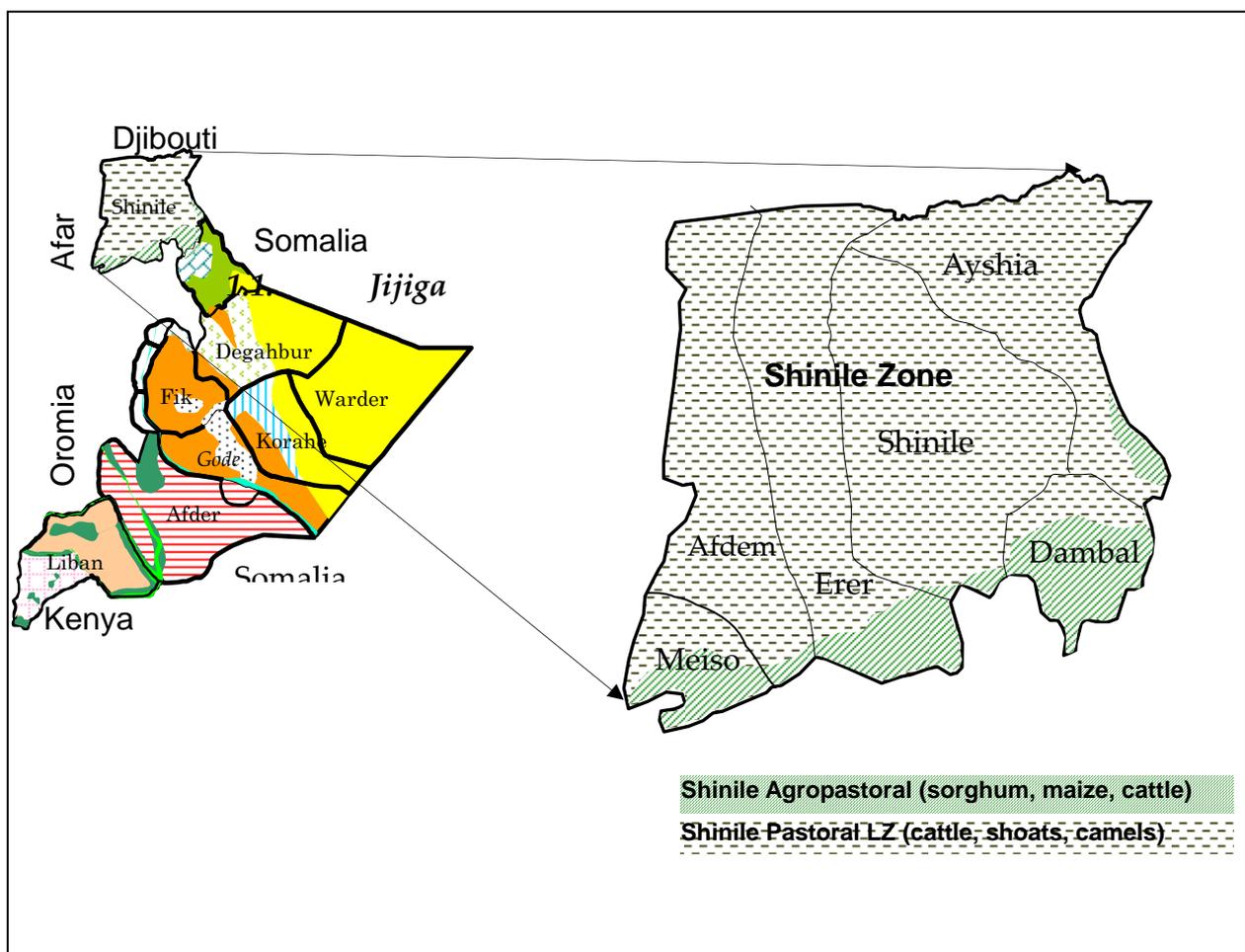


Shinile Agropastoral Livelihood Zone

(Sorghum, Cattle and Shoats)

Shinile Administrative Zone, Somali National Regional State, Ethiopia



An HEA Baseline Study By SC (UK), DPPB, and Partners, October 2001

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Terms and Acronyms

ACF	Action Contra le Faim
<i>dabagaalo</i>	squirrel
<i>Deyr</i>	Rainy season between October and December
<i>dhido</i>	porcupine
DPPB/D	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau/Department
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
LZ	Livelihood Zone
FS/EW	Food Security Monitoring/Early Warning
<i>gogori</i>	a type of Bird
<i>Gu</i>	Rainy season between early April and June
<i>Hagaa</i>	Dry season between July and September
HCS	Hararghe Catholic Secretariat
Jilaal/Qoraxeed	Hot dry season between late December and March
<i>kerkerre</i>	warthogs and wild pigs
OFDA	USAID Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance
OWDA	Ogaden Welfare and Development Association
OWS	Ogaden Welfare Society
PCAE	Pastoralist Concern Association Ethiopia
<i>quuto</i>	hornbill
SC-UK	Save the Children-UK
SC-USA	Save the Children-USA
SNRS	Somali National Regional State
WFP	UN-World Food Programme

1 Executive Summary

Shinile Zone is one of the nine administrative zones of Somali National Regional State. Lying in the northernmost tip of the Region, it borders with Djibouti in the North, Somaliland on the Northeast, Jijiga Zone on the Southeast, Direedawa and Oromia Regions on the south and Afar Region on the west. The Zonal population's livelihood mainly depends on livestock production. There is also a significant amount of trade activity and a small amount of crop production in the southern part – in livestock and imported goods.

Shinile Agropastoral LZ makes up about 15-25% of the total population of Shinile Zone. The Agropastoral LZ lies at the southern foothills of the Zone and is mainly found in Dambal district (about 60%), Meiso district (about 20%), Erer district (about 20%) and the rest in Shinile district (about 10%). This LZ grows mainly sorghum and keeps cattle. The Agropastoral area is also used as dry season grazing area by the pastoralists in the *jilaal* and sometimes and sometimes in the *hagaa* dry seasons.

The main reasons why the population in this LZ has shifted towards agropastoralism in the last decade or two include: Reduction in herd sizes due to the recurrent droughts; to stop what is perceived as an encroachment by farming Oromo Communities into Somali farming areas in Shinile. Also, the Federal system of Government has encouraged people to settle down.

The main rainy seasons of this LZ are *dira* and *karan*. Dira normally starts about late March and ends mid-May. Karan starts in July and continues up to early September. In the agropastoral areas of Shinile Zone, like the rest of the Zone, the *dira'* (gu) rains are followed by the Hagaa season, which is a dry spell that can cause crop failure if the *dira'* rains were not sufficient.

Access to cultivable land is free unless there are clan animosities. The main crop grown by the agropastoralists is sorghum followed by maize. Mostly, long cycle maturing crops (mainly sorghum) are planted, although some short cycle varieties are also planted in some areas. The main planting season is the *dira'* (late March/early April), while the main harvest season is in November-December. Both *dira'* and *karan* are important for the community. The Karan rains determine what is harvested from the long maturing cereal varieties planted in the *dira'* and also provide a second opportunity for the growing of short maturing variety of maize (*dega nugul*). The main constraints to crop production include: limited knowledge and skills for farming, lack of agricultural inputs like appropriate seeds, tools and draft power (oxen and tractor), and difficulty in clearing new land or land that has gone fallow.

Shinile agropastoralists have economic interactions with the neighbouring population groups - Jijiga Sedentary farming, Direedawa Urban, Afar and Oromia Regions, Djibouti and Somaliland (Somalia). These provide important markets (both buying and selling)

for grain and livestock sales. Direedawa, Djibouti and Somaliland also provide labour opportunities.

Among the agropastoral groups, wealth is determined mainly by livestock holdings, especially cattle. This is followed by land holdings. The persons with higher numbers of livestock have the potential to cultivate more land. Based on these criteria three major wealth groups have been defined within the LZ – Poor (25-35%), Middle (45-55%) and Better off (15-25%).

Agropastoralists give priority to their animals. All three species of livestock are kept although camels are least important. In normal years they keep the livestock within their localities or adjacent places. In bad years livestock may go as far as Afar and Oromia Regions.

The main food sources for the LZ are, own cereal production (mainly sorghum), own livestock production (milk and ghee), and Purchases (cereals, sugar, oil). There are also remittances from relatives working in Direedawa, Djibouti or Borana. The poor get some *zaka* (religious tithe).

The main income source is livestock sales, milk and ghee sales, pack camel rent, and crop sales.

The major vulnerability/risk factor is the failure of rain, which adversely affect the crop and pasture availability. As well as poor livestock production, condition and prices. Other risk factors include restriction in the collection of bush products like charcoal, firewood and construction materials, which are important sources of income for the poor groups. Clan and other conflicts are another source of risk for production as they block access to markets, farmland and grazing and water sources.

Risk minimising strategies include: Controlling and timing livestock breeding to coincide delivery with the rainy season to ensure better production and increase survival chances for the newborn. Mixed cropping and planting of drought-resistant varieties (sorghum), and the storage of crop residue for use when pasture is scarce.

Coping strategies include: increased sale of livestock, sending children to stay with wealthier relatives, increased employment seeking, reducing number of meals, substituting for less expensive foods, migration in search of pastures and water and self employment seeking. The wealthier groups would also reduce gifts. In bad years, these strategies are less effective as more people are involved and returns get very low.

Recommendations for long term food security interventions include, enacting and implementing more pastoral and agropastoral friendly policies and improving national purchase schemes and finding alternative international markets for livestock. Other recommendations are promoting free trade (in foodstuffs, livestock and other commodities) across Regions within Ethiopia and with neighbouring countries, improving access to agricultural and livestock inputs and services, and establishing measures to prevention and resolve conflicts quickly.

2 Introduction

2.1 *Purpose of the study*

In the past there has been a chronic scarcity of socio-economic baseline information in Somali Region, which has made it very difficult for decision makers (Government, aid agencies and donors) to make decision on both short-term and long-term interventions. On occasions, such as the 1999/2000 drought, this inability to make quick decisions has had catastrophic consequences for the people of the Region. In an attempt to prevent such occurrences in the future, a project aimed at improving the Food Security Monitoring and Early Warning (FS/EW) capacity of the Region was established. This project is a joint effort by Save the Children–UK (SC-UK) and the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB) of Somali National Regional State (SNRS), Ethiopia¹. The objective of the pilot phase of the project was to collect baseline information on livelihoods and develop a workable model for food security monitoring that will be built into government structures throughout the Region in Phase II

This report is one of 13 other Household Economy baseline assessment reports that have been produced by the project, during the periods of September-October 2001 and January-March 2002. Participating organisations in these baseline assessments included: DPPB (together with all DPPD offices), SC-UK, WFP, SC-USA, ACF, HCS, PCAE, OWS, OWDA and Al-Najah Charity. The baseline exercise comprised of classroom training, three weeks of fieldwork and one week of analysis and write-up.

Based on a reference or typical year, baseline reports were compiled for households belonging to the specific Livelihood Zone (LZ). The reports provide both qualitative and quantitative information on the normal mode of survival and the vulnerabilities of the different livelihood groups found in the Region, as well as information on how they respond to crises. These reports supply decision makers with useful information to make informed decisions, which will facilitate timely and appropriate responses and prevent possible disasters. The information also sheds light on longer-term food security issues and can therefore help in the planning of development initiatives.

2.2 *Methodology*

The Household Economy Approach (HEA) has been used as the assessment and analysis tool for the baseline studies. This Approach provides a rapid food security assessment technique and has been used by SC-UK for a number of years in parts of Africa and Asia. For a brief introduction to the Household Economy Approach please refer to Appendix 9.1. For further details refer to “The Household Economy Approach: A resource manual for practitioners” by John Seaman, Paul Clarke, Tanya Boudreau, and Julius Holt

¹ The Food Security Monitoring and Early Warning (FS/EW) Project, in Somali Region, Ethiopia, is a joint undertaking by Save the Children – UK and the Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau. USAID/OFDA and ECHO fund the pilot phase (Year 1) of the project. Additional financial support was received from SC-Canada and WFP. Partners in the baseline exercise included: WFP, ACF, SC-USA, HCS, PCAE, Al-Nejah Charity, OWDA, LVIA, and the Government Bureau of Livestock Environment and Crop Development.

3 Background

3.1 *Shinile Administrative Zone*

Shinile Zone is one of the nine administrative zones of Somali National Regional State. Lying in the northernmost tip of the Region, it borders with Djibouti in the North, Somalia (Somaliland) on the Northeast, Jijiga Zone on the southeast, Dire Dawa and Oromiya Regions on the south and Afar Region on the west. The Zonal population's livelihood mainly depends on livestock production. There is also a significant amount of trade activity and a small amount of crop production in the southern part – in livestock and imported goods.

Five of the six District towns (Meiso, Afdem, Erer, Shinile and Ayshia) are located along the railway line, and this is the only means of transportation for those areas. The other major route in the Zone is the loose surface gravel road between Dire Dawa and Djibouti, which passes through parts of three Districts - Shinile, Dambal and Ayshia. The rest of the Zone, particularly in the northwestern, north-central and western pastoral areas cannot be easily accessed, as the road network is extremely poor

The Zonal population comprises of different Somali groups. The Issa - majority of who are pastoralists – are the dominant clan in Shinile Zone, Gurgura, Gadabursi and Hawiya who are mainly Agro-Pastoral, also inhabit the districts of Erer, Dambal and Meiso respectively.

About 80% of this Zonal population's income comes from livestock and livestock products, 20% from a mixture of crop production (both annual and tree crops), livestock production and cross border trade. Out of this latter group, the agropastoralists form the majority.

3.2 *Livelihood Zones in the Administrative District*

Defining Livelihood Zones

Central to the Household Economy Approach is the concept of Livelihood Zones (LZ). Different populations live by very different means depending on their ecological environment, their assets, culture, skills etc. Some may depend primarily on livestock or fishing, others on agricultural production. Because of rainfall, soil type or marketing possibilities, some areas will be suitable for cash crops (such as cotton or tobacco) and others will produce only cereal staples. As a result of these different circumstances different population groups will adopt different approaches for survival. A group or population that obtains its food and income sources from a broadly similar combination of means and that have similar response to shocks is known as a Livelihood Zone (LZ).

Shinile Zone can be classified into two main Livelihood Zones (LZ) – Pastoral and Agropastoral

- **Shinile Pastoral LZ:** These comprise about 75-85% of the total population. This population is found within the semi-arid lowlands of the Zone. These lowlands, which are punctuated by rocky hills, stretch northwards from the southern

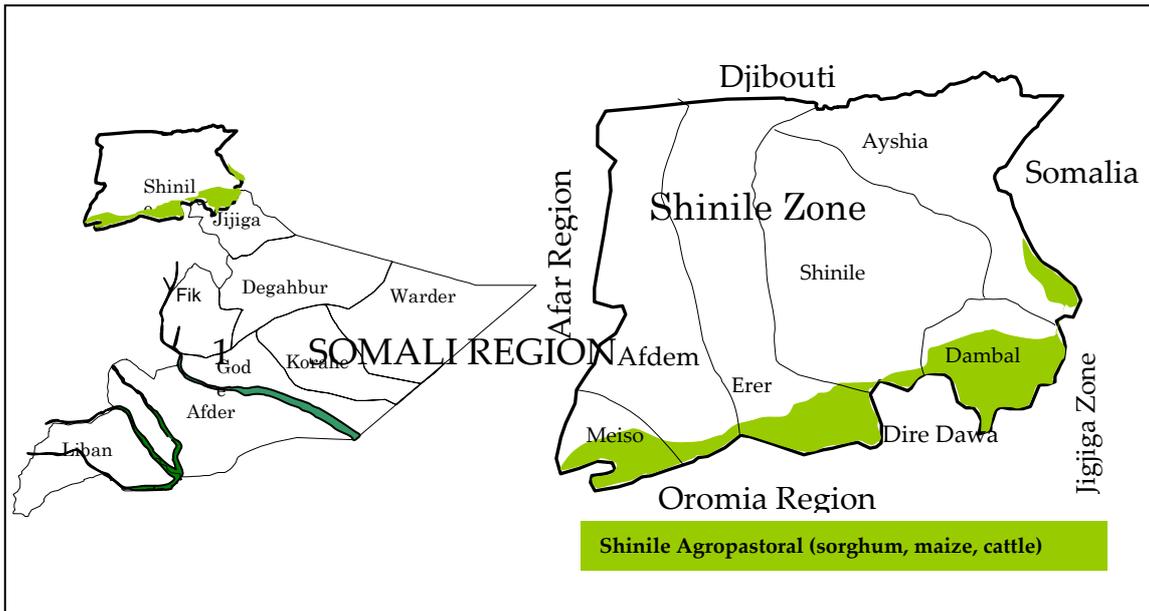
foothills to the border with Djibouti and Afar Region. All the districts of the Zone are mainly pastoral in nature except Dambal, which has a higher proportion of agropastoralists. Erer and Meiso also have a significant number of agropastoralists. Afdem and Ayshia are entirely pastoral. The main species of livestock reared are cattle and sheep, followed by camels and goats. The exception is in most of Ayshia and parts of Shinile districts, where camels are more important followed by goats.

- Shinile Agropastoral LZ: These make up about 15-25% of the total population of Shinile Zone. The Agropastoral LZ lies at the southern foothills of the Zone and is mainly found in Dambal district (about 60%), Meiso district (about 20%), Erer district (about 20% and the rest in Shinile district (about 10%). This LZ grows mainly sorghum and keeps cattle. The Agropastoral area is also used as dry season grazing area by the pastoralists in the *jilaal* and sometimes and sometimes in the *hagaa* season.
- The urban population is estimated at less than 5%. There are also groups that make a living by getting involved in the informal trade but most are either from pastoral or agropastoral groups. Those that are involved full time in this trade and not involved in either pastoralism or agropastoralism are insignificant in number.
- The table below shows the distribution of livelihood groups (LZs) of the Zone by district:

District (<i>Somali pronunciation</i>)	Pastoral	Agropastoral	Urban
Ayshia (<i>Ayshia</i>)	95-100%	0%	0-5%
Dembel (<i>Dambal</i>)	35-45%	55-65%	0-5%
Shinile (<i>Shiniile</i>)	85-95%	5-15%	0-5%
Erer (<i>Erer</i>)	75-85%	15-25%	0-5%
Afdem (<i>Afdem</i>)	95-100%	0%	0-5%
Meisso (<i>Ma'eiso</i>)	75-85%	15-25%	0-5%
Shinile Zone	75-85%	15-25%	0-5%

Source: From the present study, October 2001

Map 1 – Location of Shinile agropastoral Zone



4 Food Economies

4.1 The Livelihood Zone

Shinile Agropastoral LZ is found mainly in the districts of Dambal, Meiso, and Erer and in small portions of Shinile. In general, farming in this LZ started in early 1990s, particularly in Meiso (Bardode and Mullu Qabales) and Erer districts (Hurso) areas, although this practice is older (up to 20 years) in Dambal district. Ayshia, Shinile, Erer and Afdem Districts are largely pastoral. However there are a number of sites Shinile and Erer District, which are categorised as Agro-Pastoral.

The main reason that the Agro-Pastoralism was chosen as a means of livelihood in the last decade is:

- Reduction of the number of herds/animals reared by the people due to the recurrent droughts.
- To stop what is believed to be the encroachment by farming Oromo Communities from advancing and cultivation of new land claimed by the Somalis of Shinile.
- The regionalisation system of the government has encouraged the people to settle as Agro-Pastoralists.

In Dambal District, people had been engaged on crop farming since 1965, however, there have been great decline on crop production for the last 12 years. That was mainly due to clan conflicts and aggravated by severe droughts.

Variations within the LZ

The major food sources of the Agro-Pastoral villages in Shinile Zone are indicated in order of importance below. This is not the same for each area, hence the table below indicates the differences.

District	Visited villages	Main food sources (directly/ exchange)		Remarks
Meiso	Mullu Bardode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cattle - Camel - Own cereals-Sorghum/maize - PURCHASES? 		Shoats are not reared in this District due to environmental adaptation problems
Erer	Halsho Hurso (Harameyti)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cattle - Camel - Sorghum/maize - Sweet potatoes (Halsho only) - Purchase? 		Firewood is an important income source for food purchase in Hurso (Harameyti)
Dambal	Hindeys Karanley	<u>Hindeys:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cattle - Shoats - Sorghum/maize - Camels 	Karanley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sorghum/maize - Cattle - Shoats - Camels 	

Table 1 - Variations in food sources in Shinile LZ

Links with other LZ

Shinile Agro-Pastorals have economic interactions with the neighbouring zones Jijiga zone and Diredawa council, regions of Oromia and Afar and countries Djibouti and Somaliland.

Jijiga Zone and Diredawa Council; the Denbel Agro-Pastorals have close relations with Jijiga Zone in terms of trade. People in Denbel areas transport milk to Chinahsan areas and buy grains from sedentary farmers of Jijiga zone. Most southern parts of Shinile which are close to Diredawa town have economic interactions whereby Diredawa is main market for livestock and livestock products mainly milk and their bush products (firewood and charcoal). They also buy grains from Diredawa.

Oromia (highlands) and Afar; The Shinile Agro-pastoral share long border with Oromia (Oromo sedentary farmers). The Oromo sedentary farmers sell their grain surplus to Mieso and Diredawa, which in turn provides cheap grains to Shinile Agro- Pastorals. Diredawa is also a place for labour migration for some young men and hence a source of remittance. Oromo highlanders hire the Shinile lowlander camels to transport grains from harvest places (farms) to the stores (at home yards) which is an income source for the camel owners (the Shinile Agro-Pastoral). Afar Region and Oromia are the places where Shinile Agro-pastorals migrate to for pasture in bad years

Djibouti and Somaliland; There is cross-border trade with Somaliland and Djibouti which provides income for the owners of the animals and labourers involved (they rent their pack-camels to transport goods from either Djibouti or Somaliland). The railway goes through almost all Shinile districts, which also provides trade benefits with Djibouti for Shinile Agro-Pastorals.

Gulf countries, mainly Saudi Arabia, were the sole external markets to which Somali livestock were exported on regular basis through ports of neighbouring countries but that market was not active at all when this study was carried out. This is due to a ban imposed on the livestock of the east African countries by the Arabian countries after rift valley fever was reported in some of the east African countries. Therefore, complaints concerning this livestock ban was a dominant issue in all interviews with the community. However, the situation is improving as there seems to be a trickle of exports taking place (unspecified destination) and agropastoralists are increasingly search for better local (national) market. The main livestock markets for this LZ include Diredawa, Mieso, and Denbel.

4.2 *Historical Timeline*

Selection of the Reference Year

Household food economy analysis considers many different ways of recalling years. There are “traditional” years, “production” years and “consumption” years and the “reference” year.

In coming up with Historical timelines, the *deyr* season (which starts in October) is used as the start of the Somali traditional year. The traditional Somali year therefore spans across two Gregorian calendar years, starting with the *deyr* (October) and ending with the *hagaa* (September).

Household food economy analysis ranks years using the traditional system of recall (the *deyr* season followed by the *gu* season for each traditional year) – since this is how people recall the past – but focuses on a “consumption year” for discussions with communities on how they lived

during the year. This year is taken as the “reference year”. It runs for 12 months from the time of major food production (the *gu* rains) through to just before the following *gu* rains (i.e. the end of the long, dry *jilaal/qorahxeed* or *jilaal* season). The “consumption” year therefore covers two Gregorian calendar years. Household economy interviews (with representatives from each wealth group) gather information about a specific year, and this provides a “benchmark” or set of reference values and behaviours against which to compare any other year.

The “reference” year chosen for review is one which is within recent memory (since production and prices will have to be remembered) and which was neither very good nor very bad (extremes can be misleading when we are trying to describe a livelihood system). For convenience we will call this year the “normal” year, but this should not be interpreted necessarily as being either “frequently-occurring” or “typical” as is often the case in agricultural societies. A “normal” year from a pastoral perspective might be a year where there is adequate rainfall in terms of intensity and distribution, livestock production is adequate in both seasons, animals and milk fetch good prices and grain is not too expensive. There is little migration or little insecurity. It could be argued that this description represents a “good” year than an “average” year. For this reason it is often more useful to talk of a “reference year” which allows us to describe typical households in a particular year.

The performance of the *dira'* and *karan* rains determines if the year is considered normal, good or bad. The agreed reference year was 1998 (unanimous across the Agro-Pastoral groups), because it reflected the most recurring across all the agropastoral areas.

For information on the Traditional Somali Calendar System please refer to Appendix 9.2.

Table 2 - Historical Timeline Shinile Agropastoral LZ

<i>Year</i>	<i>Comments</i>
2001	Below average to average year (2-3): jilaal yet to be determined. Out-migration in the early part of the year as <i>dira'</i> rains were poor – causing migration to Fafan and Oromia highlands. The <i>Karan</i> rains were late but average. Grain prices were very low due to relief food. Lots of weddings in Dambal area resulting from Taffaribar and Darwanaji refugee camp closure (which accompanies ration and monetary gifts from UNHCR)
2000	Below average year (2): Uneven distribution of rainfall and lack of adequate pasture (especially poor <i>Dira</i>). Good livestock prices Meiso. Livestock prices were poor (oxen fetching 150-200 Birr instead of the normal 700-900 Birr). Cereal prices were three times above normal (normally 1.3 Birr per kg). Migration to mountain areas for huluuleysi (Dambal). Food aid distribution brought down prices of cereals in April. Nickname in Dambal duugato (all livestock sold to buy cereals)
1999	Poor year (1-2): (Jijiga), Fafan, Babile and other distant destinations. Low livestock prices, high grain prices, livestock disease. Mass death of livestock, Movement of livestock to Gololcha. Conflict between Afar and Somali. Nicknamed <i>Lafaaley</i> (lots of skeleton in the countryside) or <i>Anaa kaa daran</i> (I am worse than you are).
1998	Average to good year (3-4): Livestock condition good, <i>Karan</i> was better than <i>dira'</i> .
1997	Very good year (4-5): Too much water in the jilaal when it was not expected, good harvest of the Raton crop. Nicknamed: <i>Gannot</i> (hiding head from the rain)
1996	Average to good year (3-4): Livestock condition good. Fairly good crop harvests and no migration outside the zone.
1995	Average to good year (3-4): Livestock condition good. Fairly good crop harvests and

<i>Year</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	no migration outside the zone.
1994	Very poor year (1): Very poor year, rainfall, pasture very poor, livestock production was poor and no crop production. Nickname: <i>Masala tuur</i> (people could not remember to say the daily prayers – too busy moving livestock).
1993	Poor year (2) Rainfall, pasture was average but conflict and confusion continued. Insecurity due to clan conflict caused migration and no crop cultivation. Nicknamed <i>isdahyaa'</i> (confusion)
1992	Poor year (2) Rainfall, pasture was average but conflict and confusion reigned. Year after Derg regime fell. Insecurity due to unstable government, which stimulated clan conflict. This caused migration and no crop cultivation. Nicknamed <i>isdahyaa'</i> (confusion)

4.3 Seasonal Calendar

The main rainy seasons of this LZ are *Dira* and *Karan*. *Dira* normally starts about late March and ends mid-May. *Karan* starts in July and continues up to early September. In the Agro-Pastoral areas of Shinile Zone, the *dira'* (*gu*) rains are followed by the *Hagaa* season, which is a dry spell that can cause crop failure if the *dira'* rains were not sufficient. However, some sites in Dambal District like Hindays and Karanley, sometimes use cultivation of short cycle sorghum, known as *Badheyso*, in March. All the other Agro-Pastoral areas of the Zone benefit from *Karan* rains and cultivate the cereals (sorghum and maize) in the *Karan* season i.e. they usually sow in late July and harvest in early November - Same as *Dira* and *Karan* of the sedentary farmers in Jijiga Zone. The terms *gu* and *dira'* are used interchangeably and the term *deyr* is not used, as there are no *deyr* rains in this Zone, unlike in the southern parts of Somali Region.

Both *dira'* and *Karan* are important for the community. The *Karan* rains determine what is harvested from the long maturing cereal varieties planted in the *dira'* and also provide a second opportunity for the growing of short maturing variety of maize (*dega nugul*). Besides, the *Karan* rains have shown more reliability than the *dira'* rains in recent years and are therefore considered somewhat more important. Nevertheless, the *dira'* rains also have a special significance as they occur just after the long dry season of *jilaal* (October – March), and mark the planting season for long maturing varieties of both sorghum and maize.

Agro-Pastoralists give the priority to their animals over crops?. In normal years they keep the livestock within their localities during the seasons except in Dambal District where normal movements include migration to Chinahsan in Jijiga Zone. In normal years shoats and cattle always stay around the settlements, while the camels move to the northern pastoral areas. Migration Pattern of Agro-Pastoralist livestock is adapted to (influenced by) the migration pattern of the adjacent pastoral community. In normal year, the migration takes place within the respective Districts. In a bad year Agro-Pastoral livestock in Meiso migrate to Afar and the highlands of Oromia Region.

Agro-Pastoral livestock are moved to the adjacent Zones/countries during hard times: From Meiso, they move to the highlands of Oromia Region and across to Afar Region. Erer Agro-Pastoralists move their animals to the highlands of Oromia Zone and Dakhato, Fafan valley Erer

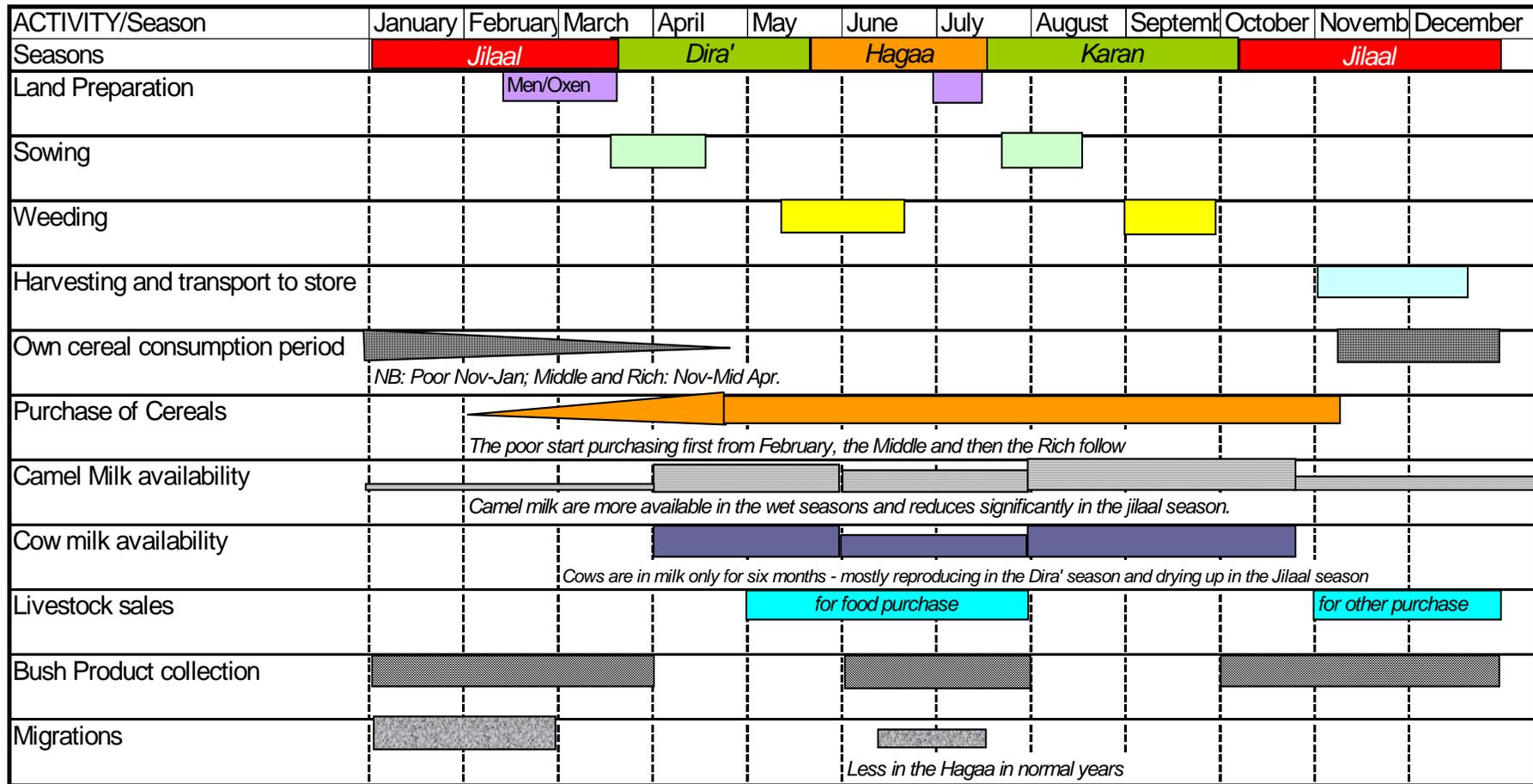
valley in Jijiga Zone. Dambal District Agro-Pastoralists move their animals across to Jijiga Zone (Fafan and Erer Valleys, Dakhato, and Chinahsan) and they can sometimes cross the border to Somalia (rarely). In particularly bad years, they move their animals to the mountain foothills (south and southwest) and hand feed them (*huluuleysi*) – the herder climbs the mountains but the animals are too weak to do so. During such livestock movements, milk animals – camels and cattle remain around homes.

In general all three main species are kept in the agropastoral areas with camels being fewest. In addition to sale in local markets, oxen and Shoat exports are very important when there is no livestock ban. Oxen are also sold to Oromia farmers who train them for ploughing. Pack camel rent as a source of income source is widely practiced in most parts of Shinile zone. These pack animals - mainly trained he-camels - carry goods from Djibouti or Borama (Somaliland) to Ethiopian markets like Diredawa. Pack camels may also be driven to the neighbouring highlands of Oromia where the agropastoral owners rent them to the farmers to transport harvested grain to stores. The most important livestock products that is sold in this LZ is milk. Ghee sales are less common.

Unlike in the other districts of the zone, where all three species (cattle, camel and shoats) are kept, in Mieso shoats do not have any economic significance. Respondents explained that in Mieso shoats easily catch diseases due to ticks/parasites, which get suitable environment for their propagation/infestation in this area. Cattle and camels are the only livestock species that are economically important in this particular district. Shoats are the most important income earner in most of other areas surveyed since shoats are sold more frequently without affecting the herd size significantly due to their high rate of reproduction. In Mieso and Dambal districts, fattening of oxen is exercised as an income source and restocking as well. They sell a cow or a big fattened oxen and from the proceeds buy a small cheaper ox (restocking) and use the rest of the money for covering the household needs such as purchases of cereals. But this is not on yearly bases, it may happen once in three years therefore the amount of money per year is low.

The main seasons in the Zone are *dira'* (rainy season between late March-end of May), *hagaa* (dry season following the *dira'*, June-late July). *Karan* (rainy season following the *hagaa* – late July-late September) and the *jilaal* season (long dry season, October-late March the following year). These seasons determine all activities of the household.

Figure 1 - Seasonal Calendar for Shinile Agropastoral LZ



4.4 *Other information particular to the LZ*

Access to Land and Water

In Shinile Agro-pastoral LZ land can be freely accessed by anyone who wishes to cultivate new land provided that there is no ethnic or clan hindrance or there is no exceptional sensitivity on land issues. It is usual in these parts for neighbouring ethnic groups (e.g. Oromo and Somali) to compete for land that may create hostility and violence but within one ethnic group (e.g. Somali which mostly subdivide multitude of clans and sub clans) the hostilities based on the land (natural resources) has less magnitude although in some areas it may be well pronounced as the former. For instance, more restriction on access to land was observed in Agro-pastoral areas around Dambal District (particularly Karanley areas) of Shinile zone.

A new comer to these areas will not have a new land to cultivate without permission or confirmation from the local community elders. The land size for the new cultivator will not even extend beyond a local standard (agreed size). This is to safeguard the future availability of land for cultivation and to make sure that the new farmer is not an intruder from the neighbouring hostile clans that may claim the area in the long run.

Normally there are two clans in this district (Dambal) that have constant disputes and hostilities based on the farming land. The two clans also have different inclinations regarding the Zone they would like to belong to (One prefers Shinile, while the other prefers Jijiga). Both clans have reasons for these different ideas. In almost all parts of this LZ, the major limiting factor for successful cultivation of land is the capacity to do farming rather than land access restrictions. Lack of oxen, collective labour, appropriate farm tools and capital to invest, are the elements that restrain the success of the farmers. In addition, the climatic factors (e.g. erratic rainfall) are, above all, the major complains of the farmers. Insecurity is another problem that hinders cultivation. During the time line analysis, it was observed that in the last 10 years, insecurity frequently prevented the locals from doing cultivation.

The past political systems and land use systems of successive governments have not been suitable to allow for settled cultivation.

Crop production

"Crop production is not a comfort but a struggle", say the agropastoralists, referring to farming in agropastoral areas. This is because there are many hurdles to overcome, including moisture stress, pests, Birds and other animals. The areas are also mainly lowlands with high percolation and high evaporation (known locally as *gamoochi*). The exact nature of soils has not been determined by the study.

During the Dira, farmers start their main agricultural activities such as ploughing (a little earlier than others), sowing and weeding. They mostly plant long cycle maturing crops although short cycle maturing varieties are also selected and practised in some areas. The main crop in the Shinile Agro-pastoral is sorghum followed by maize. The long cycle maturing varieties are sown in the Dira rains but *Karan* rains are also important for their maturity. In July, short cycle maturing varieties are sown to benefit from *Karan*

rains and have earlier harvest. This *Karan* cultivation is done in the portions of their lands that were fallow during the Dira season. In general, Shinile Agro-pastorals have only one main harvest in November to December. During this harvest time gifts are common and the people are more generous than they are religiously obliged to be. According to the religious obligation, a farmer should pay one-tenth of his produce as *Zaka* if his produce reaches approximately 10 quintals while this obligation is invalid for those who harvest less than the 10 quintals but as observed a farmer in these areas gives more than the prescribed. But gifts are paid on voluntary basis rather than on obligatory basis and there is no restriction on what and how much to give/pay. There is a local slogan at this harvest time that says “*Hidar faqir ma Jiro*” which literally means “There are no poor in November”.

Land preparation does not take a long time as there is less moisture and fewer weeds grow. This activity is more in Bardode area where the cropping experience is more and soil moisture is higher (the area is of higher altitude, receives more precipitation and gets more runoff water). Most of sowing and land preparation takes place at the same time (end of February to mid-March) for most parts of the LZ. In Bardode, land preparation and sowing (*fajas*) are done at distinct times.

The other main activities are weeding (*haramayn*) which is done by hand picking in late April/early May. This is followed by ridging exercise (*baaqbaaq*) when the plant is knee-high. The *baaqbaaq* is done to achieve three things: Thinning of plant population, to improve water infiltration and moisture retention and to improve aeration. The *baaqbaaq* is done in the month of July. Bardode area is somewhat different from the other Agro-Pastoral areas, as the ‘*badheysa*’ crop (maize) is more important.

Throughout the cropping cycle different Birds and other animals have to be scared off: these include: *gogori* (a type of Bird), hornbill (*quuto*), porcupine (*dhido*), squirrel (*dabagaalo*), warthogs and wild pigs (*kerkerre*), monkeys and Birds that feed on crop seeds.

The process of harvesting, stacking, threshing, and storing, of the main crop normally starts in November and continues for about two months, while the *badheyso* crop (where it exists) is harvested as green maize (*hasiideysi*) in July and ends in August. It is during the harvest time that most grain gift takes place, including *zako*.

- Limited knowledge and skills on farming sector (transitional period)
- Lack of assistance on agricultural inputs like appropriate seeds, tools and draft power (oxen and tractor)
- Difficulty in clearing new land for crop production or cultivation of the land which became fallow for many years like in Dambal District.

4.5 Wealth Breakdown

The Livelihood Zone can be divided into three wealth groups – Poor, Middle and Better off. The very poor community exists but constitutes a negligible percentage (less than 5% of the population). The very poor groups survive mostly on gifts and *Zaka* and split

their family members among better off communities and are associated with villages/settlements. The very rich community also exists and is characterised by the ownership of more livestock. This is the case for all species, but the area cultivated is similar to the rich and middle. They, like the very poor are also just a handful.

Among the Agro-Pastoral groups, wealth is determined mainly by livestock holdings – their number - especially cattle. This is followed by land holdings. The persons with higher numbers of livestock have the potential to cultivate more land.

Land holding is determined in terms of Kodi. One Kodi measures 22 square alternate steps, and about six (6) Kodi constitute one hectare.

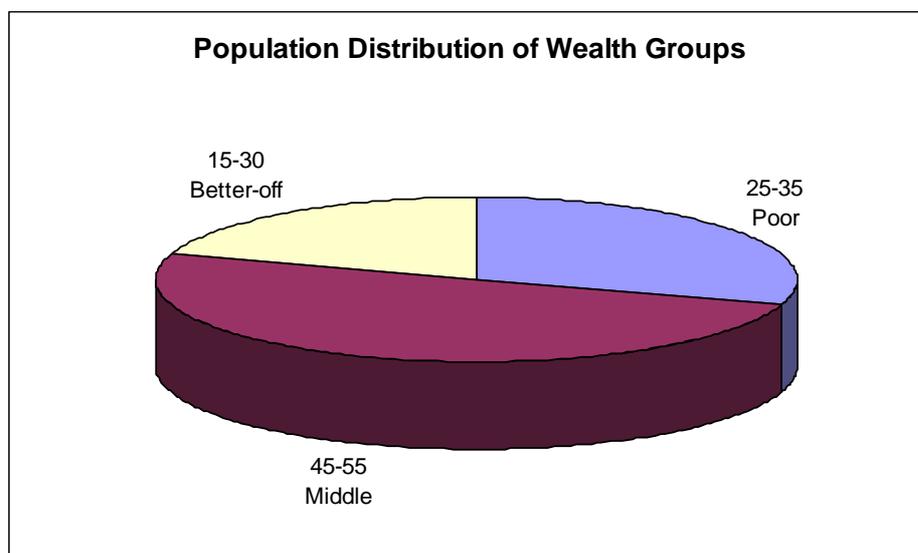


Figure 2 - Wealth Groups in Shinile Pastoral LZ

About 25-35% of Shinile Agro-pastoral was estimated to be in the poor category. They have small land sizes and subsequent low production, and have fewer livestock numbers than the middle and better-off wealth groups. This makes them more vulnerable and less able to cope with shocks than their richer counterparts. However in addition to the middle and better off, the poor are involved in bush product collection and labour – thus are less dependent on livestock and less vulnerable to negative changes in regard to livestock. About 45-55 percent of Shinile Agro-Pastorals belong to the better off wealth group. Their household size is 6. This group constitutes the wealthier households within the LZ. They do not include the “one or two” wealthiest members, but those generally referred to as the “wealthy” or *ladan*, in local terminology. They make up 15-25% of the population of the LZ. Family size is 6.

Table 3 - Wealth Characteristics

Wealth Group name & vernacular name	Poor	Middle	Better Off
Characteristics			
number of wives			
Household size	6	6	6
Number of members living away & where			
Number of members from other family(ies)			
Number of members earning income & who (in order of importance)			
LIVESTOCK			
Owned Shoats	4-10	10-20	20-30
Borrowed Shoats			
Female Shoats			
Male Shoats			
Lactating Shoats			
Owned Cattle	2-5	5-10	8-15
Borrowed Cattle			
Female Cattle			
Male Cattle			
Ox(en)			
Lactating Cow(s)			
Owned Camel(s)	0-2	2-5	5-10
Borrowed Camel(s)			
Female Camel(s)			
Male Camel(s)			
Lactating Camel(s)			
Pack Camel(s)	0	1	2
Donkey(s)/Ass(s)	1-2	1-2	0
Mule(s)/Horse(s)			
LAND			
Land owned			
Land borrowed/rented for cultivation			
Total size of land cultivated ²	2-3 Kodi	3-5 Kodi	4-6 Kodi

4.6 Food Sources in the Reference Year

Poor

Own cereals and gifts

These two ways mean that the poor always prepare their land late – after the rich and middle plough and sow. The disadvantage they have therefore is that their soils will not have enough aeration (for the required time) before planting and sometimes the moisture may reduce before they can plant. Normally delayed planting reduces yields. Therefore sorghum/maize yields per *Kodi* for the poor wealth group is normally less than yields for the middle and better-off groups. It is estimated at about 90-110 kg per *Kodi* in

² For types of crops cultivated in area land need to describe this in section in section on land cropping patterns

a normal year. The amount of grain harvested in a normal year from the 2-3 *Kodi* is 200-300kg (about 250 Kg on average) of cereals (sorghum/maize). They consume all their produce, except for about 2%, which is kept for seed for the next crop. This harvest would normally feed a poor household of six for 2-3 months. After the exhaustion they receive gifts (which were estimated to be 100 -150 Kgs of cereals per annum) from better off or even the middle groups who have more food stored. Therefore, the poor household in Shinile Agro-Pastoral consumes 375 Kgs (3.75 quintals, own cereals plus gifts) per annum on average, which covers only 30-34% of the household annual food needs (20-22%% from own cereals and 10-12% from gifts).

The Poor commonly don't sell their crop. They do not receive *Zaka* since the very poor or destitute qualify as recipients for *Zaka* although the poor households themselves (at least some) evolve to these stages during disasters. The above production figure (250 kg) means that the poor produces about 100 kg per *Kodi* when they would have potentially harvested 275 Kgs according to the land productivity (100-120 Kgs/*Kodi*) but they under produce because they don't have oxen in addition to small area cultivated. They borrow oxen from other wealth groups or exchange labour for the oxen. This makes their cultivation late (moisture content of the soil reduces as the time elapses away from the rain time) and hence the poor households are disadvantaged in terms of crop production. Regarding their land holding, the small size of their farms is not related with accessibility problems rather it is related with their capacities to cultivate (sowing, weeding, etc).

Purchase

Purchases of staple cereals (mostly sorghum) is a major source of food for the poor households. They purchased about 600 Kg of cereal, which contribute up to 50-52% of the total annual food requirement of this wealth group. The poor also purchase sugar and oil (20-30 kg and 10-15 kg of sugar and oil respectively). These two items are considered non-staple foods, and they cover about 5% of their total annual food requirement. So in total food purchases make up between 55-60% of total annual food requirement.

Livestock products

A Poor household commonly owns on average 2-3 cattle, 4-6 shoats, and 0-2 camels. The number of lactating heads per species is an indication of yearly milk availability of the household. However, in the normal year, a poor household in Shinile Agro-pastoral LZ has 1-2 lactating cows, and 1-3 shoats (mainly goats) respectively from the above-mentioned livestock holding. The majority of poor households did not have camels in milk although an insignificant number of households of the same wealth group had only one camel in milk and hence contribution of camel to the family welfare is not significant.

The average milk productivity of cattle, camel and shoats were estimated to be 240-360, 650-840, 30-36 litres per head per year respectively in Shinile Agro-Pastoral regardless of the wealth group. In regard to the livestock holding of the poor and the yearly yield of the lactating animals, the poor household receives 600, and 65 litters from cows and shoats respectively, summing to about 665 litres per household per normal year. They

sell approximately one-fourth of that total milk mainly to purchase cereals and consume the rest. The poor households cover about 8% of annual food needs from the milk consumption. Households in this group neither slaughter animals nor purchase meat. Meat consumption is very occasional - during wedding ceremonies, funerals, etc when the richer households slaughter animals.

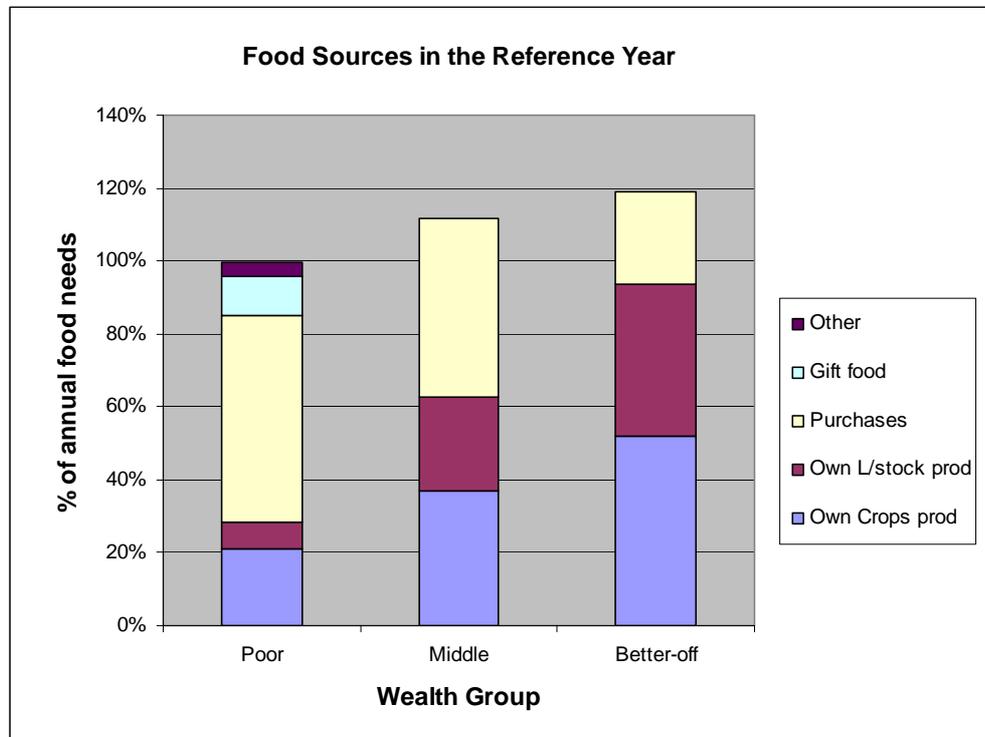


Figure 3 - Food Sources for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

Middle

Own crop production

In terms of crop production and land holding, the middle group have 4-6 Kodi of land per household. Based on this land size, such households normally harvest about 550 Kgs (110 Kgs per Kodi) on average. They consume most of their production but sell about 20% of their crop produce. Own cereals consumption covers 35-40% of the annual household food. In normal years, the middle households give considerable amount of their own cereals as gifts to the poor and destitute. The majority of which is given during the harvest time. The middle groups also make seed reserves (about 15 Kgs, which is 3% of total production) for the next cultivation.

Livestock produce

Concerning the livestock holding middle households have 2-5 camel heads (including the pack camels), 10-15 heads of cattle, and 10-20 shoats. The middle households have 1-3 lactating cows, 1-3 lactating camels and 4-6 lactating shoats (mainly goats). Compared to the poor WG, milk production for this group is important as a source of food as well as income. The contribution of milk from lactating cows, camels and goats is about 600, 1400 and 165 liters respectively. Less than one-third of this milk (650-670 litres) is sold to purchase important food items like sugar and oil and other household items. The remaining, approximately 1500 litres, is consumed at household level, which contributes

25% of the annual household food requirements. Ghee production is small and is used only for consumption.

Meat consumption was found to be insignificant among most households, the poor consuming the least. However, it was estimated that a middle household consumes about 30 Kgs of meat, the equivalent to two slaughtered goats, per normal year. This only contributes to 1.5% of annual food requirement of a poor household of 6.

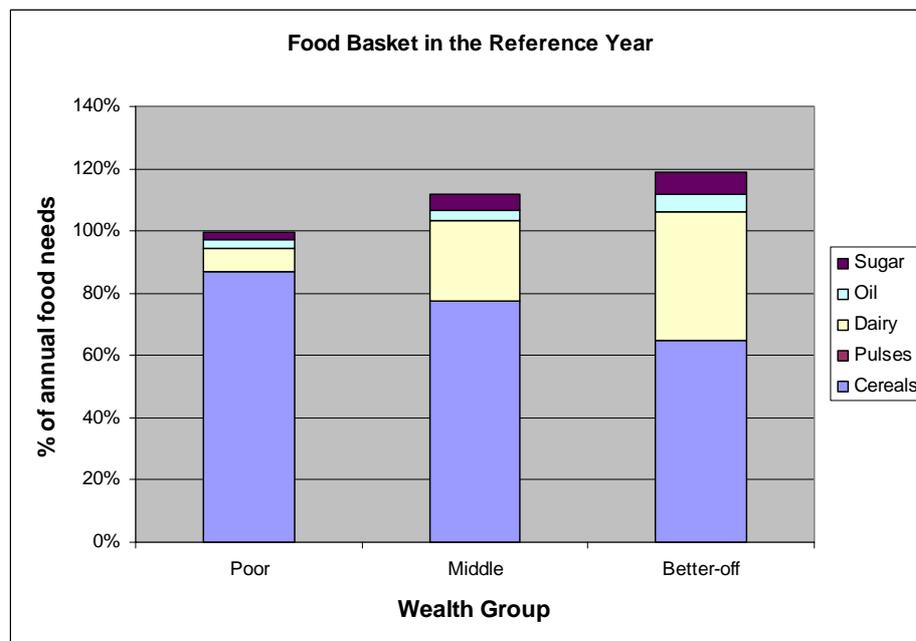


Figure 4 - Food Basket for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

Better off

Crop Production

A better off household in this LZ in the reference year cultivated 8-9 Kodis of land. From this they harvested about 900-950 Kg of cereals (sorghum) in the reference year year. The bulk of this harvest is consumed. About 21% is sold, 10% is given as gift, and 3% is kept for seed. *Zaka* gift threshold is normally 10 quintals (1000 Kgs) and therefore even the better off agropastoralists are not liable to pay *Zaka* in a normal year. However the total amount that they give away in ordinary gift usually supersedes even the *zaka* amount required from a harvest of 1000kg. The better off would normally consume 60-70% of their harvest which covers 50-55% of their annual food needs. Their harvest is enough to keep them for up to 5-6 months in the normal year. After their own produce is exhausted/consumed they purchase cereals. The purchased cereals together with non-staple foods (mainly sugar and oil) cover 13% of household annual food requirements.

Livestock production

In the reference year, the better off household had 3-5 lactating cows³. This means that the better off household gets 1200 liters of cow milk on average per year. The lactating

³ cow milk productivity was estimated to be 240-360 for Shinile Agro-pastoral

camels ranged from 2-4 and provided about 2100 liters of milk on average⁴. They had 6-10 lactating shoats, which provide about 264 liters per household per year⁵. The total milk production is 3564 liters. This milk production is important for the household both for consumption and income generation. They consume about 70% of this milk, which covers about 39% of the annual food needs of the household. It was observed that the meat consumption was nearly the same as that of the middle wealth group.

4.7 *Income Sources in the Reference Year*

Poor

In general, the poor households tend to diversify their income sources more than other wealth groups by exploiting all the options at their disposal to cover their food and non-food needs. This makes them less vulnerable to specific shocks as they can resort to alternate income sources. In addition to sales of livestock and livestock products (mainly milk), which contribute up to 44% of their total income of 24% comes from direct livestock sales and 20% from milk sales. They also sell bush products like firewood and charcoal, and labour exchange. Collection of bush products, which constitutes up to 34% of the total annual income, was found to be the most important source of income besides sales of livestock and livestock products. In some areas like Hurso under Erer district firewood and charcoal are a crucial source of income (up to 60% of annual income) used to cover food, clothes, medicine, and so on. The labour they are involved in includes assisting caravans transporting contraband goods, leading pack camels from Djibouti/Borama and taking half of the commission, self employment like renting a donkey or pack camel to transfer goods. The poor do not sell any crops. Some remittances are also received and account for 10-15% of income. This money comes from relatives in Djibouti who commonly work as domestic help.

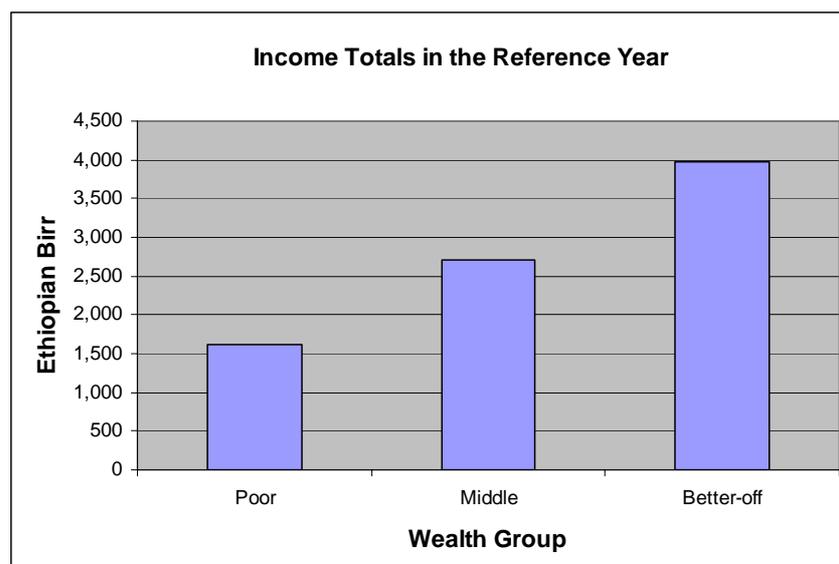


Figure 5 - Income Totals for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

⁴ Camel Productivity was estimated to be 435-840 liters/lactating camel/year.

⁵ Goat Productivity was estimated to be 30-36 liters/lactating goat/year.

Middle

The highest proportion of the income of the middle households is from livestock sales, followed by the sales of livestock product (mainly milk). Middle Households earn as much as 60-70% of the total income from the livestock (35-40% from direct livestock sales and 25-30% from milk sales).

The middle households either lend their he-camels to someone (mostly from poor WG) to collect and transport unofficially imported commodities (commonly known as contraband) across the borders or transportation grain to the highlands. In this arrangement, the owner of the pack camel receives half of the income/commission while the camel driver receives the other half. Sometimes the pack-camel owner may himself drive it and take all the proceeds from that trip. In most Agro-pastoral areas of the zone, it takes about two weeks to cover one round trip from Djibouti or Somaliland and the income per trip is 400 Birr on average (contributing up to 15-20% to total income). One trip to the neighbouring Oromo sedentary farmers is closer and cheaper (about 100 Birr per trip) but more frequent than that of Djibouti, which makes the annual income from the two sources more or less equal.

Other less important income sources include, bush product sales, remittances and crop sales. The middle households collect bush products for sale even in a normal year, but to a much lesser extent compared to the poor groups. For this group this contributes to about 6-10% of their income. Crop production contributes about 2-4%.

Remittances are normally received from relatives living in the big towns or abroad but this is more pronounced during the bad years or seasons (normally contribute about 6-10%).

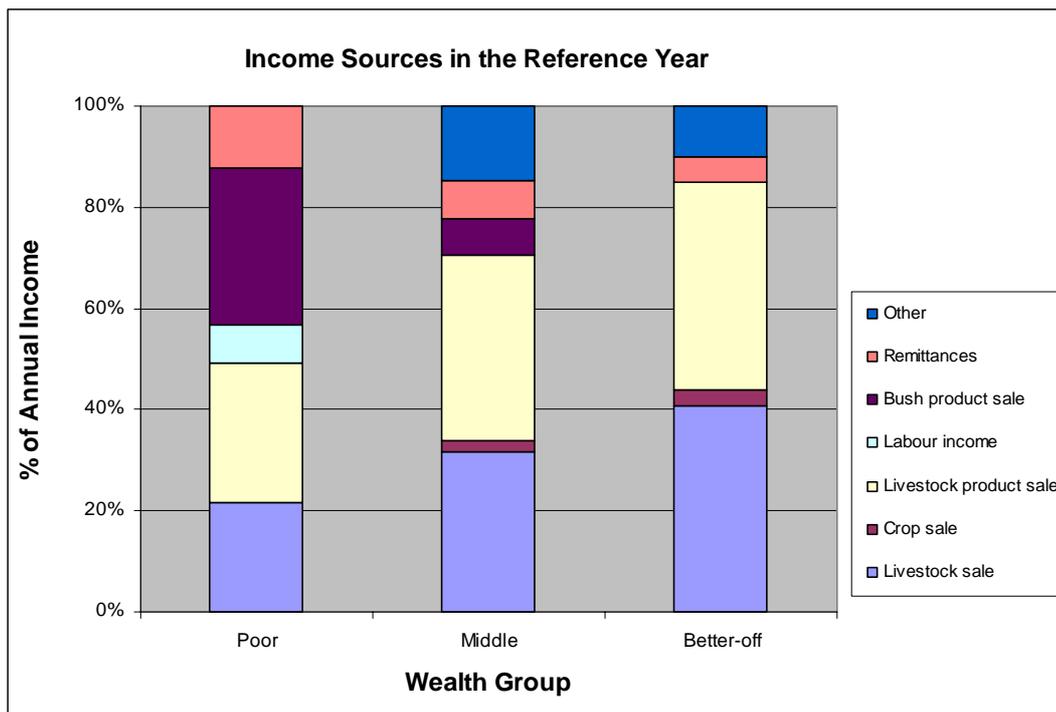


Figure 6 - Income Sources for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

In contrast to the poor households who tend to earn money from different sources, the better off households seem to depend on sales of livestock and livestock products (mainly milk) as the sole source of income. They are much more vulnerable to changes in livestock and livestock production. They get about 85% of their income from those sales (50% from livestock sales and 35% from the sales of milk). They also sell some amount of their own produced cereals (at low farm gate prices of only 60 Birr per quintal) at the time of plenty while they buy the same item and amount at higher prices (120-150 Birr/quintal) at the time of shortages. The amount of the crop that the better off groups sell is bit higher (About 21% of their total produce) compared to the middle wealth group who also do some crop sales (About 18% of the total) although the income is not significant for both groups. Only about 3% of the income of the middle groups come from crop sales while about 4% of the income of the rich (better off) comes from the same source. This shows very low terms of trade since 21% and 18% of the total produce, which are significant figures, result in incomes that make an almost insignificant contribution to incomes.

4.8 Expenditure Patterns in the Reference Year

Poor

For the poor households, income is about equal to expenditure, as most of their income earning efforts are geared towards satisfying needs. Since own crop production and livestock sale are not adequate to cover the food needs, the poor are forced to purchase most of their foodstuffs. Purchase is mainly sorghum, but some sugar and oil are also purchased. The highest proportion of their income (50-55%) is spent on purchase of staple cereals. They also spend about 15-20% of the annual income on non-staples (sugar

and oil), but relatively less on non-food essentials such as clothes, education, medicine and so on.

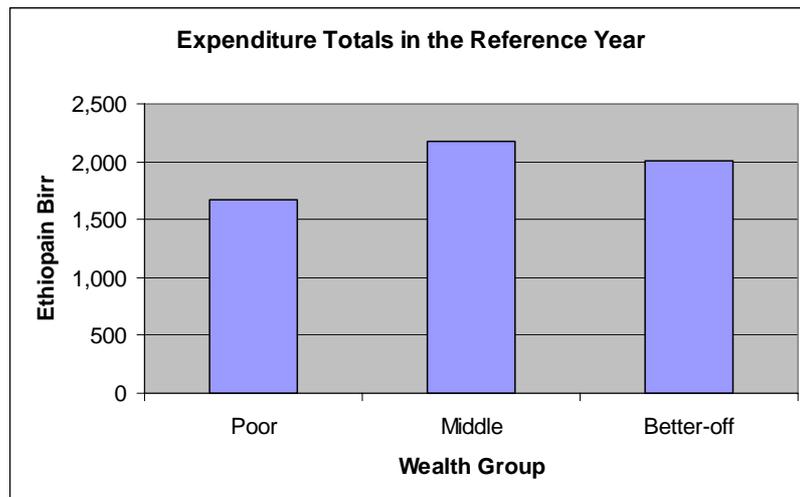


Figure 7 - Expenditure Totals for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

Middle

The middle households spend 25-30% of the total income in order to purchase food, such as cereals (sorghum). However, this is much less compared to the poor group. Likewise, they purchase other foods like sugar and oil, which are important in terms of their energy content. These items take up a substantial amount of the total income, approximately 18-20%. Unlike the poor wealth group, the middle households spend more money, about 25-30% of the total income, on non-food essentials (education, human medicine, veterinary drugs, soap, etc.). They also mainly buy clothes twice a year, which absorbs a remarkable amount of money, almost 15-20% of their income. There are also other minor expenses. They also spend some of their income on chat like all other groups. The middle groups do not make significant investments (restocking), except buying a small bull after selling a big fattened one, which occurs once in about three years.

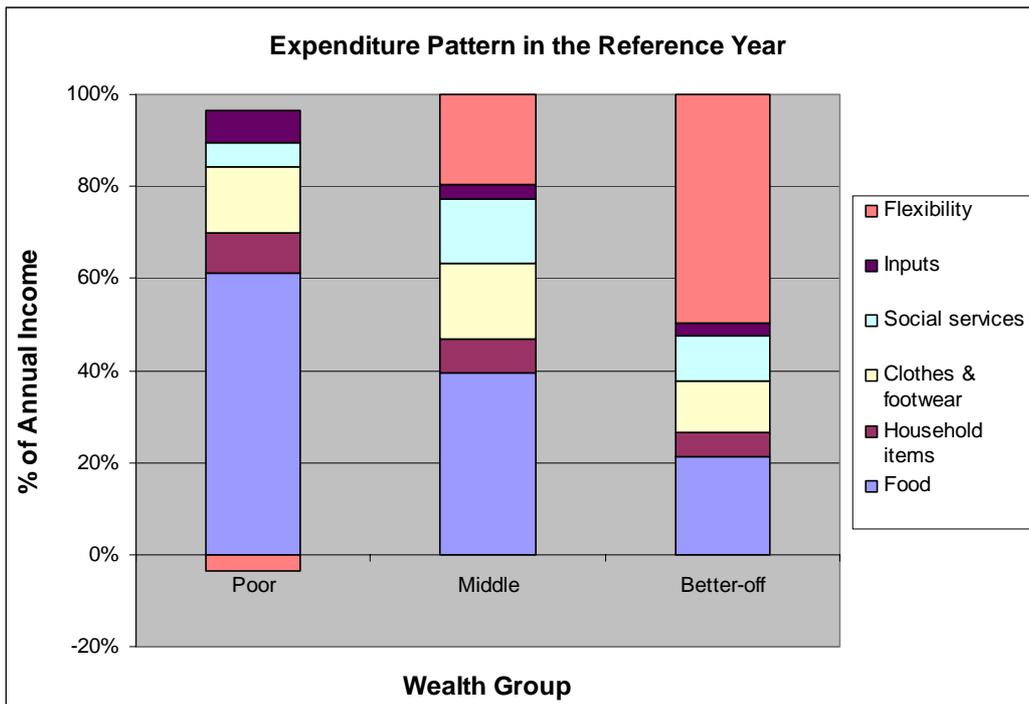


Figure 8 - Expenditure Pattern for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

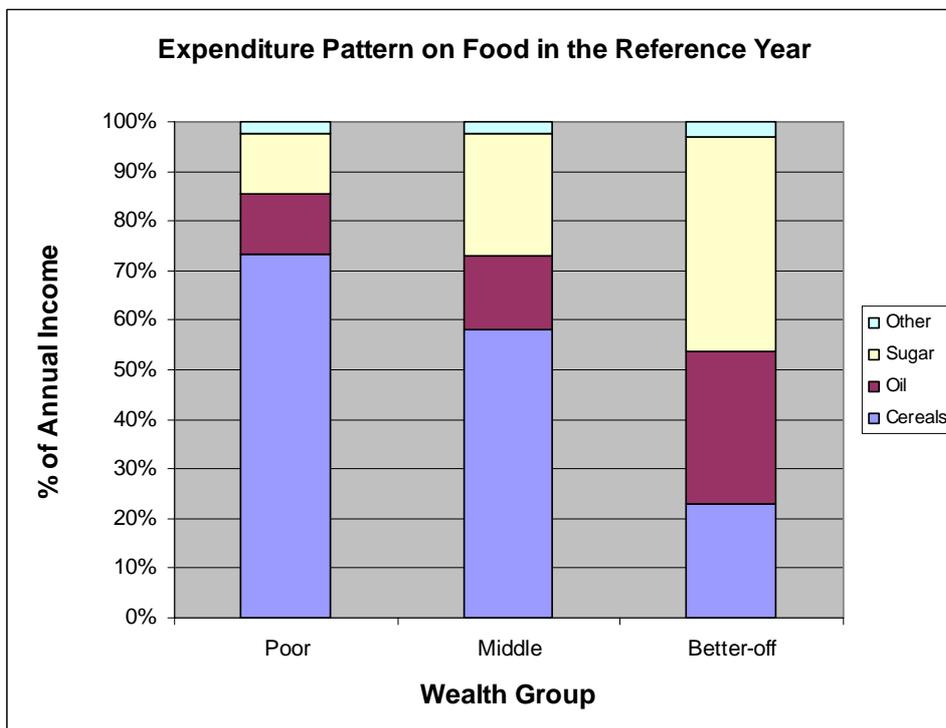


Figure 9 - Proportional Expenditure on Food for all Wealth Groups in Shinile Agropastoral LZ

Unlike the poor and the middle groups, better off households spend less on cereal purchases (only 6% of the total income). In almost all other expenses, they did not show considerable differences from the middle group (they spend their money in similar ways).

The Middle and Better off wealth groups (and particularly the better off), spend a bit more on non-food essentials (clothes, soap, education, veterinary drugs etc) compared to the poor wealth group.

5 Vulnerabilities, Risks & Coping

Vulnerability/Risk Factors

1. The Shinile Agro- Pastorals depend on their own livestock and crops as source of food and income as well. This makes them vulnerable to seasonal rainfall failures, which adversely affect the crop and pasture availability.
2. Since the Shinile Agro-pastoral depend on livestock as the main source of income they are vulnerable to market shocks such as ban against livestock exportation to the markets of the neighbouring countries or regions.
3. In some parts of Erer district namely Hurso and its neighbourhood (near to Diredawa and well accessed to it) there is remarkable dependency on bush products namely firewood and charcoal as source of income. These groups are vulnerable to anything that disturbs this type of trade like banning it as some environmentalists may campaign for. People in the area already reported that the government vehicles, which pass by, collect their bush products as the sellers exhibit piles of wood along the road.
4. All observations indicated that during times of conflict, people did not cultivate their land because of insecurity reasons and hence these people are vulnerable to insecurity or conflicts.
5. Like the main pastoral neighbours, the Shinile Agro-Pastorals adopted migration during shocks as coping strategies, therefore they are vulnerable to anything that prevents them from free movements in their normal migration routes (any restrictions imposed by mainly clan or ethnic conflicts).

The poor groups are the most vulnerable to above shocks since their coping ability is lower compared to other wealth groups.

Risk Minimizing Strategies

The Shinile Agro-pastoralists adopt the following risk minimising strategies

Livestock-related

Controlling and timing livestock breeding; They allow the siring activities in certain times so that the female animal will give Birth at pre-determined time or season (mainly rainy seasons). This is to match the lactating period of the female animal with good pasture and water conditions and to reduce the risk of stress from the lactating female.

Cropping related

They practice mixed cropping (sorghum + maize) to reduce the risk of total crop failure (one of two will survive, i.e. they prefer partial failure than total failure).

Selection of the varieties; they use drought resistant local varieties of sorghum or maize. These are also long cycle-matured varieties to benefit from *Karan* moisture. Postponing use of crop residue: They store the crop residue (stalks) to feed the weak or lactating animals during the stress (drought with scarce pasture).

Coping Strategies

Poor

During the bad year the sales of livestock increase and start earlier than usual. But this creates a problem; since a lot of livestock is supplied to the market, the prices of livestock go down. As the drought prolongs the livestock condition deteriorates which further lowers the market value of the livestock. In the reference year, the poor groups have smaller number of livestock and less production from their farms, which makes them more vulnerable to most of the shocks. In the bad year they minimise consumption and reduce expenses. They tend to exploit other options before they sell assets (livestock) like intensifying collection of firewood, charcoal and building sticks.

They also send children to other relatives (reducing the family size)

The young and able men go to the towns for labour

Middle

- They reduce their meals both in frequency and amount as the availability of household food declines. However, children, lactating mothers, and elderly people are given the priority and due caring.
- Increase of livestock sales is common for the middle groups as coping strategy in the bad year. They sell more frequently and hence number of animals sold increases to purchase food but downs of the livestock prices and ups of the grain prices always exasperate this.
- They migrate with their livestock to areas with better pasture or perhaps water.
- In the bad year, firewood collection increases and the people who are involved in this activity increases.
- They get remittance (more than the normal) from their relatives in the big towns (Djibouti, Borama, Diredawa, etc) or in abroad (Europe, America and gulf countries).
- Young and able people go to towns (Djibouti, Borama, Diredawa, etc.) for casual labour.
- Pack animal renting to carry contraband across the borders is increased.

Better Off

In bad years, better of households reduce gifts, sell more livestock, increase pack animal renting, increase remittance receives, and migrate with their livestock and minimise expenses.

6 Indicators to monitor

7 Recommendations

7.1 *Recommendations*

General

- Improving the livestock markets within the Ethiopian and internationally as well (improving local markets and finding alternative international markets). Current Government policy should try to facilitate free trade among Regions and with neighbouring Countries.
- Improving agricultural inputs like designing appropriate extension packages.
- Creating research centres to investigate methodologies and technologies, which are appropriate to these people to increase their production both in livestock and crop.
- Improving Veterinary services for livestock.
- Building up long-term conflict prevention and resolution strategies to prevent conflicts/insecurities and to resolve it if it breaks out (creating more staple co-existence).
- Making and enforcing pastoral and Agro-pastoral friendly policies at regional and federal levels of the government.
- Enhancing all the communities' coping strategies and avoiding anything that may curtail them from coping.

Specific Interventions

Based on this study, poor groups are disadvantaged in terms of their crop production because of lack or low farm inputs, therefore it would be wise to support these groups by providing them the most crucial lacking inputs like oxen and seeds (which are expensive to them).

As observed the better off and middle groups get insignificant income from crop sales since they sell it at the time of plenty when the prices are low. This is mainly because they do not have access to the markets, therefore improving accessibility will encourage farmers to bring some of their products to the markets and hence sell at better prices.

8 References

SC (SAVE THE CHILDREN) UK (2000) *The Household Economy Approach: a resource manual for practitioners*. Save the Children, London.

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9 Appendices

9.1 HEA Methodology

The Household Economy Approach⁶

The Household Economy Approach helps to provide a detailed picture of the many ways that households meet their food and income needs in a 'normal' year and the many strategies they employ to lessen the consequences of crises (selling or consuming assets, migration for employment, eating wild foods, etc.). It therefore provides a picture of the household economy and its relationship to markets and employment opportunities.

produce a coherent picture about how people live and the options open to them in a normal year

identify the types of risk which households are vulnerable to

give an estimate of the likely effect of a 'shock/hazard' on household income

explore the extent to which coping strategies can cover a household's deficit

identify which population groups are most at risk of not coping with change

predict the likely impact of a range of intervention options and identify the most effective in reducing short-term and long-term vulnerability

HEA is useful for answering the question "what constraints prevent households from prospering", or "what will be the effect of a "shock" or combination of shocks, on the economy of various types of households in different Livelihood Zones?" It provides analysis that can be used both for prediction and to make more informed interventions. The approach is reproducible and incorporates sufficient mechanisms to cross-check information internally for users to be confident of the validity of findings and subsequent recommendations. It can be used in a rapid or a comprehensive form, depending on the question of study, time and money available.

This approach is participatory in nature and does not follow conventional statistical sampling methodology. The method employs RRA tools such as seasonal calendar, time line, normal year, proportional piling, pair wise ranking and so on. Interviews focus on groups that represent specific Livelihood Zones. Within this zone interviews are held with representative key informants and wealth groups (socio-economic groups). The approach is based on the understanding that it is the quality of the information collected that is important rather than the number of interviews conducted. However, every attempt is made to ensure that the information collected is representative. Thus site selection is done in coordination with technical officials at Regional, Zonal and District levels.

A typical Household economy baseline assessment includes the following steps:

⁶ For any additional questions please contact Suleiman Mohammed the Early Warning and technical coordinator for Save the Children's food security project in Jijiga, Ethiopia. Telephone +251 5 752775/6/7 or send an email to ewtc.jijiga@telecom.net.et. Alternatively visit the Save the Children (UK) website www.savethechildren.org.uk/foodsecurity.

Step 1: Identifying Livelihood Zones (LZ)s and populations

The first step therefore is to identify population groups within which most households obtain their food and cash by broadly similar combinations of means (known as a livelihood zone, food economy area, group or zone). A Livelihood Zone may be at one extreme a refugee camp and at the other a large part of a country.

Step 2: Identifying Wealth Groups and a 'reference' year.

As it is not possible to investigate and generalise across all households, we gain insights into the lives of representatives from the major wealth groups identified by key informants; usually the 'rich', 'middle', 'poor' and 'very poor'. A profile is developed of the distribution of wealth which will relate to land and/ or livestock holdings, household labour availability, income generating activities, asset ownership and so on. These characteristics are identified by the community themselves and thus vary per LZ.

This profile usually portrays the household economy in a 'reference' year. While in reality years vary. In order to allow for comparisons to be made when conditions are significantly different, a 'reference' year is chosen which is relatively 'normal' or 'typical'. This reference year is also referred to as the 'baseline' year⁷.

Step 3: Describing Household access to food and cash income

Within each LZ we need to understand how typical households access their food and other income and how this varies for each wealth group. This information is obtained by interviewing groups of women or men from each wealth group who identify the various options households employ to secure access to food. These will explore all possible sources of food. In order to purchase food and other basic needs such as health & education, income is derived from various sources, and all are explored. Information is also gathered on all household expenditure.

For each of these three areas, food production, cash income & expenditure, the information is displayed in graphs which illustrate the current situation and show us the options available to each wealth group. Estimates are made of the extent to which a household can expand each option in times of stress. All these interviews are about the previously identified 'reference year'.

Multiple interviews are conducted and information is triangulated to ensure internal and external consistency. For instance, payment for labour reported by labourers should tally with payment rates given by employers.

Step 4: Understanding links to markets

Most households in most parts of the world depend in some way on the marketplace to obtain some of their food. The 'better-off' may increase the value of their crops by specialising production or selling when their value is highest, the poor may be obliged to sell crops directly after harvest and purchase later using income from employment.

⁷ The term "baseline" is used differently than how it is understood in monitoring longitudinal change. It is, rather, a set of reference information which can be compared with similar information gathered at a future time.

Without an understanding of 'normal' links between households and markets in procuring both food and cash income it is not possible to understand options open in times of crisis. The interviews clarify which markets are of greatest importance and therefore where observed price changes (e.g. staple food prices) or reduced access (e.g. due to hostility) will have greatest impact on households in a given LZ.

Step 5: Clarifying risk-minimising strategies and potential coping strategies

Poor households are constantly aware of the risks to their livelihoods and income and to a large degree anticipate and prepare for this. When broadly predictable, (such as in semi-arid areas where rainfall and crop production alter greatly from year to year) successful strategies will include storing crops and accumulating livestock in years of surplus production, and increasing use of wild foods and selling livestock and other assets in shortfall years. In years of extreme 'shock' other strategies may be available such as sending members of the household to fish, to find employment further a field, to increase the collection of firewood or claiming customary kinship support. As most of these are an extension of the usual coping mechanisms of the poor, interviewees are able to identify the options most likely to be pursued first.

Understanding these options is crucial to understanding how households will manage in a given change and what kind of support is necessary for them to access their food and cash income.

9.2 Note on Somali Traditional Calendar

Somali communities, mark their traditional years by giving them names that correspond to the days of the week; years are known as Monday year, followed by Tuesday year, etc, and after the seventh year (i.e. Sunday), the cycle begins again with Monday. Years with the same name would be differentiated by a nickname related to a major event (droughts, floods, war, regime change, epidemics, etc), that took place during particular year; for example *Arbaca Shuba* (meaning the “Pouring Wednesday”) referred to the el-nino year of 1997/98, which was a Wednesday year. Whereas year names are the same across all Somali groups, nicknames may be different in the different agro-ecologies and geographic locations, as events affecting them will be different.

In coming up with Historical timelines, the *deyr* season (which starts in October) is used as the start of the Somali traditional year. The traditional Somali year therefore spans across two Gregorian calendar years, starting with the *deyr* (October) and ending with the *hagaa* (September)

The Somalis use two types of calendar years (i.e. two ways of counting years). It is very important for researches studying production, seasonal related areas among the Somali, to distinguish these two calendar types because the Somali community uses them for different purposes⁸.

1. The *nairus* or *naurus* calendar: This calendar is related to the movement of the sun and other celestial bodies and therefore is used to determine seasonal patterns. The calendar year is kept orally with incredible accuracy and followed closely by the rural communities, particularly pastoralists, as it determines when to expect rainfall, and whether or not to move livestock to different location. This type of year is exactly the same as the Gregorian year (i.e. has 365 days) but does not start with January. The beginning of the year is marked by ‘the positioning of some star(s) into specific locations in the sky’, known as *kalawereega nairuuska*. This usually coincides with start of the *deyr* rainy season for most Somali groups and is marked in a variety of ways by some rural communities. The *nairus* year is divided into four main seasons in the most Somali inhabited areas – *deyr*, *jilaal*, *gu*, and *hagaa*. *Deyr* and *gu* are rainy seasons while *hagaa* and *jilaal* are dry seasons.

The number of days in each of the seasons in the *nairus* year are numbered, each about 90, although with some seasons (like the *hagaa*) being a few shorter and others slightly longer. The total number of days would then fit in exactly with the Gregorian calendar days. Therefore the start of the seasons is normally easily identified with a specific Gregorian date like *Gu* (the main rains) starts around 12-14 April in most of the Somali inhabited areas (except the *karan* belt). Similarly the other seasons start at specific dates (*hagaa* in July, *deyr* in October, and *Jilaal* in January).

⁸ The order in which the season will appear in the assessment will depend on how a given community identifies their ‘consumption’ year. Therefore a reference year could start in the *jilaal* season followed by the *gu*, *hagaa* & *deyr* or in the *gu* followed by the *hagaa*, *deyr* & *jilaal* etc.

There are parts of the Somali inhabited areas that have slightly different seasonal patterns, but still use the *nairus* system to keep track of the seasons. These are the northern part of Somali Region (Jijiga and Shinile Zones), the northwestern part of Somalia (mainly Woqooyi Galbeed, Awdal and parts of Sanaag Regions) and Djibouti. These areas do not receive *deyr* rains but instead receive *gu* (or *diraa'*) and *karan* rains.

2. The Islamic Calendar (Lunar Calendar) – This calendar uses the moon's movements instead of the sun's movement. The number of months is 12 but the year is normally around 355 days. This calendar started with the migration of Prophet Mohamed and his followers from Mecca to Madina, which marked a turning point in the history of the Islamic faith, and is therefore known as *Hijriya* (Migration) calendar. The Somali have local names for each of the Islamic months 'or moons' (but these names differ slightly among the different geographic locations) and they use these months for all religious obligations, rites and worship – like fasting, *zakat*⁹ payment, *Hajj*¹⁰, etc.

⁹ *Zakat* is the obligatory payment by wealthier Muslims to poorer ones, once their wealth (usually savings or assets) reaches a specific threshold known as *nisaab*. *Zakat* is 2.5% of savings; 10% of rainfed crop harvest; 5% of irrigated crop harvest; one shoat for every the first 5 camels owned, etc.

¹⁰ *Hajj* is a compulsory pilgrimage to the *Ka'ba* (the first house of worship established by prophet Abraham), at least once in a lifetime for Muslim individuals who can afford the journey while still being able to maintain their families.