

## RECOMMENDATIONS

DESPITE LIMITATIONS, THE VILLAGISATION PROGRAMME SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED SOME SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENABLED SOME PASTORALISTS TO IMPLEMENT IRRIGATION FARMING, DIVERSIFYING THEIR INCOME. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN WATER SHORTAGES AND LIMITED LAND RESOURCES, AND THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR HAS NOT BEEN WELL SUPPORTED, CAUSING FOOD INSECURITY IN THESE VILLAGISED COMMUNITIES. CONSEQUENTLY, IN BOTH WOREDAS, SOME HOUSEHOLDS DROPPED OUT OF THE VILLAGISATION PROGRAMME AND RETURNED TO THEIR TRADITIONAL PASTORAL WAY OF LIFE.

01

To support local livelihoods and wellbeing, water allocation and distribution schemes in villagised areas need to be more efficient and equitable. To this end, stakeholders from community, local, regional and national levels should work together to prepare policy guidelines on sustainable access to water resources between clan members of different communities, and among different age-groups. It is also critical that ABA and KSC give equal opportunities to villagised communities in their water allocation schemes and do not prioritise state and private investors' irrigation farms.

02

Watershed management activities should be prioritised throughout the Awash river basin, to regulate and stabilise the water supply, and ensure water availability for irrigation and households. For example, the government could construct more water reservoirs in the Middle Awash Valley, develop existing underground water resources, and introduce water-efficient irrigation technologies. Irrigation methods such as drip or sprinkler irrigation could help to save water and minimise the risk of soil salinisation.

03

Villagised communities should receive training on farming practices and forage improvements. The government and NGOs could also consider ways of supporting villagised communities who need to make upfront investments in order to switch to crop farming (e.g. seeds, fertilisers and irrigation water motor pumps).

04

As farmers can grow locally marketable crops such as fruit and vegetables, it is important that the federal and regional governments, in collaboration with NGOs, help to create adequate market linkages. One option could be to create links with Buyer Associations, which are established for customers in different areas and institutions, particularly in large cities nearby such as Adama and Addis Ababa.

05

Growing perennial fruit trees around homesteads and in farms (e.g. mango, papaya trees) would serve the dual purpose of providing cash crops for sale in the local market, and shade in the hot, dry climate. Research centres (e.g. Worer and Melkasa Agricultural Research Centres, ABA) could help support tree planting.

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## DOES VILLAGISATION ENHANCE THE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY OF PASTORALIST COMMUNITIES?

PERSPECTIVES FROM ASSAR'S WORK IN ETHIOPIA

IN ETHIOPIA, DROUGHT, ERRATIC RAINFALL, FLOODING, INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES, AND THE EXPANSION OF LARGE-SCALE FARMS ARE SOME OF THE DYNAMICS THAT HAVE REDUCED AVAILABLE WATER AND RANGELAND RESOURCES, AND ALTERED THE LIVELIHOODS OF PASTORALISTS.

THE GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA HAS INTRODUCED A VILLAGISATION PROGRAMME IN THE COUNTRY'S ARID AND SEMI-ARID REGIONS TO ADDRESS THE VULNERABILITIES OF PASTORALISTS TO RECENT CLIMATIC AND NON-CLIMATIC STRESSORS. THE PROGRAMME CENTRES ON WATER DEVELOPMENT, AND AIMS TO SETTLE PASTORALISTS INTO SEDENTARY WAYS OF LIFE.



HOWEVER THERE HAVE BEEN CRITICISMS OF THE PROGRAMME.

SOME PEOPLE VIEW IT AS AN ATTEMPT TO TAKE PASTORALISTS' LAND FOR GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT. OTHERS VIEW IT AS A DEVELOPMENT PLAN THAT GOES AGAINST THE RIGHTS OF THE PASTORAL LIVELIHOOD SYSTEM.

IN 2010, VILLAGISATION WAS INTRODUCED IN THE AFAR NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE, IN THE ARID AND SEMI-ARID REGION OF THE MIDDLE AWASH VALLEY. FOUR OUT OF FIVE KEBELES IN AWASH FENTALE WOREDA, AND 15 OUT OF 19 KEBELES IN AMIBARA WOREDA WERE VILLAGISED. VILLAGISATION WAS IMPLEMENTED IN KEBELES THAT HAVE WATER ACCESS EITHER FROM STATE OR COMMERCIAL IRRIGATION CANALS AND/OR THE AWASH RIVER.

THE WOREDA VILLAGISATION PROGRAMMES WERE IMPLEMENTED BY DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS, USING DIFFERENT APPROACHES. AS A RESULT, THE QUALITY OF THE HOUSES, ALLOCATED LAND SIZE, LAND COMPENSATION SCHEMES, CROPS PLANTED AND MARKET LINKAGES FOR CROPS ARE UNIQUE TO EACH WOREDA:

- In Awash Fentale, the Kesseme Sugar Corporation (KSC) managed a sugarcane plantation and sponsored villagisation. The development of the plantation meant some of the villagisation in this woreda had been involuntary. The presence of KSC meant farmers had market links for their own sugarcane and there was some compensation available for farmers before they began crop farming.
- Conversely, in Amibara, villagisation was voluntary and government-led. The broader aim was to improve livelihoods, but there were no established market linkages or compensation. Crop production was limited to subsistence farming and locally marketable crops.

HERE, WE EXPLORE A NUMBER OF THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THESE VILLAGISATION PROGRAMMES, TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY AFFECT PASTORAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE.

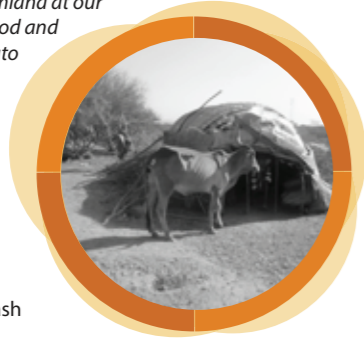


## HOUSEHOLDS BENEFIT FROM DIVERSIFIED INCOME

Pastoralists, such as Ahmed and Ali have been happy with the transition to village life.

*"We were happy as the new programme transforms us from pastoralist to agro-pastoralist. Now we have farmland at our village and we produce different food and cash crops (e.g. maize, onion, tomato and vegetables) and forage for livestock." - Ahmed, pastoralist, Amibara woreda.*

*"Previously, we did not have houses and farmlands, now we do. There is now an opportunity to improve our livelihood since we have our own land and water for irrigation." - Ali, Doho kebele, Awash Fentale woreda.*



## IMPROVED SOCIAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

For some women in Amibara woreda, the change from pastoralist to semi-sedentary way of life has altered their workload and created opportunities to learn new skills.

*"Due to villagisation we get continued training and awareness on personal and environmental sanitation, waste management, family planning and balanced diet and nutrition by health workers and health extension agents in our village. We also attend adult education, use mobile phones, and are able to write and read." - Nyala and Fatuma, Bedula-ali kebele, Amibara woreda.*



## PASTORALISTS MOVE TO A SEMI-SEDENTARY WAY OF LIFE

Additional income from new crops and access to land has enabled households to plan for future assets.

*"Previously, we only followed livestock rearing ... Now we started to generate additional income from irrigation agriculture. Since it provides us with good income, we plan to construct urban houses in the nearby towns." - Meryam, Badahamo kebele, Amibara woreda.*

*"It is better than making continuous movement from place to place. Now here is our house, here is the water, and no drinking-water shortage. There is fodder for our livestock." - Ahmed, Amibara woreda.*



# BENEFITS

Irrigation in Amibara and Awash Fentale has allowed some households to diversify their incomes and improve their food security by growing mixed crops and livestock. Most use crop residue to feed their livestock and a few started growing forage using irrigation farming. These activities are new to the pastoral community.

For women in particular, the change from pastoralist to semi-sedentary livelihoods has eased their workload and offers a new set of opportunities. In both woredas women welcomed villagisation because they can now access water, reduce their work burden related to migration, diversify their income by selling new crops and in some instances gain ownership of land for the first time. In Awash Fentale some people have gained non-agricultural employment at KSC.

Villagised communities in both woredas have improved access to basic social services and amenities such as schools, health, electricity and water. In these cases, most people can access information, technology and adult education.

For households in both woredas the shift to irrigation farming has reduced the need to migrate and enabled them to practice semi-sedentary ways of lives. In particular, elders do not have to migrate as often as they did under a pastoralist way of life and children can now go to school near their homes.



# CHALLENGES

In Awash Fentale, many pastoralists lost their rangeland to sugarcane plantations, did not receive houses or land in compensation, and therefore did not start irrigation farming. This left them feeling unhappy with the villagisation scheme. Even those who did receive houses were sometimes unhappy because the houses were not well constructed and were easily damaged.

Water shortages in the Amibara woreda negatively impacted the switch to irrigation farming. Especially when combined with existing conditions: poor irrigation canal network, poor water quality, flood hazards, priority given to government and private sugarcane plantations, and poor market linkages for crops. Meanwhile in Awash Fentale, water allocation was not based on the need and interest of the villagers, but rather on the watering programme for the sugarcane planted in the vicinity of farmers' land.

In both woredas water quality issues were also challenging. Developed underground water, together with unsafe irrigation water management, made potable water salty and left much cultivated land salinised and thus unusable.

The villagisation programme has pushed pastoralists out of their traditional rangelands. Much of the previously productive grazing land has been allocated as irrigation farming. Some households have become food insecure due to the extreme shortage of grazing land, and the absence of or delay in land compensation payment. Given that farming had often never been practised before, many households found it difficult.

The use of many forest trees in the process of villagisation has caused deforestation and a shortage of forest products and firewood in both woredas. As a result, women have been forced to travel longer distances to collect firewood and house construction materials. The removal of natural forest cover also encourages land degradation and the expansion of invasive plant species (e.g. *Prosopis juliflora*).

## UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AND LOW QUALITY HOUSES

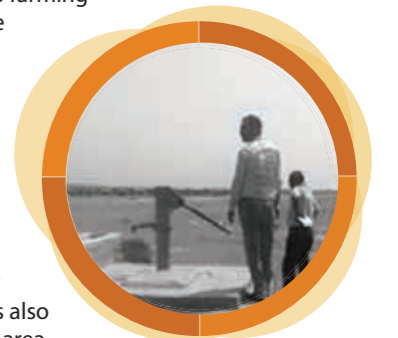
In Awash Fentale woreda, most households did not receive land for sugarcane plantation or crop farming. In addition, the size of land provided for villagisation was not always sufficient for the number of eligible households, and housing quality was often low.

*"The iron roofs for most houses was blown away by wind, and we are scared to stay in these houses. As a result, we are forced to construct traditional houses that can withstand the effect of wind." - Florence, Doho kebele.*



## WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY CHALLENGES

In Amibara, pastoralists were forced to grow cotton crops, which has a high water requirement that was difficult to meet in an area with water shortages. In Awash Fentale and Amibara woredas limited irrigation canal networks stopped farmers implementing crop farming even when they did receive irrigable land. Unfair water allocation meant households have forcefully diverted state irrigation canals, causing conflict with KSC and ABA and also between villagers. The water withdrawal capacity of available motor pumps per unit of time was also too small to irrigate a large area.



## FOOD INSECURITY DUE TO SHRINKING PASTURE LAND

Fertile rangeland was converted to irrigated farmlands, causing feed shortages and a reduction and change in mix of pastoralists' animals. There have been resultant shortages of meat, milk and marketable animals.

*"Previously the agricultural and pasture lands were separated and there was sufficient pasture land for our livestock. But now all land is covered by sugarcane plantation and we face very high pasture scarcity for our livestock." - Ali, Doho kebele, Awash Fentale woreda.*

