestation. Farmers are making an effort to counter this situation by using manure and other waste as fertilizers.

Coffee is the main cash crop of the area. Coffee ripens during the months of November, December and January and locally is called *luullo* ("red coffee") at this stage of its growth. The coffee growers sell *luullo* to the Agricultural Service Cooperative of the area at an average price of 2 birr per kilo. The SC prepares and presents the coffee for the international market by means of its coffee processing and washing machines. During the last production year the Adado area has made available 259,000 kilos of processed coffee to the international market from 5 of its 9 peasant associations. A greater amount of coffee produce is also expected during the present coffee production season. In the months from February to May the coffee is left in the field to dry in which state it is picked and sold at the current price of 8 birr per kilo. The main buyers of this type of coffee, which is meant for local consumption, are the rich coffee businessmen in Dila town who possess coffee processing machines.

Different crop diseases strike the Adado area from time to time, affecting their harvest. A disease
known in the locality as coffee cholera (technically known by experts as coffee berry disease, CBD) is one of the most serious and recurring problems responsible for coffee crop failure. This disease attacks the coffee beans, making them dry and hollow, and in the end virtually fruitless. Coffee beans thus attacked and made fruitless are locally called *koshe*.

There are two *enset* plant diseases known in the area as *woello* and *tette*. *Woello* causes the root of the plant to rot before it starts to mature. *Tette* prevents the growth of the stem by drying and stunting it. *Santo* (a disease of wheat and barley) hinders the proper growth of the crop and leaves it as a mere fruitless stalk. *Doma* (a disease attacking maize) also renders the crop utterly fruitless.

**Livestock**

The use of plough cultivation, which the growing of crops such as *tef* and wheat often entails, by the Gedeo people, is of relatively a recent origin. Average work-oxen holding in Gedeo are 0.19 and about 92% of the farmers do not have oxen at all, 6% have one ox, 1% have 2 oxen, 0.2% have three oxen and 1% have 4 or more oxen. Generally speaking, plough cultivation is not well adapted to the cultivation of *enset* because of the small size of household plots. Therefore, the local technology is dominated by hoe and digging-stick cultivation. In localities where such grains as maize, sorghum and barley grow (which are minor activities compared to *enset* and coffee) plough cultivation is used as a supplement to the traditional ways of cultivating *enset*.

The role of livestock, mainly cattle and sheep, in the economic life of Gedeo society is not as significant as that of the neighbouring Guji. Nevertheless, livestock also constitute important economic assets. This is especially true as the Gedeo have come into contact with the Guji through migration and trade. The Guji are important sources of livestock for the Gedeo. Gujis’ livestock, mainly cattle, are purchased by Gedeo in exchange for *enset*. The introduction of food grain cultivation by settlers, and an expansion of downslope cultivation through the use of the iron plough, promoted the economic value of oxen. This has developed an interest among the Gedeo in raising and maintaining cattle as important sources of income. However, sheep are favoured above cattle because they can easily be restocked and they can easily be sold at local markets for the purposes of purchasing grain (in times of shortage) and for paying government taxes and other cash needs.

The size of livestock in Adado is very limited, as a result of which vaccination programmes and cross-breeding practices are not common in the PAs. However, individual household heads keep a small number of livestock in their houses which they buy from other people, mainly Guji. They feed them so as to fatten them, and sell them for slaughter as a means of income.

**Land**

There are 4 categories of land use practices in Gedeo: land used for annual and permanent crop production, grazing and fallow land, although there is no fallow land in Adado PA. The average arable land holding for annual crop production is 0.3 ha and for permanent crop production is 0.37 ha. 39% of the total cultivated area is used for annual crop production and 49% is used for permanent crop production. Most of the land devoted to annual crop production is used for the cultivation of cereals and pulses, while land for permanent crop production is used for *enset* and coffee.

The total area of Adado is about 800 hectares which are divided roughly into the following usages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enset</td>
<td>300 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>200 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forested Land</td>
<td>120 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and other uses</td>
<td>60 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>50 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugarcane</td>
<td>20 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing Land</td>
<td>20 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesho</td>
<td>15 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Beans</td>
<td>10 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The average size of land holdings around 1920 was approximately 10 hectares. Gradually the average size diminished to very small plots. This is due to the obligation of the household head (male) to divide up his own land as each of his sons is married and requires land. Previously, they had access to land only through inheritance. After the *Michile* War of 1959 access to land was altered and today all of the following methods of acquiring land occur: inheritance, renting, purchasing, and share-cropping.

There is no man in Gedeo without a plot of land, called *tinto*, although it might be small and therefore insufficient to satisfy the needs of the family. In that case, such people are forced to sell their labour to those with more *tinto* or plots of land or move to towns such as Dila, Bule, or Wonago, where they earn their living as daily labourers.

When a son comes of age his father arranges with the family of the prospective bride the conditions for the marriage to take place. After the marriage has taken place, the bride and the groom spend together one year in the household of the groom's father. After that, the father of the groom builds a separate house for the couple so that they can start their own independent life. At this stage, the father also cuts out a piece of land (*tinto*) from his holding and gives it to the married son so he has a plot to cultivate and can earn a living for himself. The same thing is done equally for any other sons thus married. When the father dies, the eldest son takes over the responsibility of caring for the household. As far as the sharing of his property is concerned, whatever the deceased father possesses is equally distributed among his male children. Women have no share of the father's property when he dies. Neither are they given cultivable plots of land as they leave the household to reside with their husbands.

In Adado PA there are 21 women at the moment who own plots of land and pay land tax. These are all widows.

At one time everyone had equally-sized plots. But now there is uneven distribution of land. This change occurred due to population increase. Share-cropping is practised for the cultivation of *enset* and cereals, but, for coffee, farmers prefer to hire labourers. There is limited cash rental. There is no land for grazing and no *wollel aged* (use of land for collateral). If farmers are asked about the size of their landholding, most cannot tell it. However, they can tell how many plots they have. The land has lost some fertility.

**Labour**

At the beginning of the period all farm labour was provided by the household members. If the family needed outside labour it would prepare *tella* for those assisting on the farm. This is called *kora*. There was no wage labour at the beginning of the period. Recently a very few people have employed wage labourers if they have more plots than they can manage, or if they are engaged in off-farm activities themselves.

At the time of the Italian occupation they introduced a work-sharing arrangement called *debo*. Two or more men would work together to plough, weed or harvest in one another's land in rotation. The traditional *debo* system was mainly effective in clearing forests during planting and harvesting. In such work groups men were responsible for clearing forests, planting and weeding, but women were mainly responsible for harvesting and gathering of crops. In fact, *debo* groups were used for cultivation of fields whereas household labour was sufficient for the cultivation of garden plants and *enset*. However, as cash production entered the Gedeo zone, and as the Gedeo moved into new settlements in the downslope areas, the role of these groups declined, more emphasis being placed on individual efforts rather than communal work.

The father carries out the tasks of planting and taking care of coffee, *enset*, and other cereal crops such as peas, beans, barley, etc., assisted by his sons in the process. The father and the male members of the community carry the coffee and crops to the local markets and nearby towns. The mother with the assistance of the daughters is largely responsible for the processing and preparation of the *enset* plant which is the major staple food of the Gedeo. The male members of the community are not involved in this activity which is considered as taboo for them. Other household chores like gathering wood and fetching water are taken care of by women. The women are also engaged in *enset* selling at the local market. The women use the money obtained from the sale of *enset* to buy the necessary
commodities, mainly meat, for the family and are not expected to hand it over to their husbands. Women also collect coffee and mowed crops.

When people cannot support their families due to the small size of the land they cultivate they engage in wage labour for others. For collecting coffee (8am to 1pm) the payment is 2 birr. People are also paid 2 birr for weeding and hoeing coffee and enset between 7 and 9am.

In previous times, the Gedeo had a labour exchange arrangement known as kora. A man needing the help of others used to ask his son-in-law called ballo to organize a work party for him. The son-in-law approached his relatives and friends holding a matchet and green grass which symbolizes mutual assistance in collective work and ask them to lend support to his father-in-law. The man on whose behalf the kora is organized called Awa Kora, kills a sheep, while his household brews local beer and bakes worammo which is a large-sized circular-shaped bread of kotcho for the occasion.

Nowadays, however, the work party which still continues as a tradition has changed its form and is called gollo (wonfel). The man calling the gollo mobilizes a small number of people for tasks such as farming, house building, etc, and the household prepares coffee and bread for the people involved. He similarly reciprocates when a relative or a friend is in need of collective labour.

Interlinkages

Someone with a certain amount of money buys young or small stock which he entrusts to those without any money. The person entrusted with the stock is expected to feed and properly take care of them until they grow fat and strong. When the stock are thus fattened and ready for sale, they are brought to the market where they are sold, and the profit is shared between the two parties.

Similarly, those with several plots of land enter into an arrangement with those having fewer plots so that the latter contribute their labour while the former provide seed in addition to the land. When the crops are in season, the harvest is equally shared between the two sides.

Such arrangements are not necessarily made with members of the same lineage or clan but with anyone agreeing to benefit from them.

Technology

The farming technology used by the community is the iron hoe, digging stick and machete for weeding. The plough is used for land planted with grain. Different locally-made tools are used for enset processing. A sharp-edged metal tool locally called sissa is used to scrape off the stem of the plant in order to extract the edible part of it. A flat-surfaced plank of wood called metta is used as a support while scraping the stem. The root of the enset plant called ametcho is also consumable and an iron-tipped tool with a wooden handle called a chetko is used to crush it so that it is mixed with the scraped part of the stem to be eaten as food. The crushed root and scraped stem are mixed and left for two or more weeks so as to ferment during which time the women continue to stir it up with their hands. When it is finally ready, they wrap it up with enset leaves and carry it home themselves or on horseback depending upon the size and quantity.

Once it is brought home in this state it is further stirred a little on a flat plank and is crushed with a machete-like tool called habile or natto so as to remove the root-like parts of the food. Finally, the enset is baked in different shapes and sizes on a clay or metal ovens called mesha at which stage it is ready for consumption. On the occasion of wedding and funeral ceremonies as well as other important rituals, they bake a circular-shaped bread of enset called worammo in a clay pot called a mesha.

Farmers or households with several plots of land (tinto) store their crops in a granary called kercho. This granary is usually used for storing cereal crops. A granary called shakile is used to store coffee in coffee-growing PAs. However, those with small landholdings keep their crops, coffee or otherwise in sacks. Crops are carried from the fields to the granary by human labour while they are sometimes taken to the market on horseback. Nevertheless, only a few households in the PA own horses and mules.

The nearest town to Adado is Sokitcha which is located at a distance of 5 km along the road from Dila to the woreda town of Bule. Bule is another town close to Adado and is found 13 km further
away. People travel to these towns mostly on foot and it takes them 45 minutes to get to Sokitcha and one hour and half to Bule on average. The nearest big town, located 23 km away is Dila, and the usual means of travel available are small private Toyota cars.

**Innovations**

The following crops have been introduced during the lifetime of the oldest members of the community: maize, beans, wheat, horsebeans, sugarcane, banana, and chat. The most important innovation has been the introduction during the Italian Occupation of the iron as opposed to wooden hoe. Soon afterwards, local blacksmiths began making the items themselves as well as machetes. Everyone adopted these innovations.

Also during the Occupation the idea of planting crops in a row as opposed to randomly scattered was introduced and adopted by the local community. At first, some did not want to change the method of their forefathers but the advantages of easy weeding and harvesting soon meant this innovation was adopted by everyone.

At one time the ancestors of the local people used to take care of the naturally growing trees and the people used to believe that if they planted new trees they would go blind. Recently, around 1970, they began to plant trees because the tree cover had decreased dramatically. Some members of the community have taken up tree planting and managed to have a marginal effect in preventing deforestation and soil erosion. Some people did not participate because they did not understand the dangers of deforestation and soil erosion. Another positive effect has been the provision of firewood. Debo, a form of collective labour as mentioned above under labour, was an innovation of the local people. They farmed plots individually, but after the Italian Occupation their enset plants started to diminish and they faced famine. The elders of the community consulted and advised the community to farm collectively to survive the coming famine, and all agreed and as a result the community survived.

Finally, sugarcane and chat were introduced after the 1974 revolution. The people switched to these crops for two reasons: a) soil fertility was decreasing; b) they were not allowed to sell their main crop, coffee, as they wished and needed. A few members of the community initiated this activity and others followed as they saw that they could sell their produce without any fear. However, some people refused to plant these crops because they require more water to grow and this would be harmful to the main crop, enset. They recognize a long run negative effect on enset and the possibility of drought. Some farmers use canals and have privately-owned ponds. These did not exist 20-30 years ago.

In Adado PA 10 innovative farmers have been selected as "contact farmers" under each of whom 46 "follower farmers" are assigned. The names of these "contact farmers" are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of &quot;Contact farmers&quot;</th>
<th>Number of &quot;follower farmers&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ato Worassa Banta</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. &quot; Jille Fosha</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. &quot; Kurra Hirbayyo</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. &quot; Osman Yasin</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. &quot; Tegenno Diki</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. &quot; Gemede Wongil</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. &quot; Mamo Gelgo</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. &quot; Woresa Terro</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. &quot; Gedda Luku</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. &quot; Tadese Shallo</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The "contact farmers" were chosen on the basis of their abilities and inclinations to accept and adopt new and improved techniques of farming. The extension agent shows them, on the demonstration plots of the development centre or on their own plots of land, the improved methods of farming which they are supposed to pass on to fellow farmers.
Common Property Resources

Water is the main common property resource and everyone has equal access. The service cooperative was formed by members who contributed 12 birr. All members have equal rights of access to the property owned by the service cooperative.

Major incidents of theft occur when coffee ripens. The thieves, mostly poor individuals, intrude into coffee fields and cut out the ripe coffee beans. Hence in the coffee season people stay out overnight watching over their fields. Similarly, enset left in the field until it is ready for consumption is exposed to theft, particularly if it is processed.

Environment

Gedeoland is generally a food self-sufficient area, and the Ministry of Agriculture has classified Gedeo soil as one of the most fertile in the country. As already indicated, the abundance of enset and coffee has made the Gedeo people less vulnerable to such human caused and natural calamities as drought and famine, from which the rest of the nation has been suffering now and then.

The soil is generally fertile, and soil erosion is infrequent due to the wide practice of dry-stalling as a source of manure by the Gedeo people. Coffee and enset help to prevent soil erosion because they are semi-permanent crops and their wide leaf spread covers a relatively large area. A 1968 survey revealed that about 50% of the measured land in Gedeo zone was rated as fertile and semi-fertile.

At one time roughly 90% of the land was covered with trees as opposed to only about 10% today. At first, the community did not plant trees as they believed this might cause them to lose their sight. But now tree planting is practised. Forest lands that were seized and enclosed for cooperatives have now been returned to their respective owners along with trees planted in them. The law issued by the Transitional Government concerning cooperative forest lands decrees this to be implemented.

4. Off-farm Income Activities

Within the Community

At the beginning of the period there was no off-farm activity. Since 1935 people have engaged in trading activities by bringing in manufactured products and taking farm produce to and from the neighbouring towns. This trade activity is seasonal and most of the traders are farmers as well. Men sell cattle, sheep, grain and coffee (in bulk). During the coffee harvesting season they engage in general merchandising and selling tella or araqi. In addition blacksmiths producing knives and hoes began to operate.

Women have recently begun to engage in off-farm activities to help to support their families when farmland became scarce. They sell green coffee, enset, cabbage, and small amounts of (retail) coffee. They are also involved in brewing tella, distilling araqi and selling food.

Migration

After the trading period is over those who engage in these activities go back to their main activity, farming, and those who have no land migrate to the gold mining woreda Shakiso.

With the growth of population land is becoming more and more scarce forcing a number of people to migrate to neighbouring territories, mainly to Guji (Kibre Mengist, Solomo), in search of land for cultivation. There, they clear forests and cultivate cereals like tef and maize. At long intervals, they return to their natal village to visit their parents and to take care of the coffee and enset plants they left behind.

An increasing number of the younger generation flock to the nearby Shakiso town in order to work as wage labourers at the government gold mine or to dig out gold by themselves in areas not being
mined by the government. These ones also pay periodic visits to their families back in the village.

## 5. Reproductive Activity

### Fuel and Lighting

The main source of energy in the locality is firewood used for lighting the house, cooking food and as a means of heating. Wood and twigs are cut from individually-owned trees. Some households use blowlamps as a source of lighting but these are rare.

### Water

The community reports no shortage of water at any time during the year. The water sources are 5 mountain springs which are located at between 15 and 45 minutes walk from the centre of the village. In addition to this, the other main sources of water are the two rivers, Foldawi and Gellana, which run throughout the year. People use river water in the dry season and turn to springs in the wet season as the river water gets muddy. Therefore, in Adado there is no shortage of water. The problem is to get clean water. Everyone has equal access to water.

### Sanitation

There are no latrines in Adado and the people relieve themselves by going off into the nearby bushes.

### Fertility

The average fertility rate among the Adado people is 5 children per family. The Gedeo in general attach great importance to the value of fertility. As a result of this, family planning education and services which have been rendered by the local clinic for some years have not had a significant number of beneficiaries. According to the health assistant, even the small number of women who start receiving family planning services immediately stop using them and continue to have babies.

When a woman is found to be infertile the man calls for local elders preparing coffee, enset bread and local beer so that they might help him with the problem. The elders pray on her behalf consulting the Kayo. The elders will say Kayo will give her a child. Kayo is a kind of divination and interpretation of natural objects and events forecasting future success and failure, evil consequences and virtues. Kayo may be inferred from the songs of birds, the movement of animals encountered on the way, and so on. It is widely believed that such a practice often brings fertility to women enabling them to become pregnant and give birth to children. If such practices fail to bring about the desired result the man will be free to marry another wife so as to get children. The infertile woman for her part can stay with her husband if she so wishes or may marry another man. If, however, it is the man who turned out to be infertile he may keep on having his chances marrying a number of wives. Therefore, the Gedeo have no traditional or modern treatment for infertility other than consulting Kayo.

### Childbirth and Childcare

Among the Gedeo the births of both male and female babies are welcomed with equally joyful expressions of congratulations. As a result, a woman who has given birth passes a period of confinement for six months or up to a year in some cases, during which time she is relieved of all tasks and nourished with the best of food the family affords. All the household chores during this time are managed by the father. When the period of confinement is completed and the woman first leaves the house she goes about decorated with new clothing accompanied by relatives and is treated like a bride.
Socialization

Qualities that are highly valued in men are self-sufficiency, ability to manage land effectively, and the ability to solve family and community problems peacefully. Men must also display respect to elders and be humble. These qualities are taught to people by the elders. Boys are taught by inviting them to listen when the elders discuss community problems and through oral orientation by respected community members.

The desirable qualities in women are shyness, respectfulness, skill in women's duties such as scraping and processing enset and the proper handling of her husband's wealth and resources. These skills are demonstrated to girls so that they may learn good behaviour and the necessary skills. For women also the ability to peacefully solve disputes within the family and outside is a respected quality.

Girls who do not accept and demonstrate what has been taught them are regarded as socially undesirable, as well as those who go out of their compound without family permission and those who have close friendships with boys.

Education

Both women and men considered that it is important to be literate and numerate. Men said that while the academic subjects learned in school may help you to be a better farmer, they will not help you to earn off-farm income. Twenty per cent of boys in the community attend primary school and 0.01% attend secondary school. Women said that schooling would help you be a better farmer's wife but it would not help you to earn off-farm income as there are virtually no job opportunities in the community. It makes no difference how many years one stays in school. They said that 8 per cent of girls in the community attend primary school, but only one girl attends high school.

Numbers attending the primary school vary through the year. One informant found 186 students (15 girls). In the previous year 3 boys attended the secondary school. The primary curriculum involves 11 academic subjects. The parents must pay book rent and expenses to run the school. The amount of money paid depends upon the ability of each individual to pay. In general, the Adado primary school functions far below its capacity due to poor school attendance. There is a Muslim school that was founded in 1975 by the Muslim community.

Adado Primary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>year 1</th>
<th>year 2</th>
<th>year 3</th>
<th>year 4</th>
<th>year 5</th>
<th>year 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

source: field visit

When a fieldworker visited the primary school he was told that there was a total of 235 pupils in the school (see Table). There are 9 teachers altogether: 2 have 12th grade+1 and 7 have 12th grade+. There is a shortage of classrooms, tables, chairs and blackboards, but not of school books. The average cost to a family involves 16 birr for pens, paper, etc, 3 birr for book rent, and 45 birr other expenses.

Children must go to Bule for 7th and 8th grades. The high school is in Dila. There are many junior secondary school dropouts who have returned and taken up agricultural activities in the villages. A limited number who have managed to complete high school have been assigned to different positions in
the zonal administration under conditions created by the national regional administrative structures.

**Dila High School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>year 9</th>
<th>year 10</th>
<th>year 11</th>
<th>year 12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>2246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

source: field visit

Only one man from Adado PA is known to have graduated with a diploma from a health college and is at the moment working as a representative of the *Woreda* Health Office at Yirga Chiffe.

**Training**

Three farmers were sent to Agarfa Multi-purpose Farmers Training Centre in 1986 and received training in different areas of agriculture. Since their return to the PA, however, they have not effectively implemented the knowledge they acquired due to lack of follow-up. In those days, such opportunities were available only to members of Agricultural Producers’ Cooperatives and no other farmers have been sent for training since then. One other farmer went to Holeta for training in bookkeeping and is now serves as the accountant of the service cooperative.

**Health**

The calendar in the Appendix shows the occurrence of diseases in Adado as described by a group of men and a group of women. There are no very strong seasonal patterns.

The community has a health clinic which provides EPI (Expanded Programme of Immunization) family planning, public health and medical treatment. The community members, however, could only identify the last aspect of the clinic’s work. The drugs they have in store are antibiotics, anti-helminths, analgesics, anti-asthmatics, first aid, anti-septic, and anti-fungal drugs. A typical visit to the clinic costs 3 birr. The initial consulting fee is 2 birr for an adult and 1 birr for a child. There is no nurse or doctor. The clinic is open 24 hours a day. A full treatment of antibiotics costs 4.50 birr and malaria drugs cost 1.40 birr. The supply of drugs is irregular, although there is a regular supply of polio and measles vaccine. There is equipment to sterilise needles, cold storage with backup, and a minimum supply of bandages and sterile needles.

The nearest private doctor, pharmacy and hospital are in Dila. The initial consultancy fee at the hospital is 4.60 birr, while the doctor charges 5 birr.

There are also traditional medical practitioners in the community. The traditional doctor charges 1 birr as a matter of custom, while the Traditional Birth Attendant charges 3 birr. There are local injectors and illegal medical workers about 3 km from the village charging 15 birr for an adult and 7 birr for a child.

The following health problems were identified and ranked by men from most to least serious: typhoid, relapsing fever, tuberculosis, arthritis and cancer. They seek treatment for the first 3 in the local health clinic, while for arthritis they rely on traditional medicine and for cancer they do not know of any available treatment. When asked about the causes and preventions of these 5 diseases they claimed no knowledge with respect to typhoid, relapsing fever and cancer. In the case of TB they named...
the cold and "using TB infected material" and in the case of arthritis, the cold and heredity.

The women identified and ranked butan (a local form of sorcery) as the most serious health problem, followed by, diarrhoea, banko (a disease which causes some kind of mouth problems), chinecha (thought to be some kind of fungus), and kerssa (some kind of eye problem). Both sexes list a venereal disease (the men call it gonorrhoea and the women arsho) as the 6th most problematic disease. All the diseases listed by the women had some sort of association with sorcery, magic or social impropriety.

Butan is caused by something hidden (tare) on someone else's property for protection by a sorcerer. There is no method of prevention and the treatment involves confessing and begging pardon from the person who placed the tare. Banko is also caused by tare placed by the Banko clan when they are not given enough respect. There is no prevention except to respect the Banko clan and the treatment involves confessing and begging pardon of the Banko clan. Occasionally, help is also sought at the health clinic. Chinecha is considered to be caused by some form of evil eye or when rusted blades are used to cut/shave children's hair. The prevention is, therefore, not to use rusted blades and for treatment traditional practitioners had been known to put a liquid prepared from local leaves and roots on to the affected area. Kerssa is caused by the evil eye for which there is no prevention and treatment is sought from the local sorcerer. Finally, in the case of diarrhoea the women did not know the causes in young children, but in adults they named the eating of unripe cabbage as a major cause. They knew of no preventive measures and most often traditional treatment was sought which sometimes involved tying grass around the victims abdomen and taking him or her to the sorcerer.

Women surveyed listed and ranked the following top 5 children's diseases: measles, diarrhoea, typhoid, TB, and an undefined condition known as keleto. Causes and preventions were unknown for all except TB. In that case, they identified the cold and the use of an infected person's belongings as the cause. Measles used to be treated by seeking plants and roots and washing the victims in them. Diarrhoea is treated in the same fashion as mentioned by the women, though sometimes help is also sought from the health clinic. They knew of no treatment for typhoid. TB is treated at the hospital and keleto is treated at the hospital and health clinic.

6. Consumption

Food and Other Day-to-Day Goods

There is a calendar in the Appendix showing food consumption by season. From May to September people rely on enset and cabbage. Compared to barley and peas, beans are considered to be emergency crops because they ripen fast in four months and can be consumed in their fresh stage before they become dry. Enset, better known as kocho, is the chief emergency staple food in the area. The husband and wife eat together from the same plate while the children have their meals separately.

A major famine struck the area in 1983 which made even enset scarce. This plant is usually drought resistant and available when other crops are in small supply. Prior to this calamity the price of a load of kocho (carried by a horse) used to be 10 birr. Since the 1983 famine, however, the price of kocho has continued to rise steadily and it now stands at 80 birr per load.

The only edible wild fruit known is odea which ripens once a year and is a favourite mostly of children.

Saving and Investment

One of the strategies for handling crises quoted elsewhere is saving of cash which seems to be more common in Adado than elsewhere in rural Ethiopia.

The application of inputs such as fertilizers and insecticides is not very common among Gedeo farmers. Only 1% of loans taken from the Ministry of Agriculture in 1983/4 was spent on agricultural inputs and during the 1983/4 rainy season purchase of fertilizer by the Gedeo was one of the lowest for Sidamo region (Ministry of Agriculture, 1984).
Housing

In earlier times the average cost of building a thatched-roofed house ranged from 50 to 100 birr. At present, however, building the same type of house costs up to 500 birr due to the scarcity of wood. A house can last 10 years and if it is a well-built one may even last 15 years. A house thought to be big contains 3 rooms and is owned by those considered economically better off. The smallest house has 2 rooms and belongs to the poor. In Adado PA there are 25 tin-roofed houses.

Local Services

The only shop available in Adado is the one run by the service cooperative and it mostly stocks blankets, sugar, salt, umbrellas, sickles, and stationery. In addition, there is a market day every two days in the week where people buy some of these consumption goods. It was built with the help of the elders and the kebele.

There is one government-owned clinic in the area.

One extension agent with a Diploma in Agriculture serves the farmers in the PAs. He divides the peasants into 8 groups 4 of them being visited every week. He provides technical advice to farmers on every phase of farming starting from land clearing to crop harvesting. Farmers who miss the visit of the extension worker are given extension service by contact farmers recruited from the farmers themselves and trained by the extension agent. A young man recently recruited from the community and trained at Agarfa Multi-purpose Peasant Training Centre for a month is now acting as a government employee assisting the extension agent.

In Adado there are about 10 traditional bone setters locally known as chelessa. These people set the broken bones of both humans and animals. Traditional herbalists, also known as chelessa, number about 15 and prescribe different traditional medicines for various diseases. Traditional men and female birth attendants who are about 10 are serving the community at present. All of these are traditionally replaced, upon death, by their children who receive the profession from their parents through apprenticeship.

7. Local Institutions and Organizations

Households

The Gedeo accord a primal importance to men's position in the society. Voices of men, mainly elders, are generally decisive in allocating household labour and in making other household decisions. Given the patrilineal nature of the Gedeo society the father is the sole authority figure of the household, and the norms governing the relations between a household head and the rest of family members are respect and domination. This is not, however, to say that women have a marginalised position in the household; rather they play an active part in growing and marketing enset and in processing and preparing food for members of the household.

Generally speaking, with the emergence of coffee as a cash crop, men have been responsible for the maintenance of coffee plants, while women are held responsible for the growing and maintenance of enset. The decision as to what to plant, when to plant and when to harvest is largely made by men.

Marriage

Traditionally, the most important characteristic of marriage has been clan exogamy. In the Gedeo system men were encouraged to be polygynous, though this would depend upon a man's wealth and local prestige. When a man has more than one wife the co-wives either live close to each other or in
separate places. Polygyny is still significant, but the spread of Christianity and the economic pressure of having more than one wife and family have reduced its popularity.

The first married son receives from his parents land, a hoe, a machete and an axe. To a daughter parents must give utensils, cheko, cesona and a knife for use in enset processing. Other kin are not involved in any exchange of gifts at the time of a marriage. For the first year a married couple live in the house of the bridgroom's father. After one year they build their own house.

A man can take a second wife if he gives a dowry to the bride. But he does not receive any assistance or land from his family. He must build a new house for her and allocate the land he owns equally between his two wives.

A widow is free to choose to remarry or to live with her children who have inherited her husband's wealth, including land. If she marries again, she will give all the property to her husband's relatives, and her children will be brought up under guardians.

There are 5 forms of marriage practised among the Gedeo, namely, kada (marriage arranged by the parents), hawadie (elopement), boota (abduction), kinticho (sororate marriage), and dala (levirate marriage). The most common and widely accepted form of marriage is the kada. It is arranged by the parents of the bride and the groom. In earlier times, the prospective bride and groom neither had a say nor were they informed about the planned marriage. The situation has, however, been improving in recent times and the couple now have chances of getting to know each other in advance.

Usually a prolonged negotiation process takes place before the parents of the bride consent to give their daughter in marriage. Kada is the only form of marriage marked by a special celebration called Jilla conducted at the place of the bride's parents. An important aspect of the Jilla celebration is the ceremony whereby the elder brother of the bride hands over the bride to the peers of the groom with a symbolic stick called hororessa in her right hand. The symbolic significance of the ceremony is that the marriage has been made public and official in line with the accepted customs and conventions of the society. A kada conducted without this ceremony means a marriage practised against the accepted set of norms and is therefore regarded with low esteem and reduced to the level of concubinage.

Hawadie is elopement to which the couple resort when the groom and his parents realize that the chances of getting the consent of the bride's family are minimal. In this case, the groom and the bride arrange between themselves to disappear under the cover of darkness with the bride holding the symbolic stick (hororessa). The groom usually picks the girl from the market place. This type of marriage is not accepted by the community as legal until bridewealth (messano) has been paid and reconciliation has taken place between the two sides.

The third form of marriage which is informal but common is abduction (boota). A young man wishing to marry a certain girl, but not inclined to approach her parents for approval may abduct her himself, or arrange her abduction by way of friends. Abduction usually takes place at a market place and the abducted woman may resist the act. However, if she shows no sign of resistance her situation will be regarded as an elopement comparable to what happens in hawadie. Like hawadie, boota will not be valid immediately after abduction. For it to be legitimate and socially acceptable requirements, such us the payment of messano and mediation between the concerned parties, have to be satisfied.

Kinticho has legitimacy in accordance with traditional practices. This kind of marriage takes place when a man takes over the sister of his deceased wife. Kinticho closely resembles what anthropologists call sororate marriage. However, the former differs from the latter in that, unlike in sororate marriage, the husband of the deceased wife in kinticho marriage does not as of right demand the substitution of his sister-in-law as a wife.

The fifth type of marriage called dala (levirate) is a practice by which a man takes over the wife of his dead brother. This is considered as socially proper and is an arrangement whereby the brother assumes the responsibility of taking care of the property as well as the wife and children of his dead brother as an heir to his family. The heir is referred to as wassilla in Gedeo.

In earlier days bridewealth offered by the father of the groom to the father of the bride consisted of one piece of iron and/or a silver bar (messano), which traditionally was used as currency, together with a long belt of cloth. As time went by, the bridewealth provided consisted of a large-sized traditional cotton garment called sema for the father and a small-sized garment of the same type (duda) for the mother of the bride. The payment of bridewealth is now made in cash, currently 90 birr to the father of
the bride.

**Divorce**

Divorce is an undesirable but easily accepted practice among the Gedeo. When it happens, the wife has no share of the family property whatsoever and is let free empty handed leaving her children to the father.

**Inheritance**

Gedeo women are not generally eligible to inherit land. Property transfer is patrilineal and is allocated on the marriage of sons and at the death of the male household head. Upon the marriage of a son, the father calculates the land to be given to his son by dividing it by the total number of sons and himself. Upon his death the youngest son inherits his father's land if the older sons have already married and been allocated land. Occasionally, women can inherit if they are the only daughter. If the household has two or more wives the husband equally shares the land among the number of his male children born from his wives.

In terms of other property, upon the death of the household head, relatives and elders decides what each son should inherit. The eldest son will inherit any guns, spears and shields unless he is deprived of that right in which case they will go to a younger brother. The right to inherit will be removed if the person in question has an undesirable character in the family and community.

**Lineages and Clans**

There are important social and economic obligations associated with clans and lineages among the Gedeo. Members of the same clan or lineage come together to form an idir-like institution whereby the members provide mutual support when the need arises. To that end, they set up a common fund towards which each member regularly contributes 1 birr. The money thus raised is utilized when someone falls sick, suffers bereavement, loses his houses and property by fire, gives his son or daughter in marriage and so on.

Another area where the corporate nature of clans and lineages is manifested is the fact that clan and lineage leaders are responsible for settling disputes that may arise between members belonging to different clans and lineages.

Among the Gedeo there are no clan marks as such but clan members who have lived together long enough know one another very well. When they go to other places, they get to know each other by inquiring about their clan affiliations.

**Age Grading, Life Cycle Changes and Rites of Passage**

The once strong tradition of the Gada has become increasingly eroded over the years due to the encapsulation of the Gedeo by the central government and, most importantly, due to the policies of the previous government such as collectivization and villagisation. Moreover, more recently the growing influence and infiltration of Protestant denominations like Kale Hiwot, Mulu Wongel and Mekane Yesus have also played their part in undermining the Gedeo Gada system.

Unlike in pastoral societies, where there exist a number of elaborate rites of passage both for men and women, there are not many life cycle rituals among the Gedeo. The existing important rites of passage for the Gedeo men and women, involving expenditures are rites connected with birth, initiation, circumcision, marriage and death. The death of members of the Gada such as the Aba Gada, Aba Roga, and Hyitcha are accompanied by elaborate rituals, dances, chants and feasts.

Traditionally, circumcision was not practised among the Gedeo. However, during the Gada ritual marking the transfer of power from the outgoing Gada to the incoming, the newly installed Gada members used to be circumcised. At present circumcision is becoming more and more common probably due to the increasing contact of the Gedeo with the peoples and cultures of the areas where
circumcision is practised.

Markets

No standard measures and weights are used in the local markets. Sales are made by bargaining between buyers and sellers. Coffee is sold in tins or baskets to each of which containers a price is fixed. Balls of meat are sold wrapped up in enset leaves and prices are fixed according to the size of the ball. Enset or kocho is sold in loads or in parts according to which the prices vary.

During the time of Haile Selassie the local market was policed by the representatives of the local land lords called koro. They maintained market security by arresting thieves and those who tried to disturb the peace as well as by arbitrating between quarrelling parties. Since the period of the Derg, these duties have been taken over by members of the Kebele administration.

Credit and Social Security

In the case of a personal crisis such as a fire the community will give assistance. The elders assess the damage and coordinate to raise the funds for compensation.

Crisis-survival strategies among the Gedeo include saving cash, migration into Gujiland for support, marketing of enset and fruit at Guji markets, and shifting cultivation between highland and lowland areas. Inter-group lending and borrowing of cattle and enset between the Gedeo and Guji are also encouraged during times of crisis.

Four local organizations are present in the community that help to provide a form of social security. They were created in the following years; they are ranked from most to least useful for the community: 1918 - idir, 1940 equb, 1940 mehber, 1974 Peasant Association. The membership of the idir varies between 40 and 200. Members in the different idir pay 0.5-1 birr a week, 1-2 birr for a fortnight, and 2 birr a month. On death the following sums are paid: son or daughter - 50-100 birr; husband or wife - 100 birr; a relative - 40 birr; merdo (mourning a relative who died in another place and whose funeral you could not attend) - 30 birr. The idir also provides kocho (enset) for the funeral.

There are equb among retail traders. They contribute between 2 and 5 birr a week. There is also a group called edigret ("development"). This is like equb but only happens once a year.

Community Decision-making

Previously there was a community decision-making system called Gada. It made decisions from simple disputes to complex questions by putting the dispute through the system hierarchy Aba Gada, Aba Roga, Hiyitcha, Jalkaba. The final decision was made by the Aba Gada. Since the introduction of state decision-making institutions there are several possibilities for dispute resolution depending on the desire of those involved. Some go to the hierarchy to settle their dispute or the PA may recommend that the case be seen by the hierarchy. If the case is serious they will be sent to the police or court. The PA also have local police, a prison, and court to exercise power over local lawbreakers.

In 1991 2 political organizations, both claiming to represent the Gedeo, clashed. Each side arrested members of the other organization and tortured them. Upon the fall of the Derg, the Kebele leadership was replaced by the Peace and Stability Committee which in turn gave way to the establishment of the Kebele Administration. The Kebele Administration is still the representative of the government at the lowest level of the society in so far as it implements and executes the guidelines and policies of the state. However, a significant change has taken place regarding the relationship between the administration and the traditional community leaders. Not only are the traditional leaders recognized but they are also consulted and sometimes invited to attend government-called meetings concerning the welfare and common interests of the community. On such occasions, the local leaders give their blessings to all present and share their rich experience with the participants. Apart from this, there is no situation in which the local elders have taken over the place of the Kebele Administration so as to perform its duties and responsibilities. There are different hierarchical levels of elders' councils among the Gedeo. The council at PA level is known as the hayo. They are involved in solving disputes and
some matters related to justice.

Land tax is a serious problem about which the population often complain. There is a general feeling that the amount of land tax levied during the period of Haile Selassie was relatively fair. During that time taxes were collected per gasha (a gasha consists of 40 hectares) of land rather than per head. A gasha of land was taxed 40 birr annually which meant that an individual farmer who shared the gasha with a number of others was required to pay an insignificant part of the total for his own plot. Since the time of the Derg, however, taxes began to be imposed on individual plots, rather than on the basis of gashas of land. The amount levied on a single plot had reached 20 birr annually about the end of the Derg era. Farmers who possessed many plots of land had to pay up to 80 birr annually.

Although taxes have been reduced to a certain extent during the period of the Transitional Government, the amount required per plot of land continues to be high in view of the farmers annual income. Farmers explain their discontent in different ways. One farmer was reported to have brought handfuls of soil wrapped in enset leaves as his payment of the land tax. He explained that he was given soil and was paying back soil itself for what he had received. His act demonstrated that he had got no harvest and what he had was only the soil.

**Redistributive Mechanisms**

The major traditional feast involving all members of the community has been the Bale ceremony which take place once in eight years and is associated with the Gada system. On this occasion bulls are slaughtered and the community feasts together for several days in succession.

Following the return of the Emperor from exile in 1941, measures were taken to christianize the Gedeo as a result of which certain members of the local people were converted to Orthodox Christianity. The converts started to observe certain holidays and festivals in accordance with the customs of the church on which occasion they prepared feasts for the local residents. However, such feasts have now lost importance since they were regarded as not originally belonging to the customs of the native population. Hence, apart from the major festival mentioned earlier, there are no other important occasions when feasts are prepared and wealth is redistributed.

**8. Beliefs and Values**

**Land**

Occasionally a crisis may occur, such as the destruction of enset and coffee plants due to diseases. One such occurrence was the 1972/73 coffee failure. According to one source the Gedeo attempted to alleviate the coffee crisis by carrying out a ritual process of cleansing Gedeoland, called Getala. The process involved in each village the ceremonial washing away of the evil that invaded Gedeoland by performing the act of slaughtering goats and praying, which started early in the morning, and ended at sunset.

**Religion**

The traditional religious beliefs of the Gedeo are centred on a supernatural being referred to by the Gedeo as Maganno, which literally means Sky God. All creations, best qualities and abilities and limitless powers are attributed to the Maganno whom all Gedeo by instinct invariably believe to exist. Hence, the entire body of Gedeo oral traditions, their proverbs, maxims, folk tales, and myths reflect their beliefs and convictions in Maganno. Besides Maganno, natural objects and geographic features such as trees, rivers, and hills which are thought to possess superhuman powers are also adored. On the whole, the religious devotion of the Gedeo revolves around their desire to be protected against calamities and misfortunes so as, with all the adverse situations prevented, to live in peace, good health and happiness.

The Gedeo also have religious practices which serve as instruments of mediation between man and
God. The first called *Kettelia* is a ritual performed by singing, dancing and praying meant to express thanks to the divine so that he will send them blessings and curse their enemies and drive evil forces away. The Gedeo have great respect for their ancestors and there is a ritual called *Terro* when the head of the family offers food as sacrifices. The father goes to the place where his forefathers sacrificed and scatters food as an expression of thanks to God for the good harvest and all other benefits received from him. The third form of practice called *tolicha* is carried out on behalf of individuals believed to possess ritual powers. In this sacrifice, the Gedeo beg their God to pour down his blessings on the ritual leaders so that they will bring good luck and fortunes to the community.

Traditionally, all religious and ritual performances are carried out by the traditional leaders of the community (*Aba Gada, Aba Roga, Hyticha*) assisted by the elders of the clans to which role they are assigned. One example is the traditional religious ceremony which they carry out when they begin communal work and on its completion.

Christianity was introduced into the area during the 1920s and 30s and a good number of people in the PA have become Christian and some are Muslims. 90% of people are Protestants, 5% Muslim, and 2% orthodox Christian. The religions co-exist peacefully with each other and with the practice of local/traditional religious beliefs.

**Explanations of Misfortune and Illness**

Illness may be explained as a punishment for someone who has stolen somebody's property, or it may be considered as God's wishes. Carelessness is blamed for accidents.

There are local witches. They are engaged in fixing *tare*. *Tare* is something which is placed or fixed by the witch to protect somebody's property. The person who desires this protection must pay money to the witch. These witches are also traditional medical practitioners.

There are no rainmakers, but the elders pray to their gods if the rain delays.

9. The Community

**Social Conflict**

There has been traditionally a series of conflicts between the Gedeo and the Guji over the use and exploitation of land. Similar conflicts are also known to have taken place between the Gedeo and the Sidama. As far as the Gedeo elders recall, these conflicts were resolved about eighty years ago in a traditional peace-making ceremony called *Gondoro*, during which occasion the *Gada* leaders of both sides conferred to negotiate and make peace. The *Gada* leaders and the members of both communities feasted together upon the bulls slaughtered for the ceremony and broke a bone symbolizing the end of hostilities and peaceful co-existence afterwards. Ever since, no large-scale conflicts have taken place involving the communities apart from separate incidents between individual members of the group.

**Poverty and Wealth**

One can get a glimpse of Gedeo living standards from the following statistics: in 1984 the literacy rate was 33%; working age population was 44% of total population; average household income was 328 *birr*; only 4% of the Gedeo rural population have access to piped drinking water; only 13% of the population have access to medical facilities at nearby health clinics; and the unsanitary and crowded conditions of rural dwelling units were considered to be one of the lowest in Sidamo.

The source of wealth in the community is trade in agricultural products, farming, and land. The rich buy coffee and other crops to sell when the price increases. People become poor if they are not saving, if they have sold their land, or if they are not cultivating their farm properly. The richer are mostly middle-aged.

Due to the population increase most of the people have a very small size of plot which is not sufficient to feed their family throughout the year and the number of landless people is increasing. In a wealth-ranking three respondents divided a sample of households into 4 categories: rich, middle, poor
and very poor.

The wealthy were described as having many plots of land; having sufficient coffee and *enset*; saving in the form of cash; having galvanized iron roofs to their houses; having sufficient clothes; being able to borrow from outside the household; possessing the surrounding crops; being able to use what they have effectively; being able to produce a wide range of products for consumption and sale; and being able to employ daily labourers on their farming land.

The middle category have fewer plots than the rich; are unable to overcome the problem caused by coffee disease; cultivate effectively; work day and night to compete with the rich farmers; employ fewer daily labourers than the rich; have enough land to some extent; have a roof made from thatch and occasionally galvanized iron; have less coffee and *enset* than the rich; are able to manage the household; and do not borrow from outside the household.

The poor have very small plots; or they have many children with not enough land; some are employed in the surrounding service cooperative coffee mill; some work for individuals; have houses whose walls are made from bamboo and the roof from *enset* leaves (*officho*); and who live from hand to mouth.

The very poor are mainly those who have no land or crops for consumption; have no house or one made of twigs and *enset* leaves; are employed in coffee milling or in local households and in the town for their daily food consumption; have been going to Shakiso for goldmining; are going to steal if given a chance; who are drunkards; and are unable to borrow since they have no collateral.

Social Mobility

One respondent said that it takes about 5 years for a household to move down 1 category: eg from 1 to 2, or 3 to 4. Typical reasons for downward mobility are coffee "cholera" (coffee berry disease); sometimes the coffee does not flower; and frost (if the frost hits the coffee it does not give fruit for up to 5 years). People also become poorer due to shortage of land. The same respondent suggested it takes about 5 years to move up from 1 category to the next. The typical reason is the absence of the problems just mentioned. People also should be good farmers.

Other reasons for downward mobility given by the 2 other respondents included the fluctuation of market prices; being afflicted by *wello*, a disease which kills *enset* which may affect the family for up to 7 years; being unable to farm because of sickness or old age; a change in character such as when a respectable person becomes a drunkard; getting a small share of land, particularly in large families; the cost incurred when a household member dies; the cost of wedding ceremonies; and selling land at different times. All these factors are more acute for large families.

Other reasons given for upward mobility included migrating to farm a large plot of land in other areas; using income effectively; minimising unnecessary relaxation eg avoiding excessive drinking and sex; working without undermining the job; saving what is generated by the farm or other income-generating activities; working day and night; buying land (even though it is illegal) at any time and expanding the farming plots and thereby increasing the number of permanent crops (coffee and *enset*); trading locally even though they do not have a business licence; having a good housewife who can save and use efficiently what is produced on the farm and control her husband.

People frequently move between the 2 middle categories but tend to get restricted to these categories. The crucial factor is land; they do not have enough land and are not able to sell or lease it. Other suggestions are that they do not try to improve their farming methods and do not look for other opportunities.

The child of a poor person can become rich if he saves and coordinates trade and farm activities. The Gedeo highly value hard work. As a result, it is possible for someone who has been poor to acquire possessions and become wealthy through hard work. On the other hand, a rich man may lose his wealth as a result of having large family to support or his wealth may be abused by his children and he may become poor as a consequence.

Status

An individual's prestige and power in the community are not determined by the number of livestock that
he possesses (which is the case among the Guji). The prestige of the Gedeo rather depends on wealth acquired through individual effort and initiative.

The most respected people in the community are those who save and who effectively manage their livelihood. Management skills are highly valued. A successful farmer is one who has enough means of production, who saves from his production for the next season, and who has a locally accepted good house. A successful farmer is recognized as one who uses well what he has and not he who produces the largest amount. Saving is seen as the most important skill. Technical skill is not valued as such, what is respected is the effort made to be self-sufficient.

Undesirable qualities in men and boys are drunkenness and thievery. He who sells off his farmland, disrespects his wife or is a womanizer is strongly disapproved of.

Diplomacy is the most important social skill. People who are regarded with great esteem are those who are able to generate ideas to solve problems within the community, with other communities, and with the wider political system.

The other important basis of status among the Gedeo has traditionally been attaining the membership of the Gada system as Aba Gada, Aba Roga, Hyyticha. A traditional power transfer ceremony called Bale takes place at an interval of 8 years, during which time a new group of Gada members take over political ritual, social and even economic responsibilities from the out-going group of leaders. People who have attained this status which is a symbol of prestige are viewed with high respect and esteem.

There are caste groups in Adado, tanners and blacksmiths being called Awado and potters Watta. Traditionally, the caste groups are not entitled to possess plots of land. However, there are a few artisans with small plots of land. While these caste groups reside among the community mixed with the non-caste members, they intermarry only within their own group.

Social Stratification

As far as social inequalities are concerned, Gedeo society did display (in the past) small differences in wealth and property possession. The religiously and traditionally ordained gada system, supported by social sanctions, was an effective means of regulating marked differences in wealth and property. This had been attested by the relative equality in the communal allocation of land to all members of the Gedeo society. In those days, each individual had access to land; though, the principle of seniority took precedence in the administration of land by village elders. However, the community as a whole had the overall responsibility in ensuring that no household would be denied access to the minimum requirements of life. As a whole the Gedeo society was not based on exploitative social arrangements, with the exception of divisions between men and women and between cultivators and artisans. Even then, the latter were not completely subjugated to the interests and needs of the former since cultivators were dependent (in many ways) on the products of artisans.

However, the transition of Gedeo society from a communal to an individualistic orientation to wealth and property during the second half of the twentieth century has brought about internal differentiation in wealth and property. Such differences today are observed between traditionally dominated cultivators and market-oriented individuals. While most Gedeo still stick to their traditional ways of acquiring subsistence (through the hoe and digging stick, and occasionally through oxen traction), some have shifted to the cash economy dominated by coffee trading. These individuals act as mediators between town merchants and ordinary Gedeo men as a result of which they collect coffee from peasants at cheaper prices and sell to markets at relatively high prices. Besides, motivated by individual interests, some Gedeo have become successful entrepreneurs and have such establishments in Dila as hotels, restaurants and bars. Therefore, one can say that recent trends are showing significant differences in the acquisition of wealth, and such differences are conspicuous in the possession of cash, clothes and food patterns.

A person from a well-to-do family can get a job in the service cooperative.

A respondent reported that PA officials are among the local elites; they have been elected by the people and they are trying to serve loyally. They are getting wealthier but this is not because they are elites but because they work hard. One person who was named was Kebede Maru who was rich and
literate and even before he came to power the society supported him. He inherited his wealth. He is the treasurer of the coffee hulling machine. Bekele Bekete is the wereda administrator. Other members of the elite include Alemayehu Maru, Alemayehu Benta, and Woldemariam Yicheniku. They achieved their positions through hard work and their good relationship with society. There is no conflict among them.

10. Relationships with Other Communities and the Wider Society

Clans and Tribes

The Gedeo people have a special relationship with the Guji people, in which they assist one another both in bad and good times. The Gedeo supply the Guji with enset and the latter provide the neighbouring Gedeo with cattle. Nevertheless, the two groups have had conflicts, often caused by the encroachment of Gedeo upon Guji land through migration. The occupation of Gujiland by the Gedeo had been undertaken through tactful methods of displacing Guji pastoralists. It involved the gradual eviction of the Guji by means of cursing their pasturelands with cabbage seeds (this act was considered by the Guji as a cause of bad fortune to the well-being of the people and the cattle) which the Gedeo brought from their homeland.

Today, because most of the cultivable land is being devoted to coffee plantations, mainly in the lowlands, rather than enset in the middle elevation zones, some tension is being caused with the Guji who formerly used the lowlands. The Gedeo have managed to settle in lowland areas through migration since the early part of the century. As population pressure on the Gedeo's traditional settlements increased, this had to be mitigated by means of occupation of Guji lands which has caused tensions and conflicts between the two groups. In fact, such conflicts are said to have involved wars between the two, and when these wars took place, the outcomes were in favour of the Gedeo people, due to their superior military position over the neighbouring groups. For these and other similar reasons, the Gedeo land has expanded by 50% since 1895 (the period when the Gedeo people became incorporated into the Ethiopian empire).

As a strategy for dealing with crisis the Gedeo borrow and lend enset for cattle with Guji people. Some Gedeo also find relatives (nowadays the Gedeo and the Guji do intermarry) down in the Guji area and may spend weeks and months there when crises heavily affect Gedeoland.

The Gedeo community in general is composed of 7 different, but often cohesive clans, whose basis of social organisation lies in territorial divisions as expressed in rituals and the institutionally-focused Gada system known as Hayuma.

Villages, Towns and Regions

With the construction of the Addis Ababa - Nairobi all-weather asphalt road and the growing of such commercial towns as Dila and Hagermariam, the traditionally peripheral Gedeo area has become accessible for such infrastructural developments as roads, water, electricity facilities, schools and health facilities. In particular, Dila has become the centre of all trade activities for the Gedeo people and for the settlers, and is provided with most of the urban services, like a health centre, a high school, a junior agro-technical institute, electricity, water supply, hotels and other similar basic urban services. Today, the Gedeo have access to several feeder roads that connect Gedeo to different market places. With such developments, the alluring commercial nature of coffee has increased, and coffee together with enset accounts for about 32% of the cultivated land in the Gedeo area. As the Gedeo's interest in coffee increased, further reinforced by the growing importance of coffee on the international market during the post World War II period, the traditionally enset-focused cultivation in the highlands had to give way to downslope cultivation in the lowlands where coffee grows in abundance.

Local elites have a link with neighbouring peasant associations in coffee trading as well as politically. Adado PA is average in terms of income compared with surrounding PAs.
**Relationships with Wider Ethiopia**

Political issues are not the major concerns of the people of Adado at large. However, the population do not want a repeat of the times of the neftenya and the Derg regime which they remember with bitter memories. Besides, the people as a whole would like to be recognized as an ethnic group and be represented in the central government as an expression of being accepted as Ethiopians.

PA officials relate to wider Ethiopian political and administrative structures through the woreda agents.

**Effects of Government Policies**

One respondent reported that people in Adado are better off economically than they were in 1991 since the price of coffee has increased (from 2 birr to 17 birr per kg). Also there are no obligation duties and contributions. Although another said the cost of living had also increased. However they are politically worse off because of the ethnic conflict between the Gedeo and the neighbouring Guji clans because the Gujis are claiming that some of the land now included in Gedeoland is theirs. Another said that they are happy about Mengistu's exile because he used to take people to the war front by force (pulling them like asses) and forced contributions are abolished.

Another respondent suggested that most people did not know much about the Constitution or even what it means. Local elites are familiar with those bits that they think will affect them like self-determination and regionalization.

People do not support the policy of self-determination since they think this will make the conflict between them and their neighbours worse. They do not like regionalization because they want to be able to move to any region where they might find work - either farming or trading - which they cannot do since the people of one region do not allow others to live and work there.

One respondent said that people do not understand about the Constitution. People do not know about democracy properly but they think it is good since the word is said now and then by everyone as if it were good. For example, if something is done democratically but may not be good in their thinking they would not consider it as democracy. Another said they assume it is freedom to do whatever they want. Another said the do not have full knowledge of democracy but understand it as a means for equality with others and an opportunity for learning in their own language and other rights. There is a security problem in the surrounding woreda because of the conflict with the Guji. Even though the conflict areas are not adjacent to the Adado site it is threatening.

There is a shortage of land and because of this people are migrating to other areas for gold mining (Shakiso) and for farming. This was common before Mengistu left but now has decreased because of regionalization. Parents are sharing their land with their children. When we think about the future it is difficult to give a solution. Land may be distributed by local elites through the number of household members. This might not be acceptable to the people because one might own the land by different means like buying, inheriting and so on.

**Government Activities in the Community**

Adado is the central hub of the local service cooperative which was founded by 9 surrounding PAs. Facilities located in Adado include a coffee washing plant, shop, service cooperative office, school, health clinic. The SC, which was organized in 1977 by the development agents from the Ministry of Agriculture, buys coffee from and supplies merchandise to the member PAs.

In 1977 the community members built the school and the government provided the teachers. In 1979 community members attended the government literacy programme. In 1986 the community built the Health Clinic and the government supplied drugs and health workers.

The services provided by the government were not considered useful because:

a) The school did not provide a good education and as a result the students are not able to attend higher education.
b) The health clinic has not cured people of illnesses, although they pay large amounts of money.
c) The service cooperative does not provide services of which the community is in need.
d) The development agents could not help them to increase production. On the contrary, once they brought in very low production coffee seeds.

During the Derg regime the Gedeo had access to credit facilities and a Ministry of Agriculture survey in 1983/4 indicates that the average household credit in Gedeo was 5.05 birr of which 18% was spent on food, 18% on clothes, 19% for medical expenses, 10% for social and religious ceremonies, 19% for tax and debt payments and 1% for agricultural inputs.

**NGO and Community Activities in the Community**

There are no NGO activities in the community. However there have been a range of community activities to help families and neighbourhoods. Most of these activities are centred on local cooperative efforts (many of which are traditionally-based) and include road construction, the establishment of irrigation channels, the construction and maintenance of new and existing water sources, and several conservation measures including terracing. Most of these are seen by individual Gedeo as being imposed rather than self-initiated and motivated.

**Future**

There is a shortage of land which is due to the increase in population and because of this people are migrating. The shortage will get even worse in the future. One said this could be solved by controlling fertility. He suggested that if the land were redistributed in the future the community would be better off. There is a need to find extra land and off-farm unskilled jobs. They would like the establishment of projects and a free coffee market. They would also like new technology for coffee production, material aid from the government to help the poor work on their land properly, and improved seeds. They also need clean water, clinics, toilets, farm inputs, education and transport.

These inapplicable policies in developing countries like us are affecting the poorest members very much. When the cost of living increases the poor are forced to use everything they had and then become day labourers or unemployed. To come out of this, first some research has to be done in the community and then, depending on this, policies might be adjusted in relation to the available resources and the customs and traditions of the people.

One respondent said that the community does not do anything for the poor and that the rich have excess land and livestock. Those with large holdings are those who bought land at different times, who inherited from their families and who have few sons. Policies to counteract poverty are required.

**GLOSSARY**

*Arabi:* A distilled spirit.
*Balabat:* Landlord in the Southern part of Ethiopia.
*Belg:* A short rainy season usually occurring during February/March/April; the harvest takes place in July/August.
*Birr:* The currency of Ethiopia (9 birr= approximately £1)
*Chat:* *Catha edulis.* A bushy plant whose leaves contain mild narcotics. Its leaves are chewed.
*Dejazmach:* Military title.
*Derg:* The name of the military government that ruled Ethiopia from the revolution until 1991; Amharic for committee.
*Enset:* False Banana. A plant resembling the banana; the roots and inside of the trunk and branches are eaten often being stored to allow for fermentation.
Equb: A rotating savings and credit association.
Gada: Age grade social structure among the Oromo.
Gebbar: A tenant or a servant.
Gesho: A plant the leaves of which are used to make beer.
Idir: A burial society.
Kebele: A political boundary marking a village, an association of villages or an urban dweller’s association.
Maderia: Land given to soldiers as a pension.
Mehber: A religious society which meets monthly on a Saint’s day. Each member takes a turn to host the group, providing food and drink.
Meher: The main rainy season - in most places from June to mid-September. Crops sown during this period are harvested from October to December.
Neftenya: Literal meaning is one who carries a gun. Often used to refer to the soldiers and other landlords from the North who took up land in the South at the instigation of the government.
Qallad: Unit of land measure.
Qudad: Labour obligation due to a landlord or balabat.
Rist: Type of land ownership.
Tef (grain): Eragrostis abyssinica (The staple cereal crop in northern Ethiopia).
Tella: Home-made beer.
Wereda: An administrative unit in the old administrative divisions until 1991.
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### Labour

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### Remarks
- Women also engage in shopping, fetching wood and water, harvesting enset, and child care.
- Men are involved in weeding, planting, soil preparation, sowing, harvesting, and child care.
- Various tasks such as weeding, planting, harvesting, childcare, and housework are distributed across different months and ethnic groups.
## Children's Labour

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<th>Genbot</th>
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### Boys

- when they are small they fetch water
- when they are grown up they engage in farm work and herding

### Girls

- general trade
- assisting in harvesting enset
- coffee collecting enset harvesting
- harvesting enset
- housework
- housework

### School terms

- we don't know
## Health Calendar

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