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TECHNICAL REPORT

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PEACE CENTERS FOR CLIMATE AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE:

AN ASSESSMENT IN BORANA ZONE,  
OROMIA NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA



**November 2017**

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Chemonics for the ATLAS Task Order.

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Jeffrey Stark, Katsuaki Terasawa and Chalachew Niguse Agonafir for the Climate Change Adaptation, Thought Leadership and Assessments (ATLAS) Task Order No. AID-OAA-I-14-00013, under the Restoring the Environment through Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems (REPLACE) IDIQ.

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**Cover Photo:** Katsuaki Terasawa, Yabelo District, Oromia National Regional State, Ethiopia, 2017. Herders move livestock in search of water and pasture. In Oromia, more frequent and severe droughts, amplified by climate change, are reducing water supplies, forcing herders to travel longer distances and contributing to conflict among pastoralists. Peacebuilding initiatives that address both climate and nonclimate stressors are helping reduce violence and promote peace.

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Prepared for:

United States Agency for International Development  
Climate Change Adaptation, Thought Leadership and Assessments (ATLAS)

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# ACRONYMS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| CAF   | USAID Conflict Assessment Framework                  |
| EPRDF | Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front    |
| GDP   | Gross Domestic Product                               |
| NRM   | Natural Resource Management                          |
| NGO   | Nongovernmental Organization                         |
| PCCSR | Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience      |
| PCRC  | Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs                   |
| PMR   | Conflict Prevention, Mitigation and Resolution       |
| SNNPR | Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region  |
| TOP   | Transition Out of Pastoralism (pastoralist dropouts) |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development   |
| WPN   | Women's Peace Network                                |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

In recent decades, southern Ethiopia and other arid and semi-arid rangelands in the Horn of Africa have experienced the effects of two related threats: 1) increasingly frequent and severe droughts amplified by climate change, and 2) outbreaks of conflict among pastoralist groups whose access to natural resources has been squeezed by population growth, land development, administrative boundaries, rangeland degradation, and erratic and extreme weather.

These threats have potential implications for stability and security in the Horn of Africa. The past decade of research on climate change, environmental stresses and conflict, however, suggests that the effects of climate change on conflict are mediated by many nonclimate factors and are highly contingent. Development practitioners are giving increasing attention to the propositions that collaborative community activities to strengthen climate resilience, focused on building key institutional relationships, may contribute to conflict prevention, and that lower levels of conflict can provide the opportunity to enhance the scope and quality of climate adaptation.

This report provides an assessment of lessons learned from a pilot project in Borana Zone, Oromia National Regional State, Ethiopia, that tests that proposition. Since 2014, the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience (PCCSR) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the College of Law of Haramaya University, has undertaken collaborative activities in pastoral communities in three districts (*woredas*) in Borana Zone to address community vulnerabilities to climate change and improve communities' capacity for conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution (PMR).

The relationship between climate change and conflict is increasingly being recognized as an emergent risk in international policy fora. However, a nuanced understanding of the climate–conflict nexus and the role of institutional change has been difficult to integrate into donor programming, due in part to organizational compartmentalization. In places like Borana—poor, rural areas with weak or flawed governance—climate adaptation will be suboptimal or impossible without conflict PMR, and conflict PMR will be suboptimal or impossible without serious attention to climate threats and climate adaptation.

In the first decade of the 2000s, local governments and customary institutions in Borana faced periodic outbreaks of violence that resulted in cycles of instability and conflict. The PCCSR initiative endeavored to reverse these patterns of conflict and change the collective perceptions, attitudes and behaviors underlying them. It built upon the hypothesis proposed in Mercy Corps' 2012 report, "From Conflict to Coping," that conflict PMR is a key piece of climate adaptation, as peacebuilding efforts may contribute to conditions that foster greater freedom of movement and

enable better access to natural resources (such as pasture and water) that allow pastoralists to deploy strategies to cope with climate shocks.

This report analyzes the climate and conflict dynamics of the project areas, how the PCCSR project activities addressed them, the results of PCCSR activities and their effects on conflict and climate resilience, and the lessons from the PCCSR pilot project's implementation.

The assessment is based on the concepts and research methodologies used in the USAID Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF). The CAF uses key analytic categories that provide a structured way to think about conflict dynamics. These include identities, societal patterns, grievances, institutional performance, key actors, and trends and triggers of conflict.

From mid-May 2017 to early June 2017, a three-person assessment team met in Addis Ababa with USAID/Ethiopia mission staff, nongovernmental experts, officials from ministries of the federal government of Ethiopia and the Oromia National Regional State government, followed by extensive field interviews and focus group discussions in Borana.

The field research focused on five key areas:

- 1) How did local perceptions, attitudes and behaviors toward conflict change during the PCCSR project activities? What contributed to those changes?
- 2) What lessons about conflict PMR were learned from the interactions of customary and formal institutions? How can customary–formal institutional linkages be further improved?
- 3) Did climate change adaptation measures contribute to conflict reduction and, if so, how?
- 4) How did the PCCSR project experience affect the roles and expectations of elders/traditional leaders, women and youth?
- 5) What are the most important next steps to promote conflict resilience and climate security in Borana and other pastoralist regions of Ethiopia?

Given Ethiopia's location in a notoriously "bad neighborhood" in the Horn of Africa (bordered by Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea), Ethiopia has been remarkably stable since 2000. National stability, however, has not been accompanied by open political competition. Ethiopia enacted its 1995 Constitution based on a form of decentralization that empowered local ethnic groups that aligned themselves through regional parties with the ruling national party, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Ethiopia's national stability also masks conflict that persists at more local levels in national regional states. For the past several years, there have been protests in Oromia linked to complaints about land grabs and longstanding aspirations for greater autonomy and political voice. In October 2016, a six-month state of emergency was declared in Ethiopia, later modified somewhat and extended for another four months.

Mobility is at the heart of traditional pastoralist livelihood practices. The alternation of dry and wet season grazing areas, the movement between host and receiving communities, and the use of migration for risk management are central to pastoralists' efficient use of scarce natural resources. Periodic droughts are part of the natural climate cycle in Borana. The movement of people and animals to adapt to environmental conditions can cover long distances, far beyond the relatively narrow confines of districts' administrative boundaries. The differing priorities of mobility for pastoralist livelihoods and fixed administrative jurisdictions for government exist in an uneasy and sometimes antagonistic relationship in Borana.

The Borana and other Oromo people have a deeply embedded cultural system of governance known as *Gadaa*, which regulates political, economic, social and religious activities as well as natural resource management (NRM), dispute resolution and compensation. Pastoralism as traditionally practiced in Borana has been under increasing pressure for some time due to rapid population growth, overgrazing, bush encroachment, croplands expansion, private enclosures, commercial development and administrative boundaries. The pace of droughts quickened in recent years, including 1999–2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010–2011 and 2015–2017.

During this time, Borana Zone also experienced violence in relation to contested grazing areas, cattle theft, competition over water points, agricultural encroachment and boundary disputes. The conflicts are often internalized in relation to identity and viewed through an ethno-political lens, regardless of the specific circumstances and nature of the original events. Zonal records of conflict incidents in Borana between 2005 and 2014 show periodic killings of sometimes more than 50 people, with individual violent incidents displacing as many as 1,500 people and resulting in the looting of hundreds, or even occasionally thousands, of cattle.

## **ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PEACE CENTERS**

Prior to the PCCSR project, while peace committees existed in some districts, most were not functioning, the track record of others was very poor and, in some locations, it was not even clear who the members of the peace committees were.

The peace centers of the PCCSR were designed with three main objectives: 1) improving conflict resilience through collaborative community actions on climate vulnerabilities; 2) enhancing community adaptive capacity to address climate and natural resource challenges; and 3) strengthening the overall capacity of communities in conflict PMR. An important cross-cutting aim was the improvement of communications and linkages between customary and formal institutions.

Workshops were held in each woreda with elders, traditional leaders, women and youth from each of the respective ethnic groups as well as government officials to validate preparatory project information gathered by PCCSR staff and other Haramaya University researchers. This included survey findings on the most important climate and nonclimate hazards affecting the project communities and the findings of needs assessments conducted for each woreda. Based on the consensus and recommendations emerging from these validation processes, the PCCSR

project stakeholders jointly agreed upon a series of tasks to meet the project objectives in the three target woredas and 12 project neighborhoods (*kebeles*) through iterations of a series of sequenced, core activities:

- Revitalizing and Strengthening Peace Committees
- Initiating Intergroup Community Dialogues (past grievances and attitudes)
- Trainings/Workshops on Peace and Conflict
- Trainings/Workshops on Climate Change Impacts and Climate Change Adaptation
- Establishing Community Priorities on Conflict and Natural Resource Management (NRM)
- Conducting Assessments on Issues Related to Conflict, Climate Change and Resilience
- Mobilizing Joint Intergroup NRM Activities (pond rehabilitation, soil bunds, bush thinning)
- Identifying Key and Contested Water and Pasture Areas through Community Dialogues
- Establishing Women’s Peace Networks (WPNs)
- Establishing Youth Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs (PCRC)
- Developing Community Bylaws with Local Government on Joint Use and Management of Rangeland Resources

In meetings, interviews and focus group discussions with more than 100 people in Borana Zone, interviewees said that PCCSR activities succeeded in changing attitudes among ethnic groups in the project districts. Administration and security officials for Borana Zone said that the PCCSR had made good progress in ensuring that communities focus on individual criminal acts rather than ascribing culpability to entire ethnic groups. They saw an overall decline in conflict from 2015–2017, and said that people now report incidents of violence and crimes as they occur to local peace committees.

At a meeting with Borana, Gabra and Guji pastoralists, elders noted that previous peace committees were not successful in stopping repeated conflict. Before, one participant said, “We looked at others as the source of problems, now we look at the problems we are causing.” One woman stated that the PCCSR was a difficult process, “but they brought us together continuously and we began to connect with each other.” Now, she said, every woman knows the lessons shared by the WPN. The contrast of conflict conditions before and after the beginning of the PCCSR project was made clear in focus group discussions, which emphasized how rapidly and destructively conflict has affected communities in Borana. Focus group participants said peace committees now intervene to squelch false rumors and stop individual criminal acts from being used as a rationale for retaliation and escalation.

The success of the PCCSR in strengthening conflict resilience seems to lie in the structured, labor-intensive, sequential and iterative approach used in implementing the project. Community dialogues identified grievances and community priorities. Training on climate change and conflict PMR was directed at not just community members but also government officials and PCCSR staff. Learning was “cascaded down” from zonal to district and neighborhood levels. Women and youth developed organizational structures to sustain the effort.

Tangible, joint climate change adaptation activities (ponds, bush thinning, soil bunds, etc.) produced an important lesson. While project participants were focused on the physical results and important practical benefits of these activities, they said that over time they found the most valuable outcome was the sense of mutual understanding and solidarity that emerged among different groups by working collaboratively.

The project had good success in improving communications and linkages between government institutions and customary institutions, although government institutions clearly dominated that interaction. Some cross-currents with government continue. While PCCSR communities are delinking violent acts from group identity in their training and discussions, government administrative structures continue to reinforce ethnically based concepts.

## **CLIMATE TRENDS, PASTORALIST DROPOUTS AND LAND USE**

While the PCCSR model has been a successful “proof of concept” in building conflict resilience, the assessment team found that climate change—especially the stepped-up frequency of droughts—appears to be overwhelming some communities, and climate change adaptation is not providing an adequate response.

Observed weather data show that although seasonal cycles may vary from year to year, annual rainfall in Borana Zone is reducing consistently, accompanied somewhat paradoxically by an increased frequency of intense rainfall events. Spring rainfall is lower and unpredictable, and when it does come, it may arrive in downpours. When that happens, the consequences are severe, as soil nutrients are lost and the ground absorbs little moisture due to the intensity of the rain as well as the lack of ground cover caused by frequent drought and overgrazing. Poor soil with scant moisture does not provide the necessary conditions for the regrowth of ground cover. Increasing temperatures exacerbate the situation.

All the communities visited in the PCCSR project areas were experiencing varying degrees of drought conditions, and they expressed concerns about the viability of pastoralism as a reliable livelihood for a growing, youthful population. Along with climate threats, the problem of too many cattle on shrinking and degraded rangelands, the constraints on mobility created by political and administrative boundaries, and the abuse of private enclosures were mentioned frequently by community leaders and local experts. One consequence of the confluence of these diverse challenges is the increasing stream of pastoralist “dropouts,” especially young men and women.

The success rate of pastoralist dropouts in finding a stable alternative livelihood is very low. Most pastoralists lack fundamental educational skills. There is a strong need for collective basic education, attitudinal changes and skills development for empowerment. Given their prior life experiences, very few pastoralist dropouts meet employment criteria, and the majority, who are illiterate and lack family connections, are often unaware of and unable to locate job opportunities.

Conflict is a cause—and possible consequence—of the phenomenon of pastoralist dropouts, who constitute a growing population of unemployed or underemployed internally displaced persons.

Efforts are being made to address the needs of pastoralist dropouts, including technical and vocational training, basic workplace skills and jobs linked to livestock value chains. Like climate trends, however, the rising curve of pastoralist dropouts appears to be outstripping the absorptive capacity of labor markets in Borana and elsewhere in Ethiopia. A rural-to-urban, unmoored and growing population of mainly young men and women without productive activities to occupy them is an urgent problem that raises serious concerns about instability and conflict.

With shrinking rangelands, two distinctly different land use paradigms for pastoralists are under discussion. Land use by pastoralists in Borana must balance a host of issues, including not only the needs of pastoralists for access to grazing lands and water resources but also the potential for ethnic or clan tensions and the political and administrative preferences of local officials seeking to deliver services and maintain security.

The first land use paradigm is the so-called “linear settlement” system, which is a community-level pastoralist settlement pattern along a defined line, with wet and dry grazing areas on either side. Government officials see it as a rational shift from previous dispersed settlement patterns. Critics, however, see it primarily as a political mechanism to limit and monitor the movement of pastoralist groups. Pilot communities for linear settlement now exist in each of the districts visited.

The second paradigm envisions the management of natural resources through the certification of *dheeda*, the customary lowland territorial and ecological unit used as communal land by pastoralists in Borana. Dheedas encompass a much larger expanse of land, running across districts, with dry and wet season grazing areas based on water points and natural grazing landscapes. Clear pros and cons exist for each paradigm, and their divergent priorities have different implications for the potential for conflict.

Many pastoralist leaders do not see the linear settlement model as a viable basis for pastoralist mobility, and government officials feel the *dheeda* system undermines their administrative prerogatives and responsibilities. After negotiations, however, regional government officials decided to pilot certification of three *dheeda* areas.

Going forward, the question is how these institutional differences are to be managed and resolved. The PCCSR project offers a successful model that could help to fill this gap and facilitate the necessary dialogue and collaboration at the local level.

## **BUILDING ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE PEACE CENTERS**

In pastoralist areas of Ethiopia, conflict is an immediate threat to the livelihoods of entire communities. In times of conflict, livestock mobility is greatly reduced or curtailed, and access to pasture and water may become impossible. Markets and petty trade can collapse, and

economic activity in nearby towns can grind to a halt. It is against these cumulative costs, which Borana has incurred repeatedly in the recent past, that the value and cost-effectiveness of the PCCSR should be measured.

The PCCSR project areas have experienced very few episodes of conflict, and when tensions or conflict arise, violations or crimes are reported almost immediately. The most fundamental achievement of the PCCSR, however, is the attitudinal change identified by all project stakeholders. This is the shift from “ethnic attribution” of criminal acts and negative characteristics (aggressive, wild, violent, untrustworthy, immoral) to ascribing them to the *individuals* who commit acts of violence or exhibit those characteristics.

The process needed to produce these results, while not requiring large expenditures, involves systematic, sequential, structured and iterative activities to build knowledge, social capital and trust. These activities need sufficient time to be fully implemented and to take hold. The effective functioning of the peace committees and women’s and youth groups is enhanced by a constructive collaborative relationship between local government and customary institutions.

Climate change has been an effective organizing principle and center of gravity for the PCCSR project for the compelling reason that it is an “external threat” experienced by all ethnic groups and clans in Borana. The critical need to respond to climate threats provided a meaningful rationale and strong incentive for interethnic dialogue and collaboration. Community discussions about climate challenges usefully broadened and strengthened the agenda for interethnic and interclan dialogue about conflict issues.

Climate change adaptation measures that directly or indirectly reduced competition for grazing areas and water points reduced the potential for conflict. While climate change adaptation activities to harvest water and reduce erosion were important for the direct benefits they provided for livelihoods, the rehabilitation and sharing of water ponds was a more powerful and important contribution to conflict prevention.

One of the difficulties in measuring the value of a project focused on conflict is that much of what may have been gained is counterfactual. However, by their own testimony, the PCCSR has been used by zonal and local authorities to increase their awareness and capacity to respond to potential conflict and the aftermath of conflict. As analysts have sometimes observed, Ethiopia’s governance is “brittle,” strong at the surface but subject to fracture. The activities of the PCCSR helped to boost the responsiveness and resilience of local government institutions.

Challenges in the not-so-distant future could produce new outbreaks of conflict in forms that differ from the ones addressed by the PCCSR so far. The most important of these is the dilemma of pastoralist dropouts. Many focus group participants, both men and women, made it clear that they would leave pastoralism if given a viable alternative path forward.

Despite initiatives by government and donors, efforts to date to address this urgent challenge appear to be far from adequate. From the perspective of conflict analysis, there is a high risk that the current trajectory of incremental actions to address the issue of pastoralist dropouts will lead to an explosive and destabilizing situation in the future. The PCCSR model could help raise awareness and explore with local government and businesses possible steps to respond to the swelling pool of pastoralist dropouts.

A second challenge is establishing clearer and more firmly agreed upon systems of pastoralist land use tenure. The divergent priorities of small and tightly administered political units on the one hand and large landscapes for livelihood needs on the other reflect the basic tensions between state and society in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia. Dialogue and negotiation are needed to find workable land use solutions. The PCCSR approach could contribute to or facilitate some of these discussions.

Religion, government and other cultural influences are penetrating more deeply into community life in Borana. Given the role of traditional institutions in conflict prevention, these changes have implications for their effectiveness. By providing organizational structures for women's and youth groups, the PCCSR model can provide a channel for their input and contributions to managing the challenges of this changing context.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to USAID to encourage successful completion of the final stages of the PCCSR pilot project and support continuation of the PCCSR model in a second phase:

1. Ensure that the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience project fully completes the final drafting and signing of community bylaws for all project target communities.
2. Encourage PCCSR staff to work with communities toward diversification of the composition of the peace committees, including a higher proportion of nongovernmental community members, especially women and youth.
3. Hold a by-invitation workshop in Addis Ababa cosponsored by USAID and Haramaya University on lessons learned from the PCCSR project, including participants such as the core working group of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Pastoralist Development, Oromia Pastoralist Area Development Commission, World Bank, African Development Bank, IGAD and Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia, as well as other representatives from Oromia National Regional State and Borana Zone as appropriate.
4. Recognize the positive return on investment from USAID's support for the PCCSR pilot project and its success in strengthening conflict resilience, and actively support funding, diversification and expansion of PCCSR activities for another full project cycle.
5. Encourage the Federal Government of Ethiopia and Oromia National Regional State to support the PCCSR model both financially (operational baseline budget) and as part of their security and peace policies.



6. Support the extension of PCCSR activities in a second phase to other zones in Oromia as well as conflict-prone, cross-boundary areas with Somali and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) National Regional States.
7. Explore ways of increasing and integrating programmatic support to address the challenge of pastoralist dropouts, including recognition of its implications for conflict and the constructive role that the PCCSR model may be able to play in addressing the issue.
8. Encourage the PCCSR in a second phase to assist the Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs for youth in conducting a needs assessment and "ground-truthing" on transitions out of pastoralism. These findings should then be shared with the broader community in the project districts, including local government, small businesses and those in the livestock value chain and supply system.
9. Continue to support discussions among formal and customary institutions to come to a consensus on approaches to the certification of pastoralist land tenure, considering both livelihood and administrative priorities and concerns. Explore ways in which the PCCSR model might support this certification process in its pilot phase and as it evolves.
10. Expand and diversify the interethnic, collaborative climate change adaptation activities of the PCCSR model, including soil trenches for water harvesting, bush thinning and water ponds.
11. Encourage the use of the PCCSR model to explore in greater depth the accelerating impacts of climate change in Borana and the formulation of a more ambitious short- to medium-term menu of climate change adaptation activities.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, southern Ethiopia and other arid and semi-arid rangelands in the Horn of Africa have experienced the effects of two related threats: 1) increasingly frequent and severe droughts amplified by climate change, and 2) outbreaks of conflict among pastoralist groups whose access to natural resources has been squeezed by population growth, land development, administrative boundaries, rangeland degradation, and erratic and extreme weather. For many observers, the climate–conflict linkage appears to be headed toward a downward spiral, accompanied by fears that climate change will increase resource competition among poor rural populations and spread conflict in vulnerable regions of the world (Clapper 2014; CNA Military Advisory Board 2014; Parenti 2010).

These threats are serious and real, and they have potential implications for stability and security in the Horn of Africa. The past decade of research on climate change, environmental stresses and conflict, however, suggests that the effects of climate change on conflict are mediated by many nonclimate factors and are highly contingent (Mazo 2010; Benjaminsen et al. 2012; Scheffran et al. 2012; IPCC 2014). Development practitioners are giving increasing attention to the propositions that carefully planned collaborative activities to strengthen climate resilience, focused on building key institutional relationships, may contribute to conflict prevention, and that lower levels of conflict can provide the opportunity to enhance the scope and quality of climate adaptation.

This report provides an assessment of lessons learned from a pilot project in Borana Zone, Oromia National Regional State, Ethiopia, that tests that proposition. Since 2014, the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience (PCCSR) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the College of Law of Haramaya University, has undertaken an extensive set of collaborative activities in pastoral communities in three districts (*woredas*) in Borana Zone to address community vulnerabilities to climate change and improve communities' capacity for conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution (PMR).

The PCCSR project activities took place within the context of the prevailing political and economic conditions in Ethiopia and the specific governance and livelihood challenges faced by pastoralists and agropastoralists in Borana. In the first decade of the 2000s, local governments and customary institutions in Borana faced periodic outbreaks of violence that resulted in cycles of instability and conflict that escalated quickly. The PCCSR initiative endeavored to reverse these patterns of conflict and to change the collective perceptions, attitudes and behaviors that underlie them.

This report is neither a full conflict assessment nor a project evaluation, but an effort to analyze the climate and conflict dynamics of the project areas, how the PCCSR project activities addressed them, the results of PCCSR activities and their effects on conflict and climate



## 2. METHODOLOGY

This assessment is based on the concepts and research methodologies used in previous USAID studies on climate and conflict, notably those of the USAID Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF) 2.0.<sup>1</sup> These recognize that conflict is the result of context-specific economic, social, institutional, cultural and historical factors that sometimes intertwine in important ways with the effects of climate shocks and stresses. The CAF 2.0 uses several key analytic categories that provide a structured way to think about conflict dynamics. These include:

**Identities** – Markers of similarity or distinction among individuals and groups (e.g., ethnicity, religion, gender, age cohort, indigene/migrant, etc.).

**Societal patterns** – Systematic and repetitive forms of interaction among individuals, groups and institutions in the community (e.g., authority, inclusion, exclusion, accountability).

**Grievances** – Feelings of dissatisfaction among society’s members based on perceptions of whether their needs for livelihoods, identity and rights are met in ways that are fair and just.

**Institutional performance** – The extent to which formal and informal institutions are perceived to be legitimate (fair, transparent, accountable) and effective (providing order and basic public goods).

**Key actors** – Influential individuals and organizations that have the capacity to mobilize collective actions around grievances or resiliencies.

**Trends** – Dynamics and patterns that influence developments over an extended period. Trends may involve identities, societal patterns, grievances, institutional performance, key actors and the dynamics among them.

**Triggers** – Actions or events that can provoke acts of violence, suppression or conflict.

From mid-May 2017 to early June 2017, a three-person assessment team met in Addis Ababa with USAID/Ethiopia mission staff, nongovernmental experts, officials from ministries of the federal government of Ethiopia and Oromia National Regional State, followed by extensive field interviews and focus group discussions in Borana with local government officials, community elders, traditional leaders, traditional resource managers, peace committees, Women’s Peace Network (WPN) members, Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs (PCRC) youth members and PCCSR staff in project neighborhoods (*kebeles*) in Yabelo, Arero and Teltele woredas (Figure 2). In addition, several in-person, follow-up interviews were conducted in Addis Ababa in the

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications>.

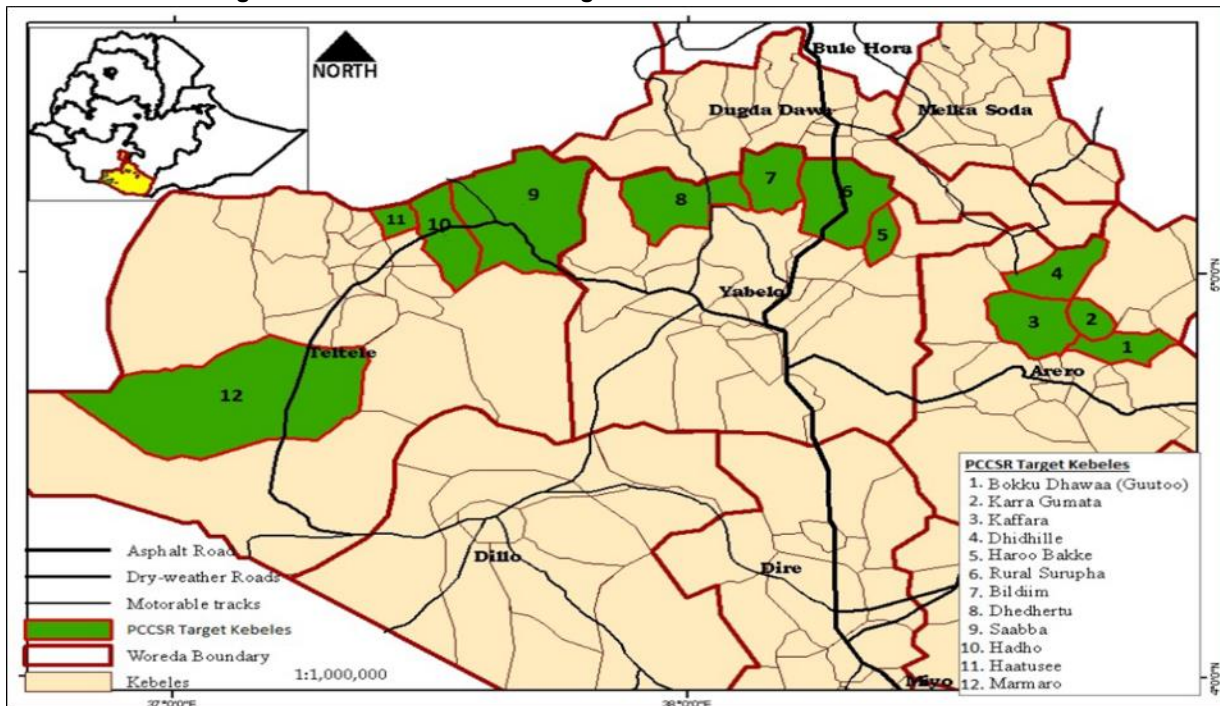
second week of June 2017, and other sets of follow-up questions for interviewees were answered by email.

Given the limitations of time and resources, field research was conducted using a mix of empirical and qualitative data, including observed weather data, government documents, published studies and reports, and sets of guiding questions that served as the basis for interviews and focus group discussions in the field (see Annex A for guiding question sets used during the study). Climate data were obtained from the World Bank Climate Knowledge Group and the Oromia Agricultural Research Institute in Yabelo, Ethiopia.

The research team focused on five key areas during interviews and discussions in Borana:

- 1) How did local perceptions, attitudes and behaviors toward conflict change during the PCCSR project activities? What contributed to those changes?
- 2) What lessons about conflict PMR were learned from the interactions of customary and formal institutions? How can customary–formal institutional linkages be further improved?
- 3) Did climate change adaptation measures contribute to conflict reduction and, if so, how?
- 4) How did the PCCSR project experience affect the roles and expectations of elders/traditional leaders, women and youth?
- 5) What are the most important next steps to promote conflict resilience and climate security in Borana and other pastoralist regions of Ethiopia?

Figure 2: Location of PCCSR target woredas and kebeles in Borana Zone



Note 2. The map above shows the location of Borana in southern Ethiopia, the 3 target woredas (Teltele, Yabelo and Arero), and the 12 target kebeles in green across northern Borana Zone.<sup>2</sup> Source: Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience, Haramaya University College of Law.

<sup>2</sup> During the project, some of this area was redistricted to become part of two newly created woredas, Gomole and El Waye.

# 3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## 3.1 GROWING CONCERNS ABOUT CLIMATE AND CONFLICT

Concerns among scholars and policy makers that global warming and climate-related environmental effects (droughts, floods, sea level rise) might contribute to higher levels of conflict in developing regions, especially Africa, intensified rapidly with the release of the Fourth Annual Assessment of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007.

Numerous articles and reports soon appeared from security and intelligence specialists to warn about the strong likelihood of climate change and conflict trending upward in tandem (e.g., CNA Corporation 2007; CNAS and CSIS 2008; Fingar 2009). The German Advisory Council on Global Change (2008) proposed four climate-driven “conflict constellations,” including water, food, natural disasters and migration. To this, the UN Secretary-General added the further tensions caused by resource competition, disease outbreaks and economic shocks (UN 2009).

Some scholars began to use quantitative analysis to test the causal linkages between global warming and violence. One team of researchers looked at temperature records and civil war in Sub-Saharan Africa. Their findings, which projected “a roughly 54 percent increase in armed conflict by 2030,” gained attention in many media outlets (Burke et al. 2009). Another study found an increase in civil conflict in warmer and drier El Niño years (Hsiang, Meng, and Cane 2011). Efforts to identify a relationship between extreme weather events like erratic rainfall and conflict in Africa showed some positive results, but were not entirely conclusive (Hendrix and Salehyan 2012; Koubi et al. 2012).

Recently, scholars have refined their research questions to look more closely at specific circumstances. Two new studies produced findings that potentially have relevance to the political context and climate conditions of Ethiopia. In the first, global data for the period 1980–2010 showed that about one-quarter of conflict outbreaks in ethnically divided countries coincided with climate-related natural disasters (Schleussner et al. 2016). In the second, data from Africa and Asia covering the period 1989–2014 showed that sustained drought in agricultural communities over several growing seasons increased the risk of conflict by approximately 15 percent, and that linkages between conflict and environmental shocks “constitute a vicious circle” that deepens over time (van Uexkull et al. 2016).

Quantitative studies have been challenged on both methodological and substantive grounds by conflict experts, who argue that extensive work by social scientists indicates that broad generalizations based on climate data are of little help in anticipating conflict in specific countries marked by distinctive political, economic, social and cultural systems that heavily influence the probabilities of stability or instability (Buhaug 2010; Busby 2013). The results of

newer research studies designed with a sharper analytic focus, however, suggest that drought-prone countries with significant ethnic divisions, such as Ethiopia, may face increased risks of conflict if current climate trends continue.

## 3.2 INTERACTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND NONCLIMATE FACTORS

The impacts of unpredictable and severe weather events affect and interact with a wide array of nonclimate factors. These include livelihoods and economic development, state–society dynamics, resource governance, institutional performance, and relations among privileged and disadvantaged identity groups. These variables are common points of reference in conflict analysis. To get a clearer understanding of how climate variability is interacting with nonclimate factors and affecting stability in specific country contexts, USAID supported a series of country case studies in Africa, Asia and Latin America conducted by International Alert and the Foundation for Environmental Security and Sustainability (FESS). The summary report of International Alert on its work in South Asia concluded that:

“Any risk to stability in contexts vulnerable to climate change involves multiple drivers beyond the direct environmental hazards; many of these drivers are pre-existing social, economic and political stresses...It is therefore erroneous for donors, international institutions, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and national governments to promote climate change as a discrete risk and to address this through standalone strategies” (Mitra and Vivekananda 2013).

FESS distilled key findings from five case studies it conducted on climate and security in a variety of rural and urban settings in seven countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Peru and Uganda). These findings included the following:

- A major source of insecurity in rural areas in low-income countries is climate change’s steady erosion of the effectiveness of traditional knowledge and coping mechanisms.
- Climate change increases tensions over transitions from traditional livelihoods to the implementation of new national development plans.
- Climate change impacts intertwine with and highlight existing institutional shortcomings in ways that negatively affect stability.
- Weak government responses to climate change impacts amplify already existing perceptions of injustice and inequality felt by vulnerable populations (Stark 2014).

Taken together, these studies from a dozen countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America indicate that climate vulnerability, as well as vulnerability to instability and conflict related to climate change, is closely linked to challenges of governance, including lack of institutional legitimacy, effectiveness and participation.<sup>3</sup> Climate adaptation interventions tending toward mostly

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<sup>3</sup> Climate vulnerability is commonly defined in terms of three components: 1) exposure to climate variation, 2) sensitivity of communities and their livelihoods to climate stresses, and 3) adaptive capacity of communities to cope with climate impacts by moderating damaging consequences and taking advantage of opportunities for building resilience. The latter two components are



technical solutions are likely to be limited, reversible or sometimes even negative in their effects. The PCCSR project design sought to take these broader considerations into account.

The findings also point toward the centrality of governance as a prime determinant of whether climate stresses push communities past a tipping point where legal or normative restraints are transgressed and violence becomes possible.

### **3.3 GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA**

Given Ethiopia's location in a notoriously "bad neighborhood" in the Horn of Africa (it borders Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea), Ethiopia has been remarkably stable since 2000, when a two-year war with Eritrea came to an end. Political authority in the country has been exercised for more than two decades by the ruling party, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

In 1995, Ethiopia enacted its Constitution based on the concept of ethnic federalism, which divided the country into nine regional states (and two chartered cities of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa) based mainly on core ethnic identities. This was a form of decentralization that empowered local ethnic groups, provided they joined or aligned themselves through regional parties with the EPRDF. Over time, the EPRDF extended and deepened its influence vertically through party cadres that reach all levels of governance in Ethiopia—from the federal level to regional states and downward to zones, woredas and kebeles (the lowest community level structures).<sup>4</sup>

National stability, however, has not been accompanied by open political competition or public trust in state institutions. Contested elections in 2005 produced protests and violence, while elections in 2010 saw the ruling party win 499 of 536 seats in Parliament, and the elections of 2015 produced a clean sweep of all 546 Parliamentary seats by the EPRDF and its allies. Few channels have been available for the expression of political dissent, and international human rights organizations have protested the widespread prosecution and detention of journalists, activists and members of opposition parties. Hence, Ethiopia has many of the widely recognized contextual risk factors for conflict—illiberal governance, factionalism, a "bad neighborhood" in the Horn of Africa, and a history of conflict, including recent events in Oromia and Amhara National Regional States.

From 1995 to 2012, Ethiopia was led by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, whose vision of a strong developmental state with ambitious goals for economic growth produced impressive results. This orientation was expressed in a series of three five-year plans beginning in 2005: the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP); the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) I; and the current GTP II. Underlying these plans is an emphasis on intensifying commercial agriculture, developing growth corridors in key geographic locations,

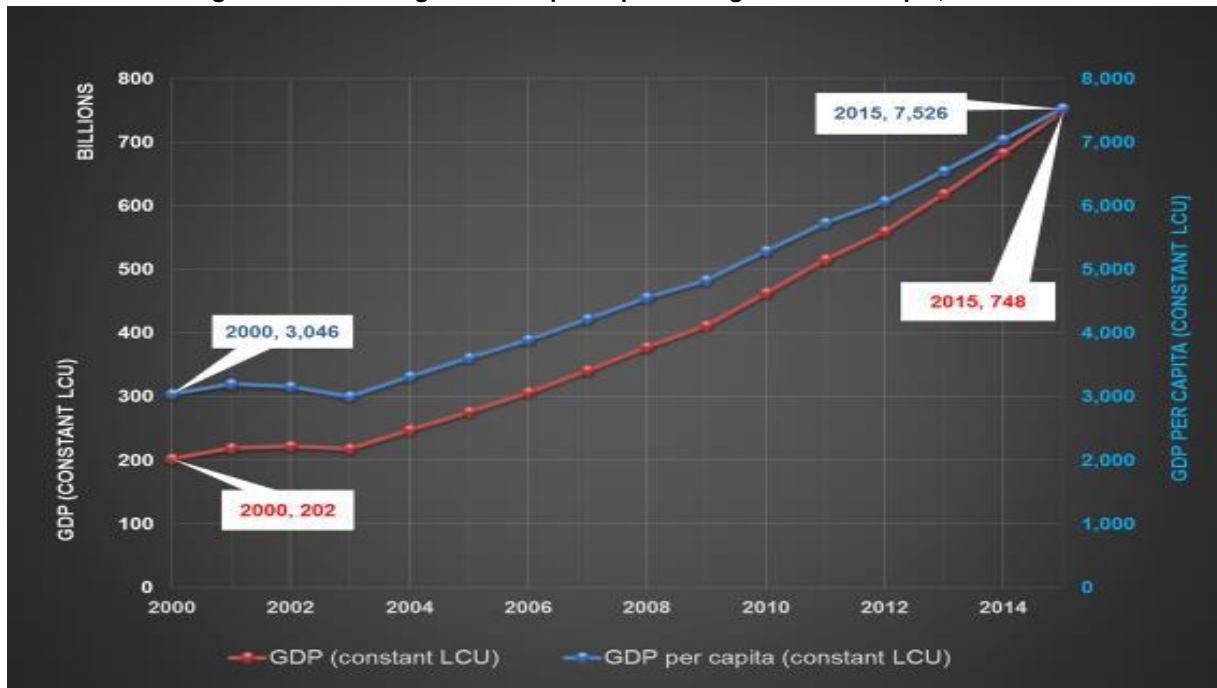
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strongly influenced by formal and informal systems of governance and the choices made by authorities in managing natural resources.

<sup>4</sup> Recently, this influence reached down even further to encompass zones, a subunit of kebeles. Party recruitment has been based on the "one-to-five" system, in which one party member is expected to recruit five new members.

building new water infrastructure and significantly increasing exports, including livestock and meat production. In Addis Ababa and other urban areas, the service sector has expanded rapidly. The GTP II sets a highly ambitious goal of gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 11 percent annually.

**Figure 3: Real GDP growth and per capita GDP growth in Ethiopia, 2000–2015**



Note 3. From 2000–2015, real GDP in Ethiopia (red line) grew at an annual rate of 9.1 percent, while GDP per capita (blue line) nearly quadrupled as measured in local currency units (LCU). Source: Based on data from World Development Indicators, World Bank.

Even contemplating such a rapid rate of growth would be unimaginable for most countries, but Ethiopia’s growth statistics since 2000 as reported by the World Bank are striking. From 2000–2015, as indicated in Figure 2, real GDP in Ethiopia grew at an annual rate of 9.1 percent, while per capita GDP nearly quadrupled. Basic quality of life indicators showed marked improvement as well. For example, under-5 mortality rates per 1,000 live births fell from 145 in 2000 to just 60 in 2015. In education, the primary completion rate went from 21 percent in 2000 to 50 percent in 2012 (World Bank 2015).

But educational progress is not uniform across income groups. The richest quintile now receives 7.5 years of schooling, while the poorest quintile receives only 1.6 years of schooling. Approximately 80 percent of Ethiopia’s population still lives in rural areas, and around 30 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (World Bank 2015). In the United Nations Human Development Report 2016, Ethiopia is ranked 174 out of a total of 188 countries (UNDP 2016). Ethiopia’s rapid economic growth started from a very low base, and despite its notable accomplishments, the nation’s ascent to its self-described goal of becoming a lower-middle-income country remains long and arduous.

### 3.4 POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN OROMIA

Ethiopia's national stability also masks conflict and violence that persists at more local levels in national regional states. Ethnic majorities in the regional states often exercise political authority in ways that make minorities feel discriminated against and powerless. One common solution is the creation of new zones and woredas to accommodate greater local autonomy for minorities, but conflict over changing administrative boundaries is common. In some areas, conflict also takes place over regional state boundaries such as Oromia–Somali, Oromia–SNNPR and Oromia–Afar–Somali regions (Greene 2011).

Oromia is a huge, sprawling regional state of around 30 million people covering large swathes of the southcentral and western areas of Ethiopia. With its own language, Afaan Oromo, strong ethnic identity and nearly 35 percent of the country's population, Oromia is a powerful center of political gravity in the country. During the rebellion in 1991 that led to the assumption of power by the current political regime, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) was one of the three leading coalition forces. The OLF soon came into conflict with the EPRDF, though, and left the government after the rebellion was successful. The OLF has continued in considerably diminished form, pursuing greater autonomy and self-determination for Oromia, but is viewed by the federal government as a terrorist organization collaborating with outside enemies and a source of sporadic violence. The Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) is the dominant regional party formally aligned with the EPRDF.

The federally chartered city of Addis Ababa is also the capital of Oromia. For the past several years, there have been protests in Oromia against the proposed Addis Ababa Integrated Master Plan, which would greatly expand the city's municipal boundaries and remove a very large area of land from the jurisdiction of Oromia National Regional State. Those who protest the plan object to such concerns as the displacement of farmers without compensation, the appropriation of land for development projects and the impact of new administrative boundaries on regional state budgets. The government set aside the plan, but protests continued, linked to broader complaints about land grabs and longstanding aspirations for greater autonomy and political voice in Oromia. Protests and public gatherings were met with force in August and October 2016, resulting in hundreds of arrests and killings. A similar outbreak of protests and violent suppression occurred in Amhara in August 2016. In October 2016, a six-month state of emergency was declared in Ethiopia, later modified somewhat and extended for another four months (BBC 2016; The Guardian 2016; Horne 2017). During the assessment team's field research in Borana, the only outward sign of security concerns was the presence of occasional checkpoints on main roads in the area.

## 4. PASTORALISM, CLIMATE AND CONFLICT IN BORANA

At the southern edge of Oromia, Borana Zone is composed of generally hot, semi-arid rangelands that receive highly variable rainfall in a bimodal pattern. The long (*ganaa*) rains take place between mid-March and May and the short (*hagaya*) rains between September and November. According to national estimates, the projected population for Borana Zone in 2017 is approximately 1.25 million people, with 89 percent of the population residing in rural areas (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2013). Most people are pastoralists and agropastoralists, combining seminomadic livestock production with rainfed crops, including maize, sorghum, haricot beans, barley and teff (Ng'ang'a et al. 2016). Livestock are a mix of cattle, sheep, goats and camels, but there has been a partial shift away from grazers (cattle and sheep) toward browsers (goats and camels), which are better able to withstand long dry spells. A strong local cultural preference persists for cattle, however, because of their place in social practices such as religious rituals, wealth redistribution, dowries and the payment of fines (Berhanu and Beyene 2015).

Mobility is at the heart of traditional pastoralist livelihood practices. The alternation of dry and wet season grazing areas, the movement between host and receiving communities, and the use of migration for risk management are central to pastoralists' efficient use of scarce natural resources. Periodic droughts are part of the natural climate cycle in Borana, and elders and customary natural resource managers have long made use of a storehouse of traditional knowledge to regulate the communal sharing of water and pasture resources, both within and between pastoralist groups. This movement of people and animals to adapt to environmental conditions can cover long distances, far beyond the relatively narrow confines of the administrative boundaries of woredas and kebeles. The differing priorities of mobility for pastoralist livelihoods and fixed administrative jurisdictions for government exist in an uneasy and sometimes antagonistic relationship in Borana.

The Borana and other Oromo people, including the Guji, have a deeply embedded cultural system of governance known as *Gadaa*, which has been recognized by UNESCO as an "intangible cultural heritage of humanity." Like other systems of traditional knowledge, it is the distillation of many generations of experience acquired in Borana's distinctive environmental setting. *Gadaa* is a male-based, hierarchical system of age groups that regulates political, economic, social and religious activities as well as natural resource management, dispute resolution and compensation. The *Gadaa* leader is known as the *Abbaa Gadaa* and serves for a period of eight years. Women are consulted on any decisions said to affect their interests and rights. Oral historians pass on knowledge of the *Gadaa* system in classes and children are taught about *Gadaa* at home. As the outside influences of formal government and religion reach Boran communities, the *Gadaa* system is slowly weakening. As one interviewee noted, it is "...

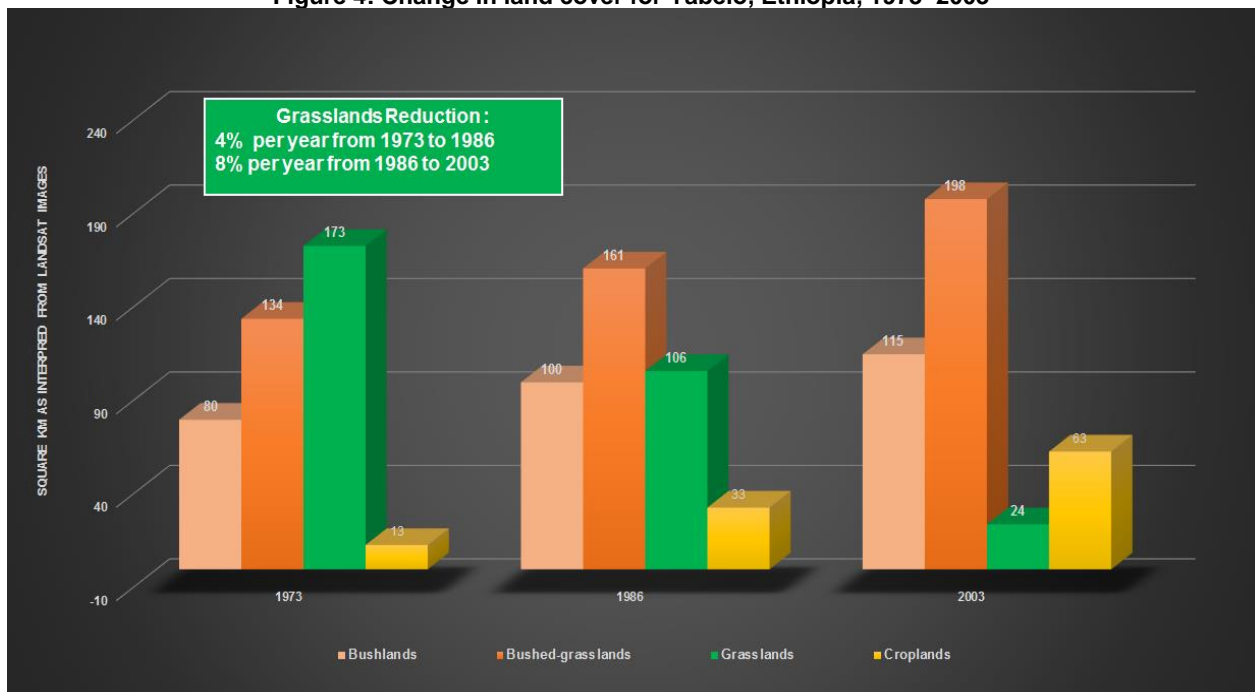
no longer the Gadaa system of the anthropology books.” Nevertheless, it remains a unifying force and touchstone of identity within Boran culture.

#### 4.1 ANTHROPOGENIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURES ON PASTORALISM

Pastoralism as traditionally practiced in Borana has been under increasing pressure for some time. In the 1970s, according to Homann et al. (2008), “the construction of water ponds in traditional rainy season pastures attracted the expansion of permanent encampments and created an imbalance between human populations, water and forage resources.” The expansion in some areas of agricultural cultivation and private commercial ranching also reduced grazing areas. In the following decades, rapid population growth and increases in the number of cattle contributed to overgrazing. Bush encroachment by woody species and the spread of unpalatable grasses and invasive species further squeezed access to good grazing lands (Angassa and Beyene 2003). The traditional land management mechanism of bush burning was banned by the prior Derg regime. Figure 3 shows the accelerating reduction in grasslands, the growth of bush encroachment and the increase in croplands in Borana.

In a survey done in 2003 in Yabelo, Arero and Dirre woredas, there was unanimity among respondents that bush encroachment was increasing, grass cover was decreasing, milk production per animal was declining and land degradation was a serious problem. Over 90 percent of those surveyed said that the pastoralist livelihood was deteriorating (Angassa and Beyene 2003). By 2015, a participatory research assessment found that bush encroachment had affected 52 percent of Borana rangelands (SOS Sahel Ethiopia 2015).

Figure 4: Change in land cover for Yabelo, Ethiopia, 1973–2003



Note 4. Grasslands shrank at an accelerating rate for more than 40 years in Yabelo woreda, while bush encroachment and croplands steadily increased. Source: Adapted from Coppock et al. (2008).

The demarcation of regional state boundaries in line with the policy of ethnic regionalism also produced outcomes that distressed Boran pastoralists. The 1992 Oromia–Somali boundary adjustment by the EPRDF transferred both rangelands and two key wells of spiritual value to the Borana to the Somali region. In 2004, a referendum resulted in the town of Hudet being transferred from Borana to Somali National Regional State. These decisions contributed to interethnic warfare between the Borana and Garre and led to lingering resentments (Homann et al. (2008). Boran suspicions of Somali expansionist aims and episodes of border tensions between Oromia and Somali National Regional States are still present today.

In the past decade, the proliferation of private enclosures that contravene traditions of communal land use has become a serious problem in Borana. In late 2009, Borana traditional leaders declared that this “control of the best grazing lands by self-interested individuals has resulted not only in degradation...but also has caused internal conflicts...” Accordingly, they issued a directive that “there will be no more private enclosures recognized in any part of our rangeland” (Borana Oromo Leaders 2010). Nevertheless, the problem has continued and evolved in new forms. Enclosures created by NGOs and government for bush thinning and watershed management have been given to user cooperatives, which use them for animal fattening or the sale of grass. This has led to abuses and resentments, as people whose cattle stray into the enclosures are made to pay widely varying fines that are arbitrary and unregulated. Enclosures also have become common at the micro-level of “zones” in each kebele (there are three zones in a kebele), further hampering pastoralist mobility. In some locales, ethnic groups have established a series of enclosures in close proximity to physically establish their dominance.

## **4.2 CLIMATE VULNERABILITY IN BORANA**

Prior to the initiation of activities at PCCSR project sites, a team of five researchers from Haramaya University, supported by more than 20 field staff working as enumerators, conducted 30 days of interviews, focus group discussions and detailed surveys of 620 households of the target woredas to assess “climate vulnerability and capacity” (Shimelis et al. 2015). This included both climatic and nonclimatic hazards and their interactions.

The results confirmed that conflict and climate impacts are seen by PCCSR project communities as the greatest threats to their livelihoods. In Arero and Yabelo woredas, conflict was ranked as having the greatest impact, while in Teltele woreda drought was ranked first. In all three woredas, conflict, drought and overall rainfall shortage were ranked among the first three hazards faced by communities (Table 1).

Very high percentages of respondents from Arero, Teltele and Yabelo said that the number of days in the main rainy season has decreased in recent years (87 percent, 95 percent and 78 percent, respectively), and even higher percentages of respondents said that the duration of the main rainy season had shortened (86 percent, 97 percent and 90 percent, respectively). In each location, over 95 percent of those asked said that the frequency of rainfall shortage was at least every two years. The communities perceive these changes as relatively recent, with 71 percent

of all respondents saying the changes began within the last 15 years, and 61 percent saying they expect rainfall to continue to decrease in the coming decades.

The responses to the question of whether temperatures have been increasing approached near unanimity, with 93 percent of all respondents in the three woredas replying affirmatively, a finding echoed in the ranking of extreme heat in either fourth or fifth place among hazards faced by the community (Table 1). Temperature increases are seen by 82 percent of those surveyed as having become noticeable in the past 15 years, and 70 percent expect temperature increases to continue (Shimelis et al. 2015).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 1: Climate and nonclimate hazards ranked in terms of severity of impact on livelihoods**

| Woreda  | 1 <sup>st</sup> rank | 2 <sup>nd</sup> rank | 3 <sup>rd</sup> rank | 4 <sup>th</sup> rank | 5 <sup>th</sup> rank    |
|---------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Arero   | Conflict             | Drought              | Rainfall shortage    | Erratic rainfall     | Extreme heat            |
| Teltele | Drought              | Rainfall shortage    | Conflict             | Extreme heat         | Livestock disease/pests |
| Yabelo  | Conflict             | Drought              | Rainfall shortage    | Extreme heat         | Flooding                |

Table Note 1. This table is based on a survey of 620 households in Arero, Teltele and Yabelo woredas that shows the rank order of the top five hazards in terms of severity affecting the livelihoods of the respective communities. Source: Shimelis et al. 2015.

The survey results match up well with other research on the history of droughts in Borana. A study done by researchers at the Horn of Africa Resilience Lab at Jimma University found seven clusters of drought events in Borana Zone over the past 50 years, several of which combined with poor political and NRM decisions to produce conflict (Birhanu, Birhanu, and Ambelu 2015). The general historical rule of thumb applied to Borana is that it has had droughts every five to ten years. But the pace of droughts quickened in recent years, including 1999–2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010–2011, and 2015–2017.

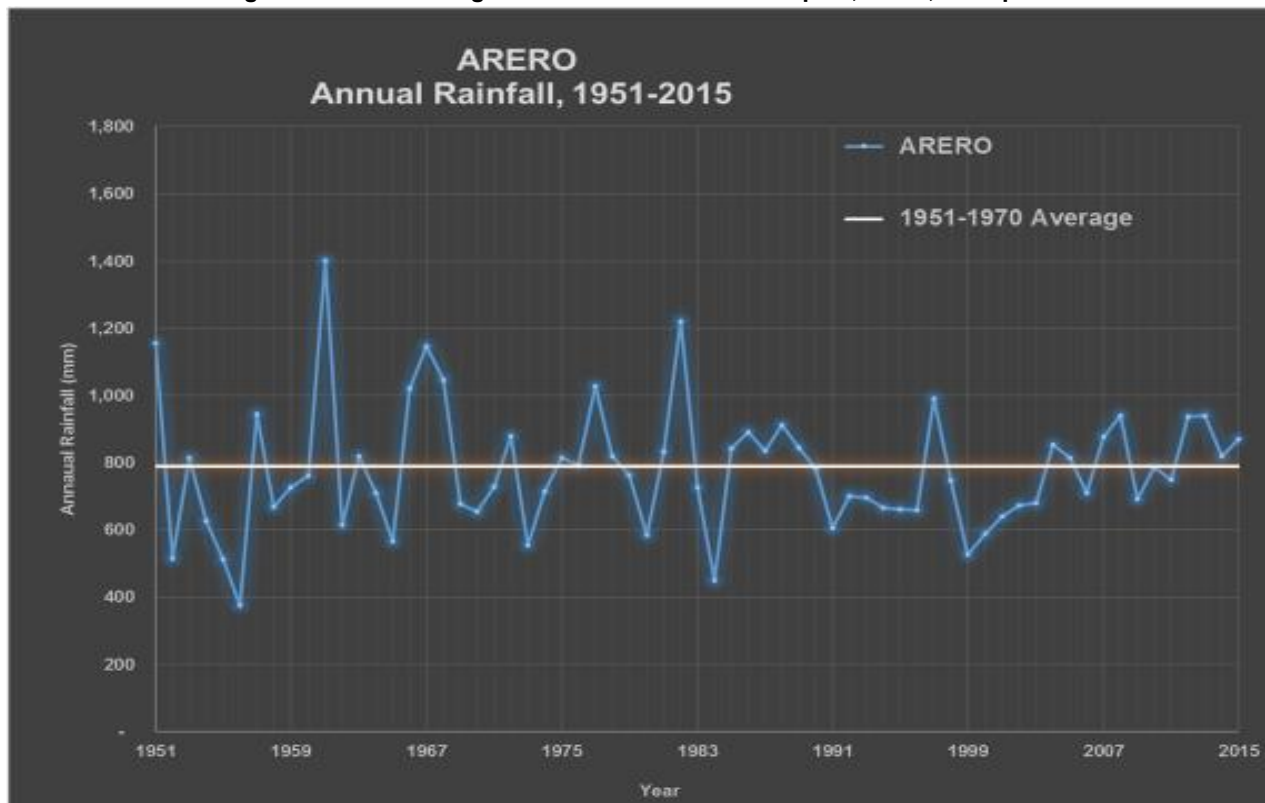
The perceptions of the communities in the three target woredas of the PCCSR project generally comport well with historical weather data for the project areas. The assessment team obtained observed daily weather data for Borana Zone from the Oromia Agricultural Research Institute in Yabelo (rainfall and temperature at Arero, Yabelo, Mega and Moyale from October 1999 to May 2015 for most stations) and monthly historical weather data from the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Group. These collective data were vetted, analyzed and put into graphic form.

Using data from Arero comparing two 32-year periods (1951–1983 versus 1983–2015), Figure 5 shows a modest but steady decline in annual rainfall. The data are similar for Yabelo. The lower rainfall average is accompanied by lower variation in recent years. This implies that although the ganaa and hagaya seasonal cycles may vary from year to year, annual rainfall has consistently reduced in the more recent period.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> As a point of reference for these findings, 67 percent of those surveyed were between 30 and 60 years of age, 23 percent were between 20 and 30 years of age and 10 percent were above 60 years old. Approximately 23 percent of the respondents were women.

<sup>6</sup> Climate scientists are finding increasing evidence of linkages between East African spring droughts and sea surface temperature fluctuations in the central Indian Ocean and western Pacific Ocean. Monitoring these patterns may help improve predictions and early warning of drought conditions in southern Ethiopia (see Funk et al. 2014).

Figure 5: Lower average annual rainfall than in the past, Arero, Ethiopia

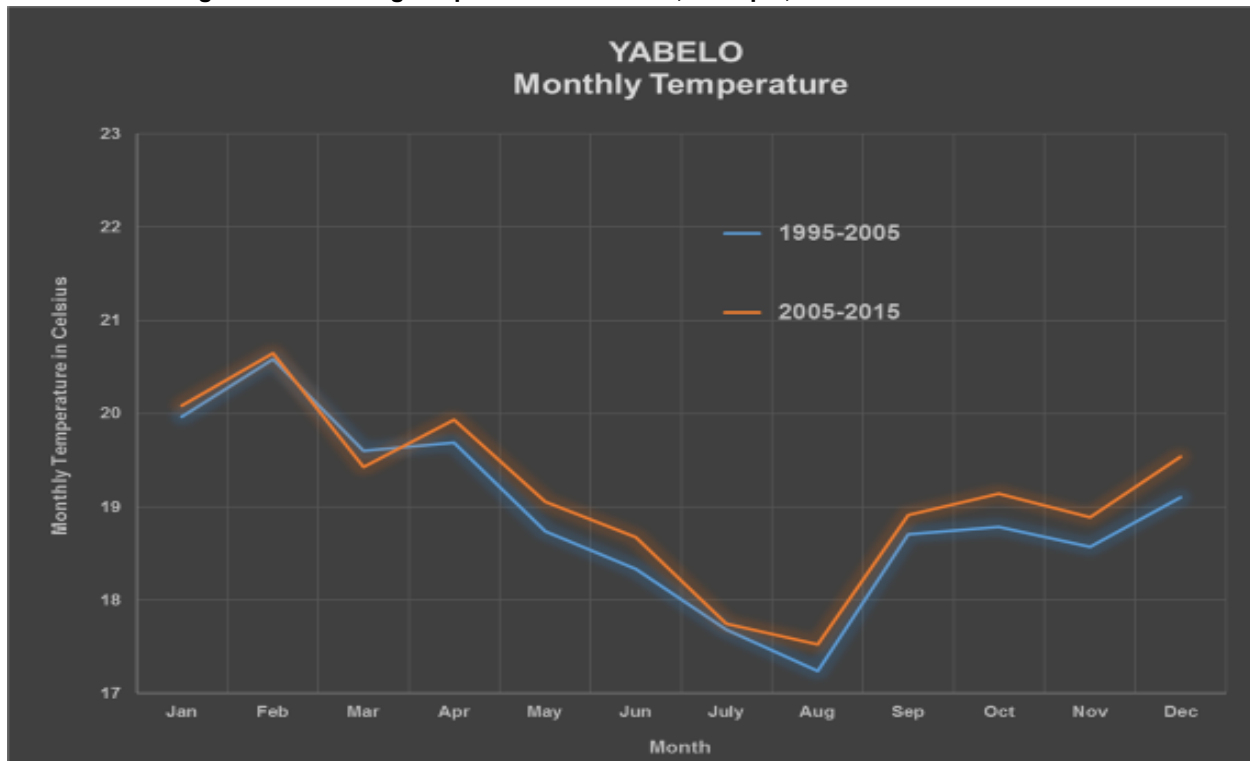


Note 5. Average annual rainfall decreased in Arero by 33 millimeters/year between two 32-year periods, 1951–1983 and 1983–2015. Data for Yabelo show a similar pattern. Source: Based on data from the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Group.

Figure 6 shows a temperature comparison of the two most recent decades, 1995–2005 versus 2005–2015, for Yabelo. Average monthly temperatures increased for every month of the year except March. An analysis of data from 1981–2014 shows the same pattern of increasing temperatures, especially in the second half of the main *ganaa* rainy season (USAID 2015). The problem for pastoralists and agropastoralists in Borana is not merely heat but the effects of increased temperatures on evapotranspiration, soil moisture, water runoff and, ultimately, grasses or crops. The net result of these effects is a marked reduction in water and pasture.



Figure 6: Increasing temperatures in Yabelo, Ethiopia, 1995–2005 vs. 2005–2015

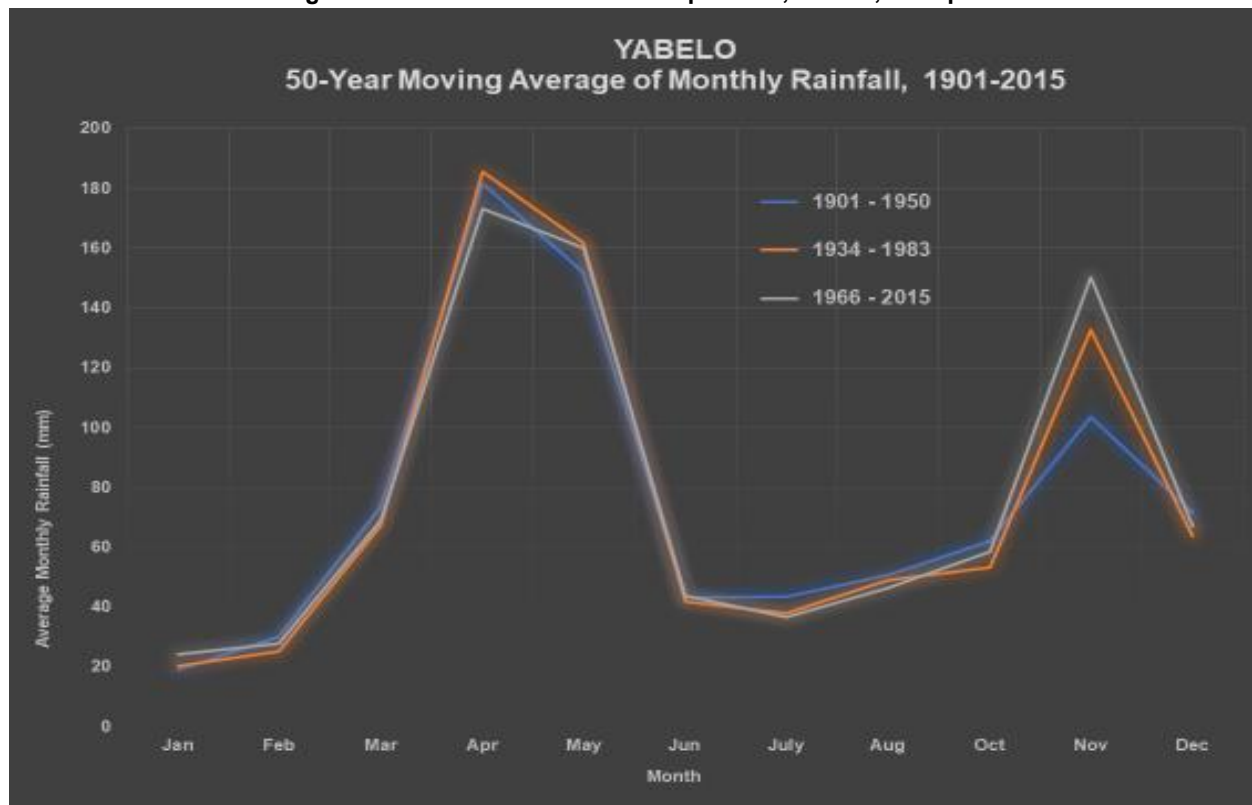


Note 6. This graph reflects an average annual temperature increase of 0.22°C in Yabelo from 1995–2005 (blue line) to 2005–2015 (orange line). The most recent decade had higher average temperatures every month except for March. Source: Based on data from the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Group.

Figure 7 addresses the issue of rainfall seasonality. The PCCSR climate vulnerability study found that PCCSR communities perceived a decrease in the rain of both rainy seasons. However, a shifting 50-year average shows that while the *ganaa* rainy season has been decreasing in total rainfall, a small increase in rainfall in the *hagaya* rainy season has occurred. *Ganaa* rains are traditionally the main rains for grazing and crop production. The “unseasonality” of rainfall adds to its unpredictability for both farmers and pastoralists.

With relatively limited weather station coverage, the element of unpredictability that is not captured by observed weather data is what local pastoralists and agropastoralists say is the increasingly erratic *distribution* of rainfall. Kebeles that are proximate may or may not receive rain in the same rainfall events. Nearly two-thirds of those surveyed in the three woredas said that such highly scattered and spatially unpredictable rainfall did not occur in the past (Shimelis 2015 et al.), and it now further complicates the search for water and pasture.

Figure 7: Shifts in seasonal rainfall patterns, Yabelo, Ethiopia



Note 7. A comparison of shifting averages of three 50-year timeframes, 1901–1950 (blue line), 1935–1985 (orange line) and 1965–2015 (gray line) shows a reduction of rain in the main planting season (*ganaa*) and an increase of rain in the second rainy season (*hagaya*). Source: Based on data from the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Group.

One parameter of the PCCSR climate vulnerability and capacity survey that is at notable variance with observed weather data is rainfall intensity, which most respondents said was decreasing. (This may be in part from the variety of ways that the term “intensity” may be interpreted.) The observed data show that increased temperatures, reduced annual rain and the shifts in seasonality were accompanied somewhat paradoxically by increased intensity of rainfall events (Table 2). Comparing three consecutive decades, the largest number of heavy rainfall events occurred in the most recent one, 2007–2017 (Line C in Table 2). These are days when the intensity of rain far exceeds the capacity of the soil and plants to absorb the water, leading to heavy runoff, land erosion and flooding. Coming suddenly on the heels of drought, heavy rains can also increase the mortality of weakened cattle.

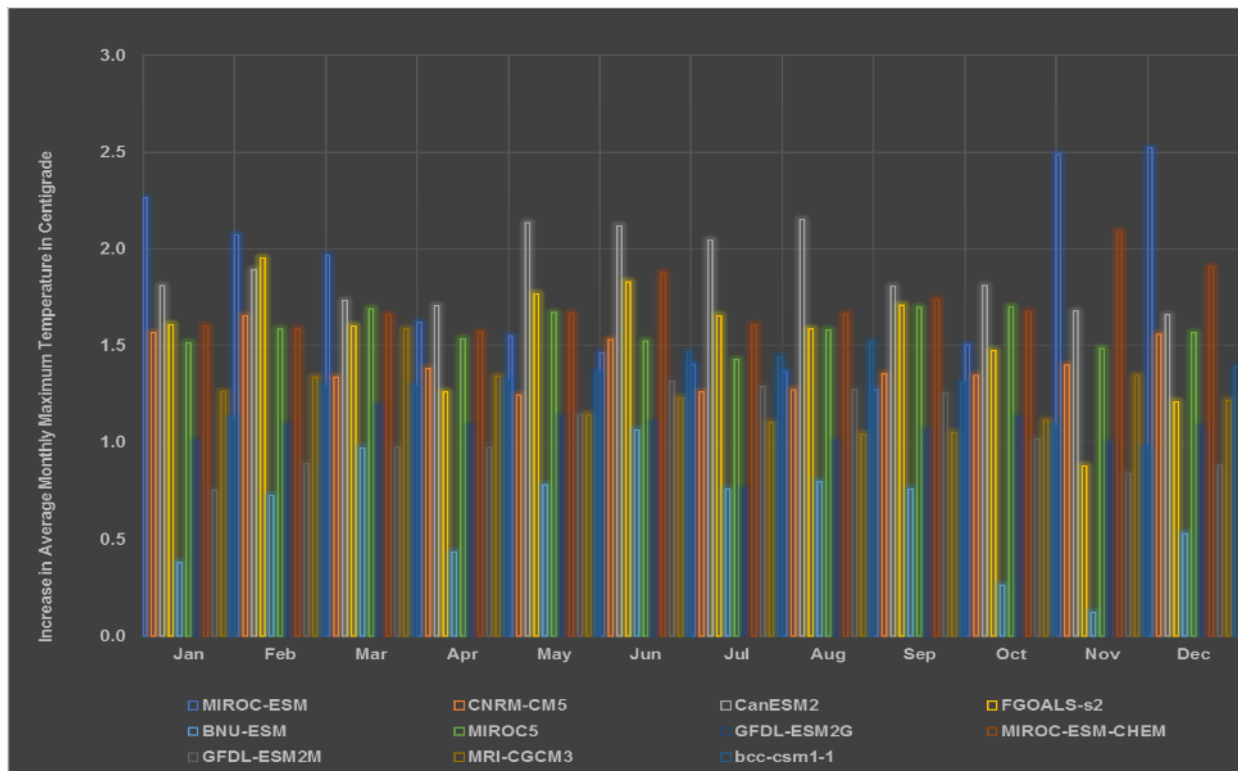
Table 2: Increased intensity of rain, Yabelo, Ethiopia

| Rainfall Event                   | 30 mm per day | 50 mm per day | 70 mm per day | 90 mm per day |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Time Period</b>               |               |               |               |               |
| <b>A: 1986–1996 (3,736 days)</b> | 31 (1.0)      | 8 (1.0)       | 2 (1.0)       | 1 (1.0)       |
| <b>B: 1997–2007 (3,725 days)</b> | 25 (0.8)      | 8 (1.0)       | 3 (1.5)       | 0 (0.0)       |
| <b>C: 2007–2017 (2,947 days)</b> | 35 (1.1)      | 14 (1.8)      | 5 (2.5)       | 4 (3.8)       |

Table Note 2. Comparing 1986–1996, 1997–2007 and 2007–2017 (with the number of observation days normalized), the most recent decade (Period C) has significantly more intense rainy days. Source: Based on data from the Oromia Agricultural Institute.

Data from climate model projections made available by the Climate System Analysis Group (CSAG) at the University of Cape Town show that communities in Borana are justified in their concerns about worsening climate impacts. Based on calculations for Negelle using average monthly temperatures for the period 1960–2016 as the baseline and comparing these to projections for the period 2017–2100, all 11 climate models project increases in monthly maximum average temperatures for every month of the year, with an average increase of 1.4°C (Figure 8).<sup>7</sup>

**Figure 8: Monthly average maximum temperature increase in Negelle, Ethiopia, for 11 models, 1960–2016 vs. 2017–2100**



Note 8. This graph is based on calculations of the projected increases of 11 climate models for monthly average maximum temperatures in Negelle, comparing the baseline average of 1960–2016 to the period 2017–2100. Temperatures increase in every month in every model. The average monthly increase is 1.4°C. Source: Based on data from 63533.tmax. RCP4.5 monthly means from CSAG (<http://cip.csag.uct.ac.za/webclient2/app/>).

Rainfall projections for Borana are much less certain. Based again on calculations for Negelle and using average annual rainfall for the period 1960–2016 as the baseline and comparing it to projections for the period 2017–2100, 7 out of 11 models show a decrease in annual rainfall ranging from 2 percent to 13 percent, while 4 models show an increase ranging from 1 percent to 4 percent (Table 3). The average of the 11 models shows a modest annual decrease of 20 mm, or 2 percent.

<sup>7</sup> Negelle, approximately 100 kilometers east of Arero, has the oldest weather station in the area. Similar results are obtained comparing the same timeframes with the same 11 models to look at monthly minimum average temperatures. They also increase in every month and cumulatively average an increase of 1.4°C.

**Table 3: Change in annual average rainfall in Negelle, Ethiopia, for 11 models, 1960–2016 vs. 2017–2100**

| Climate Model Names    | bcc-csm1-1 | MRI-CGM3 | CNRM-CM5 | MIROC-ESM | Can | GFDL-ESM2G | MIROC 5 | FGOAL S-s2 | GFDL-ESM2M | MIROC-ESM-CHEM | BNU-ESM | Model Average |
|------------------------|------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----|------------|---------|------------|------------|----------------|---------|---------------|
| <b>Changes (in mm)</b> | -95        | -64      | -43      | -45       | -20 | -34        | -12     | 5          | 20         | 43             | 28      | -20           |
| <b>% Changes</b>       | -13%       | -12%     | -7%      | -5%       | -3% | -3%        | -2%     | 1%         | 2%         | 4%             | 4%      | -2.40%        |

Table Note 3. This table shows projected changes in average annual rainfall in Negelle, comparing the baseline average of 1960-2016 to the period 2017-2100. Source: Based on data from 63533.ppt.RCP8.5. Monthly totals from CSAG (<http://cip.csag.uct.ac.za/webclient2/app/>).

Despite the mixed projections of future annual rainfall in Borana, the overall picture of climate vulnerability in Arero, Teltele and Yabelo remains extremely daunting. There are clear data trends and community testimony of increasing temperatures that are projected to continue. Chronic drought and rainfall shortages and unpredictability have repeatedly depleted the livestock assets of pastoralists and the rainfed crop production of agropastoralists. Drought shrinks grazing areas and creates feed shortages. Livestock are more susceptible to diseases and their meat and milk productivity declines. The failure of harvests contributes to malnutrition and food insecurity. Erratic rains hasten erosion, floods and land degradation, which combine with extreme temperatures to deplete soil moisture. These conditions also favor invasive species and unpalatable grasses for cattle.

The impacts of drought are particularly difficult for women. In addition to cooking, child raising, and attending to smaller or weaker animals, women must travel across long distances for water, firewood and collection of grasses from mountains or to access markets. In times of conflict, these trips become even more difficult and dangerous, or simply not possible. Women also must attend to the needs of children and older people, who are more vulnerable to the effects of malnutrition and extreme heat.

The lack of access to reliable markets compounds these challenges for pastoralist communities. Some communities are far from tarmac roads and require two days travel to reach livestock markets. Livestock lose up to 10 kilograms of body weight on such long treks. Given the impracticability of taking the livestock on a return journey home, pastoralists are “price takers” at these distant markets. During prolonged droughts, pastoralists suffer large cattle losses and sell their remaining, weakened cattle to brokers at very low prices.<sup>8</sup>

Pastoralists and agropastoralists in Borana have undertaken a variety of measures to try to adapt to these changing circumstances. Some family members undertake “abnormal migration,” traveling longer distances than usual with livestock. There has been an increased focus on the conservation of feed and fodder for livestock. The diversification of livestock toward more drought-tolerant animals has been extensive. Some attempts have been made to use hybrid

<sup>8</sup> Even during seasons with more adequate rainfall, pastoralists have scant information about fair market prices and have virtually no bargaining power with the very limited number of brokers.

seeds and erosion control to improve agriculture, but the lack of rain has often meant failed harvests. Traditions of mutual assistance and sharing under Gadaa practices are stretched thin by the prevalence of climate effects (see Table 4 for some of the main climate adaptation strategies).

**Table 4: Common adaptation strategies in response to climate challenges in Borana Zone, Ethiopia**

| Livelihood Strategy           | Main Climate Adaptation Strategies                                    |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Pastoralism</b>            | Migration, increased mobility   |
|                               | Herd diversification (drought-tolerant browsers, e.g., camels, goats) |
|                               | Feed conservation (e.g., collecting grass for hay)                    |
|                               | Private enclosure for fodder protection                               |
|                               | Mutual assistance and sharing of livestock assets                     |
| <b>Agropastoralism</b>        | Erosion control   |
|                               | Crop diversity  |
|                               | Hybrid seeds  |
|                               | New crop plots  |
|                               | Change in family labor roles or adding labor to graze livestock       |
| <b>Income Diversification</b> | Off-farm job  |
|                               | Start trade or business   |
|                               | Charcoal making and/or fuelwood selling                               |
|                               | Casual labor  |
|                               | Beekeeping  |
|                               | Artisanal mining  |

Table Note 4. This table lists some of the main climate adaptation strategies used by pastoralists and agropastoralists in Borana, including efforts at income diversification through other activities. Source: Adapted from Ng'ang'a et al. (2016) and Berhanu and Beyene (2015).

With pastoralist and agropastoralist livelihoods weakened by climate impacts, many people pursue supplementary or alternative economic activities. Charcoal making and fuelwood selling is a common activity, although it can be maladaptive in those instances when it contributes to increased deforestation. The pursuit of other forms of petty trade is common. Some people who have lost assets provide labor to other pastoralists or agropastoralists. Beekeeping is sometimes practiced, and in some areas people explore the potential of artisanal mining. Income diversification is frequently inadequate, however, and an increasing number of young people drop out of pastoralist livelihoods altogether.

### 4.3 CONFLICT AND RECONCILIATION

In recent years, Borana Zone has seen sporadic outbreaks of violence among pastoralist groups in relation to contested grazing areas, cattle theft, competition over water points, agricultural encroachment and boundary disputes. Frequently, these incidents have been followed by retaliatory responses that escalate tensions. Weapons are common in the area and are easily obtained. The conflicts are often internalized in relation to identity and are recounted through an ethno-political lens, regardless of the specific circumstances and nature of the original events.

Between 1992 and 2004, eight major conflicts occurred between the Borana and Garre along the Oromia–Somali border. Other border conflicts erupted in 2008, 2009 and 2012 (Kebede 2014). Zonal records of conflict incidents in Borana between 2005 and 2014 show periodic

killings of sometimes more than 50 people, with individual violent incidents displacing as many as 1,500 people and resulting in the looting of hundreds, or even occasionally thousands, of cattle (Richards et al. 2015).

In 2006–2007, several thousand households were displaced after a series of conflicts broke out among Borana, Guji and Gabra clans near a makeshift bridge across the Mormora River. The Ethiopian Red Cross Society and Oxfam America facilitated development of the so-called Alona Peace Bridge conference, which brought together the three contending groups to try to prevent and control conflict. Committees of 10 elders from each clan were elected to conduct the negotiations. They agreed not to ask compensation for past actions, but they established repayment systems for any future interclan killings. Displaced pastoralists returned to their homes. Elders from each clan praised the Alona process as an effective conflict prevention mechanism, but their hopes that it might serve as a model for other communities were not fulfilled (Oxfam America 2007).

In 2008–2009, major violence again erupted between the Borana and the Garre after the latter burned a water-drilling machine intended to develop a new water point in Borana. Zonal records do not provide specific numbers but “many people [were] killed on both sides” (Richards et al. 2015).

The Borana–Garre conflict was followed by continuing insecurity in the border region. Livestock mobility was severely reduced and herd health declined. Conditions were unsafe to collect water and firewood, and markets became inaccessible. People around Wachile and Hudet could neither care for nor sell their animals and they suffered huge losses in household assets. Efforts by both customary leaders and government to quell the instability were unsuccessful.

With the support of the governments of Oromia and Somali National Regional States, USAID and Mercy Corps assisted in developing a lengthy process of dialogue and negotiation among the Borana, Garre, Gabra and Guji that resulted in the signing of the so-called Negelle Accords in June 2011. Government officials, elders, women and youth worked together to identify the underlying causes of conflict and the attitudes that had perpetuated or exacerbated it. Mechanisms were agreed to defuse tensions as quickly as possible at the first appearance of conflict. As security in the area improved, pastoralists from the respective groups began to move freely and share resources. Economic activity revived with the reopening of markets and new construction (USAID 2014).

A study conducted subsequently by Mercy Corps demonstrated that the increased freedom of movement, access to resources and collective decision-making produced by these peacebuilding efforts also meant that communities had more opportunities to use effective livelihoods coping strategies against climate shocks (Mercy Corps 2012).

Funding ran out, however, for the continuation of the nascent process produced by the Negelle Accords. Both nongovernmental and governmental interviewees in Addis Ababa and Yabelo

described the Negelle process as a short-term “fire brigade” effort that was an important achievement, but one that did not have lasting effects.

The steep penalty under Negelle of 50 cattle for killing someone was meant as a stiff deterrent, but difficulties were encountered in the process by which the decision was reached and in implementing it. Customary law and formal law also were at odds with each other with respect to the necessary punishment. Critics further stated that the Negelle Accords were too narrow in their scope. At the time of the Negelle Accords, participants did not view them as temporary and saw them as the basis for “lasting peace.” But the process was truncated and did not realize all its ambitions.

In 2013–2014, the conflict incident reports of Borana Zone appeared to show a decline in outbreaks of conflict, but few new institutional structures were in place to sustain that trend. While peace committees existed in some woredas and kebeles, most were not functioning, the track record of others was very poor and, in some locations, it was not even clear who the members of the peace committees were.

# 5. PEACE CENTERS FOR CLIMATE AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

## 5.1 ACTIVITIES AND TECHNIQUES OF THE PCCSR

The PCCSR project was designed with three main objectives: 1) improving conflict resilience through collaborative community actions on climate vulnerabilities; 2) enhancing community adaptive capacity to address climate and natural resource challenges; and 3) strengthening the overall capacity of communities in conflict PMR.

An important cross-cutting aim running through all the PCCSR activities was the improvement of communications and linkages between customary and formal institutions.

Workshops were held in each woreda with elders, traditional leaders, women and youth from each of the respective ethnic and clan groups as well as government officials to validate the preparatory information gathered by PCCSR staff and other Haramaya University researchers. This included both the survey findings on the most important climate and nonclimate hazards affecting the project communities and the findings of needs assessments conducted for each woreda (Abogado 2015). Based on the consensus and recommendations emerging from these validation processes, PCCSR project stakeholders jointly agreed upon a series of tasks to meet the project objectives in the 3 target woredas and 12 project kebeles through iterations of a series of sequenced, core activities:

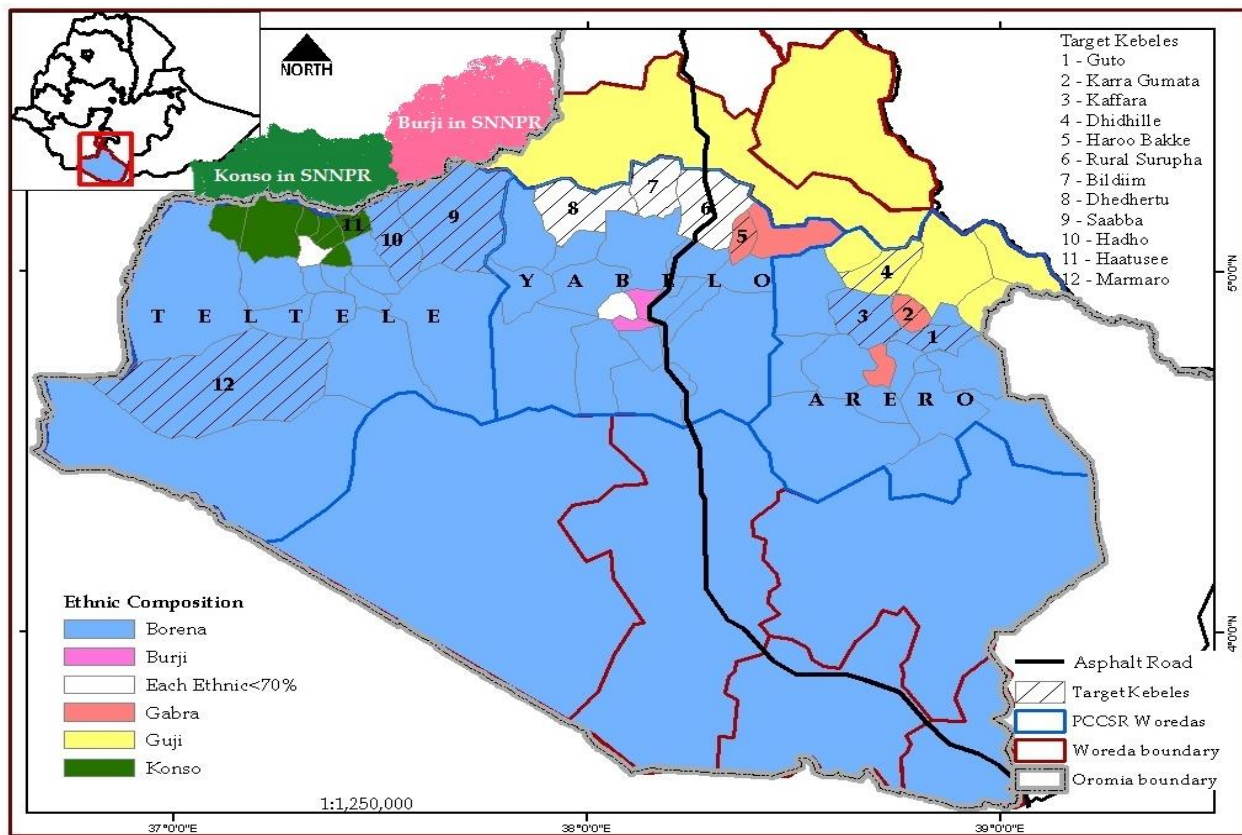
- Revitalizing and Strengthening Peace Committees
- Initiating Intergroup Community Dialogues (past grievances and attitudes)
- Trainings/Workshops on Peace and Conflict
- Trainings/Workshops on Climate Change Impacts and Climate Change Adaptation
- Establishing Community Priorities on Conflict and Natural Resource Management (NRM)
- Conducting Assessments on Issues Related to Conflict, Climate Change and Resilience
- Mobilizing Joint Intergroup NRM Activities (pond rehabilitation, soil bunds, bush thinning)
- Identifying Key and Contested Water and Pasture Areas through Community Dialogues
- Establishing Women's Peace Networks (WPNs)
- Establishing Youth Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs (PCRC)
- Developing Community Bylaws with Local Government on Joint Use and Management of Rangeland Resources

The areas chosen for these activities were based in part on their history of ethnic tensions and conflict among local identity groups. Figure 9 shows the ethnic composition of the project areas



and the relative dominance of the Borana—although that dominance is greater in terms of geography than in terms of population. The main identity groups in the PCCSR project areas are Borana, Guji, Gabra and Konso pastoralists and agropastoralists (about 40 percent, 30 percent, 20 percent and 10 percent of the population, respectively), with adjacent Konso and Burji agropastoralist groups to the north of Teltele in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR).

Figure 9: Ethnic composition of the PCCSR project areas



Note 9. The colored areas above show the dominant ethnic group in each area, with the 12 project kebeles numbered and their boundaries drawn with hatch marks. Source: Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience, Haramaya University College of Law.

The process of “revitalizing” the peace committees was as much a matter of reinvention as it was of reenergizing them. In addition to their incoherence and disarray, peace committees had traditionally been bulwarks for narrow group-identity and community interests. Their main function was to defend the resources, livestock assets and physical safety of community members as well as to do justice to community grievances. This often took the form of identifying aggressive or preemptive actions, sometimes including violence, and targeting opposing clans. A peace committee member in Gomole woreda said that “Gabra, Guji and Borana clans thought of each other as killers, murderers and wild.” In a focus group discussion in Haro Bake kebele, one participant said, “in the past, they should have been called ‘war committees,’ not ‘peace committees.’” In discussion forums and trainings, PCCSR staff highlighted this common defensive and antagonistic orientation as a topic for discussion and

reflection, and used that discussion to broaden the perspectives of peace committee members from different kebeles.

At the outset of the project, linkages between the peace committees and formal justice systems were very weak. Peace committees lacked operating rules, guidelines and procedures for making and enforcing decisions. Justice officers from the woredas began to work with peace committees to instruct them on formal rules of evidence to close the gap between informal and formal understandings and adjudications of illegal acts. PCCSR staff helped to incorporate these issues as well as encourage the inclusion of a more diverse composition of the peace committees in new guidelines to be agreed by all parties.

Community dialogues about grievances, attitudes and behaviors also had to overcome hostile collective perspectives based on the “ethnic attribution” of negative qualities to opposing groups. This was as much a problem with women and youth as men. In workshops with the Women’s Peace Network (WPN) members (15 members in each woreda, with 3 of them woreda officials) and the Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs (PCRC) members (10 members in each woreda), findings from previous assessments on climate–resource–conflict linkages were presented as a common basis for discussion. Using these outside resources to get the relevant issues on the table, participants then spoke more freely about their own attitudes. These kinds of discussions were “cascaded down” and replicated at kebele level, sometimes by government officials. PCCSR staff “transcribed words, phrases, poems, and songs” that women recounted and discussed that contained “belittling references and instigation against other groups.”

Conversely, a series of cultural events organized by the PCRC were attended by all ethnic groups and people of all ages. Music and poems were performed by youth that affirmed shared values and women enacted joint coffee ceremonies. Traditional leaders spoke about times in the past of collaboration among different ethnic groups and how attitudes had gradually shifted away from traditional values of mutual support systems. These events served as occasions for reflecting on how certain words and language conveyed undesirable and antagonistic perspectives to youth and children.

A series of needs assessments were conducted for all three woredas and natural resource inventories were prepared. In line with the project’s emphasis on collaborative climate change adaptation activities, priority attention was given to threatened natural resources shared by different kebeles and ethnic groups. Based on those discussions and the information gathered through the natural resource inventories, 18 contested grazing areas, 6 communal ponds and 8 degraded grazing areas needing rehabilitation (due to bush encroachment) were identified.

In addition to establishing principles and practices of resource sharing through community dialogues, the project communities selected bush thinning, the restoration of water ponds and the construction of soil bunds for water harvesting as their three main climate adaptation activities. Bush thinning produces only temporary improvements that require continuous follow-up, as bush encroachment returns quickly. Two drought-resistant acacia species, *Acacia mellifera* (black thorn) and *Acacia drepanolobium* (whistling thorn), have proliferated in the

project areas, spread through landscape change and seeds in camel droppings. These thorn trees form impenetrable thickets that prevent the movement of cattle (Lemma, Tessema, and Fessehaie 2015).

Water ponds are subject to erosion, siltation and drying due to the seasonal changes associated with climate variability, and climate change exacerbates these processes. Once constructed, water ponds need continuous upkeep to maximize their effectiveness.

A series of workshops and meetings involving all groups developed specific plans (tasks, timelines, division of labor, etc.) to address the rehabilitation, shared use and maintenance of these physical sites. The synergies and underlying logic of interethnic and interclan collaborative adaptation activities to respond to climate vulnerability are reflected in Figure 10. The incentive for the different ethnic groups in the project woredas to collaborate came from the imperative to respond to climate change. The scope and effectiveness of climate adaptation were increased by the pooling of the groups' labor and technical knowledge of shared rangelands and water resources. The collaboration among these groups on the tangible and beneficial rehabilitation of natural resources built social trust that contributed to conflict prevention. All the relationships in this triangular relationship were thus mutually strengthening.

**Figure 10: Mutual relationships among interethnic collaboration, climate adaptation and conflict prevention**



Note 10: This figure shows in simple terms the mutually reinforcing relationships among interethnic collaboration, climate adaptation and conflict prevention that underpin the PCCSR activities to promote resource rehabilitation and the sharing of natural resources.

Some tangible benefits are already apparent. Several thousand hectares of grazing land were agreed upon for joint use. Management of these areas is to be based on bylaws that were drafted and are to be made part of a larger set of community bylaws.

Four large water ponds were rehabilitated, not only providing increased water supplies but also reducing competition and possible tensions among neighboring groups. For example, the water pond in Marmaro reduces conflict potential by obviating the need for dry season grazing in Chalbi, where Kenyan Gabras and pastoralists from Hamar and Arbore in SNNPR also gather. The water pond rehabilitated in Guto kebele of Arero woreda is shared by groups from five different kebeles. These projects gave visible expression to the idea of joint works projects in climate adaptation and the shared use and management of natural resources.



Photo Note 1. This is a rehabilitated water pond located in Guto kebele in Arero woreda. The pond serves as a water point for cattle belonging to Borana, Gabra and Guji pastoralists coming from five different kebeles. Source: Katsuaki Terasawa.

One assertion sometimes made by critics about formal and customary (or informal) institutions is that the latter do not have rules and procedures codified in a written form and, as a result, they sometimes make decisions in a nontransparent or subjective manner. In fact, this claim may be more apparent than real, and there are other factors at play, such as differing conceptions of restorative and punitive justice. But the absence of written guidelines clearly places customary institutions at a disadvantage in relation to the formal institutions of the state. In specific cases, the gaps or divergence between customary and formal institutional decisions can be exploited by violators or even turned against traditional leaders.

For these reasons, one of the most important remaining activities of the PCCSR project is the conclusion of community bylaws. The drafting and agreement of the bylaws became possible only *after* the completion and shared experience of the many discussions, workshops, assessments, public events and joint site activities described briefly above. This reflects 1) the time and effort needed to broaden the collective perspectives of the different ethnic groups, and 2) the requirement for extended discussion to improve mutual understanding between customary leaders and government officials representing key functions like administration, peace and security and justice. It also highlights, in this case, the practical advantage of having the Haramaya University College of Law as an authoritative institutional base for PCCSR activities.

At present, while a list of issues and points of agreement were identified, the bylaws have not been fully drafted. The intended scope of the bylaws is considerable, including identification of

the parties to the bylaws (i.e., communities), the land and water resources covered by them, the arrangements for their shared use (specification of groups, animals and schedule to be followed), specified commitments to avoid conflict and competition, sanctions for violations, plans for maintenance and rehabilitation of shared natural resources, identification of those authorities responsible for enforcing the bylaws, powers of the authorities responsible for enforcement of the bylaws, and articulation of the role of formal institutions in relation to sanctions and enforcement mechanisms. The successful completion of agreed-upon and signed bylaws is essential for consolidating the institutional advances realized through the PCCSR project activities.

## **5.2 PCCSR AS A RESOURCE FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

The principal focus of the PCCSR project was to address conflict issues affecting communities in the project's target woredas and kebeles. But one of the main contributions made by the PCCSR has been to serve as an accessible and reliable resource for local government officials.

Several of the workshops and training activities conducted by the PCCSR were done at the request of government officials. Early in the project, a large workshop on conflict PMR with over 100 participants was initiated by the zonal administration office. Subsequent events coordinated with zonal and district administration offices included awareness-raising forums and panel discussions on climate and conflict issues.

On other occasions, woreda or kebele officials asked the PCCSR to hold dialogues to reduce tensions over specific grazing areas. This included an appeal to help with Borana–Gabra frictions over the Chabi grazing area between Haro Bake and Harboro kebeles and a request from the Teltele woreda administration to address problems of the Chalbi grazing area in Marmaro kebele, where Borana, Kenyan Gabra and Hamar and Arbore groups from SNNPR National Regional State gather. It is noteworthy that these requests led to the expansion of PCCSR activities beyond the original project target areas—neither Harboro kebele nor engagement with cross-border groups was originally envisioned within the scope of the project. Any future PCCSR undertakings should anticipate that this kind of “organic” growth in conflict PMR is likely to occur. In both instances, the PCCSR was able to bring the competing groups into dialogue and more collaborative relationships.

The period around the elections of May 2015 brought instability to Borana, including the project woredas. Individuals from Borana, Guji and Gabra groups were killed in Arero and Yabelo woredas, and concerns arose that conflict might spread to Teltele woreda and south to the Moyale area. Officials from all three woredas requested that the PCCSR arrange peace conferences. The PCCSR organized peace conferences in Bobella in Arero, Dhedhertu in Yabelo and Sabba in Teltele. The meetings provided assistance for post-conflict restoration of stability. More than 400 people participated in the three events, including some from outside the PCCSR project areas.

In addition to these PCCSR activities and interventions at the request of local government, officials noted three ways in which the PCCSR made important contributions to more effective

governance. First, the various assessments that the PCCSR conducted on conflict and climate issues surfaced key issues that enabled officials to make more informed decisions and brought them “one step closer” to solving important problems. Second, government officials appreciated that, unlike NGOs with programmed activities, the PCCSR worked with local government to integrate its activities, both bringing the attention of officials to critical concerns and assisting government planning processes. Third, by creating and facilitating intergroup discussions on sometimes contentious issues, the PCCSR helped officials overcome their own reluctance to talk about sensitive issues out of concern that it might add to tensions. This last contribution to overcoming the psychology of conflict paralleled the change in attitudes and behaviors the PCCSR achieved working with the project communities.

### **5.3 PCCSR SUCCESS IN CHANGING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS**

In meetings, interviews and focus group discussions with more than 100 people in Borana Zone, the assessment team consistently heard that PCCSR activities succeeded in changing attitudes among ethnic groups in the project woredas. This was reflected in statements made in a variety of settings by both government officials and traditional leaders, elders, women and youth.

The administration and security officials for Borana Zone said that the PCCSR had made good progress in ensuring that communities focus on individual criminal acts rather than ascribing culpability to entire ethnic groups. They saw an overall decline in conflict from 2015–2017, and said that people now report incidents of violence and crimes as they occur to local peace committees. The zonal justice officer is working with the PCCSR to establish better legal linkages with the project communities. In the view of zonal officials, “since peace is everything for pastoralists,” the PCCSR project needs to be extended throughout Borana Zone, Guji Zone, SNNPR and the Somali National Regional State. Each of these areas, in their view, needs structured peace committees that can function along the lines of the PCCSR.

In Yabelo, woreda officials said that as recently as 2013, in areas like Dhedhertu and Surupha, where the Guji, Borana and Gabra are all present, they used to hear of theft of 10 livestock every week, but that has declined to a few cases every two or three months. The representative for women’s and children’s affairs said that women are now “not instigators,” but “leaders (*abbaas*) for peace.”

In Gomole woreda, government officials said that just a few years ago boundaries were increasingly being contested and there was little communication among different groups and kebeles. Cattle theft was common. Peace committees sometimes protected or hid thieves of their own clan. An increase in private enclosures in Gomole was also causing conflict. Officials said that the PCCSR project helped to shift ownership attitudes back from “mine” to “ours.” Local government officials said they are now beginning implementation of a plan to dismantle private enclosures in Gomole.<sup>9</sup> When asked why government officials should spend time on the

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<sup>9</sup> At the time of the assessment team’s visit, PCCSR staff were working to complete an assessment of the causes, consequences and possible solutions to the wider problem of private enclosures in the three project woredas. The findings of the assessment are potentially an important contribution to community bylaws and actions by peace committees and local government to address the problem.

peace committees if conflict has declined, one official responded that “the PCCSR has shown us that we need to build peace during peace.”

At a meeting with Borana, Gabra and Guji pastoralists from Haro Bake, Surupha and Harboro, elders said that previously peace committees were not successful in stopping repeated conflict. Before, one participant said, “we looked at others as the source of problems, now we look at the problems we are causing.” One woman stated that the PCCSR was a difficult process, “but they brought us together continuously and we began to connect with each other.” Now, she said, every woman knows the lessons shared by the WPN. A member of the PCRC for youth said that “at first, we didn’t even know to sit together, but they made us sit in mixed groups...this gave me a good education.” Participants said that one notable change was that there is now intergroup participation in child-naming ceremonies, and contributions are made from other ethnic groups when marriages take place. Another group participant said that “without conflict reduction, we would not have survived the drought in 2015... together they would have been overwhelming.” On justice issues, one elder stated that the accused now gets a hearing, unlike in the past, and after decisions are rendered in writing, the guilty person signs the document to avoid any subsequent attempts to call the decision into question.



Photo Note 2. A focus group participant and member of the Women’s Peace Network in Haro Bake in Yabelo woreda. Source: Katsuaki Terasawa.

In Arero, the woreda administrator said that despite slow implementation, the PCCSR system of continuous training had forged better attitudes and that “internally” (within the woreda and zone) Borana, Guji and Gabra could now work together to maintain low levels of conflict. Twenty years ago, he said, elders and traditional leaders triggered conflict, supporting their own clans and even assisting in the stealing of livestock. His concern today is that “externally” (vis-à-vis the

neighboring Somali National Regional State) the woreda faces problems of illegal land expansion. Relations between communities of Borana and Somali National Regional State also needed to be incorporated into PCCSR activities, he said.

The contrast of conflict conditions before and after the beginning of the PCCSR project (whether because of the project or as part of larger trends) was made often in focus group discussions, which sometimes emphasized how rapidly and destructively conflict had affected communities in Borana. In El Waye woreda (formerly part of Teltele), one focus group participant said, “Some years ago, a boy was killed by a Borana; in retaliation, the Konso killed 20 people and took thousands of cattle; the Borana then destroyed the houses of Konso people in two kebeles.” He said peace committees now intervene to squelch false rumors and stop individual criminal acts from being used as a rationale for retaliation and escalation. The school director from the local school of 255 students said that the lessons about conflict from the PCCSR project are applied there and shared with Boran and Konso students.

### **5.3.1 LESS INSPIRATION THAN PERSPIRATION**

What produced the apparent success of the PCCSR in strengthening conflict resilience in the target kebeles? The PCCSR project activities did include some innovative methods to break through entrenched negative attitudes and biases, but the larger part of the answer seems to lie in the structured, labor-intensive, sequential and iterative approach used in implementing the project. Government officials and participants from different communities were “yoked together,” as one participant put it, to work together in every project activity. The high quality of PCCSR staff members facilitating the process was clearly another relevant factor.

Community dialogues identified grievances and community priorities. Training on the basics of conflict PMR helped to frame these issues and built awareness of context and principles of “do no harm.” This included training directed at not just community members but also government officials and PCCSR staff members. Learning was “cascaded down” from zonal to woreda to kebele levels. Peace committees worked toward “revitalization” through incremental steps. Women and youth had their own trainings on climate and conflict and jointly developed organizational structures to sustain the effort (i.e., the WPN and the PCRC for youth). The needs assessment processes went through multiple stages of dialogue before reaching a final validation workshop.

Tangible, joint climate change adaptation activities (ponds, bush thinning, soil bunds, etc.) were specified, validated and implemented by mixed groups. These activities produced an important lesson. While project participants were focused on the physical results and important practical benefits of these adaptation activities (e.g., rehabilitated ponds that could be used as major water points), they said that over time they found the most valuable outcome was the sense of mutual understanding and solidarity that emerged among different groups by working collaboratively. Thus, another lesson was that sufficient time is required to allow the desired changes in attitudes and behaviors to take place.

### **5.3.2 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITS OF THE PCCSR PROJECT**



Although in some ways an operational issue, the assessment team found it significant that a gap appeared to exist between the encouraging results produced by the PCCSR project's activities and the effective communication of those positive outcomes by PCCSR staff to the project funders and higher-level government officials. This is perhaps not surprising for a modest pilot project working under a new, university-based model, but it is regrettable because the lessons to be learned from the project have not yet been widely shared. Hopefully, this is a shortcoming that can be rectified as the project ends its current cycle and more time becomes available for broader dialogue and reflection on its experiences.

Despite its achievements, the PCCSR project was constrained by the structural realities of its working environment. The most fundamental constraint was the asymmetry in the relationship between government at all levels and the communities themselves. Even though the project had good success in improving communications and linkages between government institutions and customary institutions, the government institutions clearly dominated that interaction. Peace committees, for example, were essentially run by government officials, with the benefit of contributions from community input. This was not a flaw of the PCCSR project but an inherent and noteworthy characteristic. Project management by Haramaya University clearly brought trust and credibility, but given the university's institutional niche in the government, it also somewhat conditioned the project's focus and orientation. As government officials gain familiarity with and confidence in the peace committees, communities may be able to gradually increase the scope of their role in the process.

Perhaps because of the demands of its own numerous activities, the PCCSR project also seemed to be somewhat isolated from cross-fertilization with NGO projects working on pastoralist issues in Borana. There are several issue-areas—e.g., NRM, youth programs, livelihood diversification—where the activities of NGOs like CARE and SOS Sahel Ethiopia could overlap with and strengthen elements of the PCCSR project.

Some additional cross-currents are apparent in the relationship between government and communities in the PCCSR project. While PCCSR communities are determinedly delinking violent acts from group identity in their training and discussions, government administrative structures continue to reinforce ethnically based concepts. For instance, during the project, parts of Yabelo and Arero woredas were redistricted as Gomole woreda, referred to locally as the new "Gabra" woreda.

In Teltele, there is also the example of the area known as Berkaa. There, land is now being farmed by Konso and Burji sharecroppers along the Segen River. This is land traditionally used as a Boran dry season grazing area, and the presence of other ethnic groups using the land for agriculture has raised tensions in the area. Communities from the PCCSR project kebeles were trying to pursue dialogue with Konso officials to reduce those frictions. But it is believed by local people that the Burji landowners who hired the sharecroppers live elsewhere and that their use of the land has been illicitly "approved" by current or former government officials. This reinforces broader public concerns about corrupt or nontransparent allocations of traditional pastoralist lands without the knowledge or consent of traditional leaders and communities.



Photo Note 3. These are Konso sharecroppers working on fields of corn and sorghum on what was traditionally dry season grazing land for Boran pastoralists. The farms are allegedly owned by absentee landowners who were given the land by government officials. Source: Katsuaki Terasawa.

## 6. FALLING BEHIND THE CLIMATE CURVE

For both local government officials and communities, the PCCSR model is a successful “proof of concept” in building conflict resilience. However, the assessment team found that climate change—especially the stepped-up frequency of droughts—appears to be overwhelming some communities, and climate change adaptation is not providing an adequate response. Statements and empirical data made available by government officials and community members in the project areas supported this point of view.

Data provided by the Borana Zone Pastoral Development Office showed that as of late April 2017, Borana pastoralists had “lost 27–30 percent of their livestock inventory” in the current drought and there was “critical water and pasture shortage.” The woredas of the zone had received on average 1–3 days of ganaa rains at that point (no significant rain arrived in the zone until a month later at the end of May). Communities were traveling long distances for water, which was being rationed at schools and health facilities, and water trucks were being used to deliver additional supplies. Following on the failure of the ganaa and hagaya rains in 2016, the zone was also experiencing severe food insecurity. According to the report, “out of the total population of 1.1 million of the zone, 357,934 need food support.” To meet their family needs, over 4,000 students had dropped out of school in the current drought cycle (Borana Zone Pastoral Development Office 2017).

In a group discussion on climate and conflict in Haro Bake, participants agreed that “our greatest fear is losing all our animals” due to drought. Participants in the focus group discussion in Dhedhertu stated that they had “lost hope in pastoralism.” Pastoralists there had lost about half of their cattle on average, and they were spending their few remaining resources on feed and veterinary medicines. Market prices for livestock were only one-fifth their normal prices, and the residents of Dhedhertu were anxious to adopt government plans for turning the community into a market center. Residents from Kaffara, Guto and Kara Gumata kebeles in Arero woreda said there has been no harvest in some areas for the past three years due to repeated drought, and the most severely affected households have experienced asset losses of up to 90 percent. One focus group participant said that it would take 10 years of “normal” weather to rebuild household assets. Arero woreda officials estimated that up to 5–10 percent of pastoralists drop out each year.

Recent climate trends interact to create strong negative synergies. Spring rainfall is lower and unpredictable, and when it does come, it may arrive in downpours. When that happens, the consequences are severe as soil nutrients are lost and the ground absorbs little moisture due to the intensity of the rain as well as the lack of ground cover caused by frequent drought and overgrazing. The cycle continues, as poor soil with scant moisture does not provide the

necessary conditions for the regrowth of ground cover. Increased temperatures exacerbate the situation. The photo below shows an example of land in this parched and degraded condition.



Photo Note 4. Soil bunds (trenches) to capture rainfall on parched land in Nanawa grazing area in Yabelo woreda. The soil bunds were dug by hand in a collaborative effort among different ethnic communities. Photo by Katsuaki Terasawa.

The oral testimony of pastoralists in Borana also paints a picture of intensifying climate change impacts that at times overwhelm the coping capacities of communities. In a focus group discussion in Sabba kebele in El Waye woreda, one participant said that after no spring rain, and with the dry season approaching, “we have a great fear in our heads.”<sup>10</sup> All the communities visited in the PCCSR project areas were experiencing varying degrees of drought conditions, and they expressed concerns about the viability of pastoralism as a reliable livelihood for a growing, youthful population.

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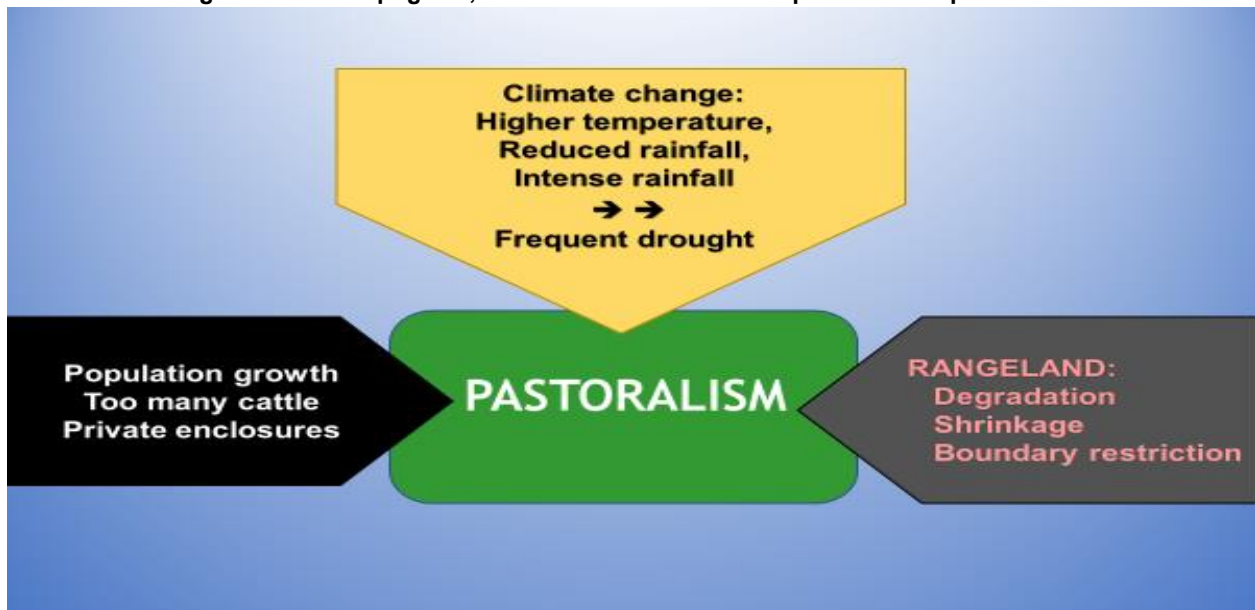
<sup>10</sup> El Waye is another new woreda (formerly part of Teltele woreda) created during the PCCSR project.

# 7. TRENDS AND CHALLENGES: PASTORALIST DROPOUTS AND LAND USE PARADIGMS

## 7.1 PASTORALIST DROPOUTS AND THE TRANSITION OUT OF PASTORALISM

Climate change and population growth are fundamental trends affecting pastoralism. They combine with other environmental and anthropogenic factors that complicate pastoralist livelihoods. The problem of too many cattle on shrinking and degraded rangelands, the constraints on mobility created by political and administrative boundaries, and the abuse of private enclosures were mentioned frequently in meetings and discussions by community leaders and local experts<sup>11</sup> (Figure 11). One consequence of the confluence of these diverse challenges is the increasing stream of pastoralist “dropouts,” especially young men and women.

Figure 11: Anthropogenic, environmental and climate pressures on pastoralism



Note 11. Pastoral livelihoods in Borana are beset with a variety of anthropogenic, environmental and climatic pressures that contribute to the outflow of pastoral dropouts.

The term “dropout” refers to a person who gives up pastoralism entirely and leaves the community. Because of the cultural value given to cattle raising in Borana, the transition out of pastoralism (TOP) is both a livelihood crisis and a severe social dislocation. People who lose all

<sup>11</sup> The overall problem of increasing livestock should be seen in the context of what Boran traditional leaders have called the “appalling pasture scarcity throughout the Borana rangeland” (Borana Oromo Leaders 2010).

their livestock and become destitute (*qolle*) may remain in the village and hope they may be restocked through community traditions of mutual assistance (*busa gonofa*), but repeated drought depletes the household assets of all community members. A threshold is reached below which there are no longer sufficient cows for restocking through sharing (Desta et al. 2008). Serious episodes of conflict may also leave victims destitute and are an additional driver of pastoralist dropouts.

The success rate of pastoralist dropouts (or TOPs) in finding a stable alternative livelihood is very low. Dropouts in Borana generally settle near or within villages, small towns or peri-urban areas and (especially if supported) undertake a wide array of income-generating activities, including petty trade, animal fattening, milk collection, timber harvesting and artisanal goldmining, or as hired labor in agriculture, irrigation farms and construction. Few TOPs go directly to larger towns due to their unfamiliarity with the practices and expectations of people living in urban areas. Women may engage in fuelwood collection, cooking and housekeeping, and they often encounter serious challenges in finding secure housing. Women also often express an interest in starting their own micro businesses, but they lack access to credit. Salaries for TOPs vary but are generally in the range of US\$1–2 per day or less.

Most pastoralists lack fundamental educational skills. There is a strong need for collective basic education, attitudinal changes and skills development for empowerment. A labor market assessment done for USAID’s PRIME (Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion) program in 2014 found that business employers in Afar, Somali and Oromia National Regional States said their most important requirements were “related skill sets, prior working experience, basic business skills and a positive attitude” (Bahiru and Ku 2014). Given their very different prior life experiences, few TOPs meet these criteria, and the majority, who are illiterate and lack family connections, are often unaware of and unable to locate job opportunities.

At the same time, labor in town settings is often seen by former pastoralists as an undesirable and socially diminishing alternative, and even educational opportunities are sometimes shunned. Dida Jarso, team leader for SOS Sahel, which helps dropouts attend a local polytechnic school, noted that many TOPs are uninterested in vocational training. Several focus group participants in the project woredas expressed hopes that their children could find a way to pursue education in nearby towns, but the cultural, educational and psychological barriers that pastoralist dropouts face in making a livelihood transition are formidable.

Conflict is a cause—and possible consequence—of the phenomenon of pastoralist dropouts, who constitute a growing population of unemployed or underemployed internally displaced persons. Antagonistic or criminal acts by TOPs can stir conflicts between clans or ethnic groups. Informal or illegal housing can create tensions with receiving communities and government authorities. Many town dwellers see pastoralist dropouts as uneducated and difficult to communicate with, while TOPs feel shunned and offended by what they perceive as disrespect. The possibilities of miscommunication, dissatisfaction and conflict in peri-urban and urban areas are likely to increase as more people involuntarily leave pastoralist livelihoods.

Through the PRIME project and other government and donor programs, various efforts are being made to address the needs of pastoralist dropouts. These include technical and vocational training, basic workplace skills, jobs linked to livestock value chains (production and marketing), self-organized cooperatives, microcredit and assistance to small businesses whose growth can increase employment opportunities. Like climate trends, however, the rising curve of pastoralist dropouts appears to be outstripping the absorptive capacity of labor markets in Borana and elsewhere in Ethiopia. A rural-to-urban, unmoored and growing population of mainly young men and women without productive activities to occupy them is an urgent problem that raises serious concerns about instability and conflict.

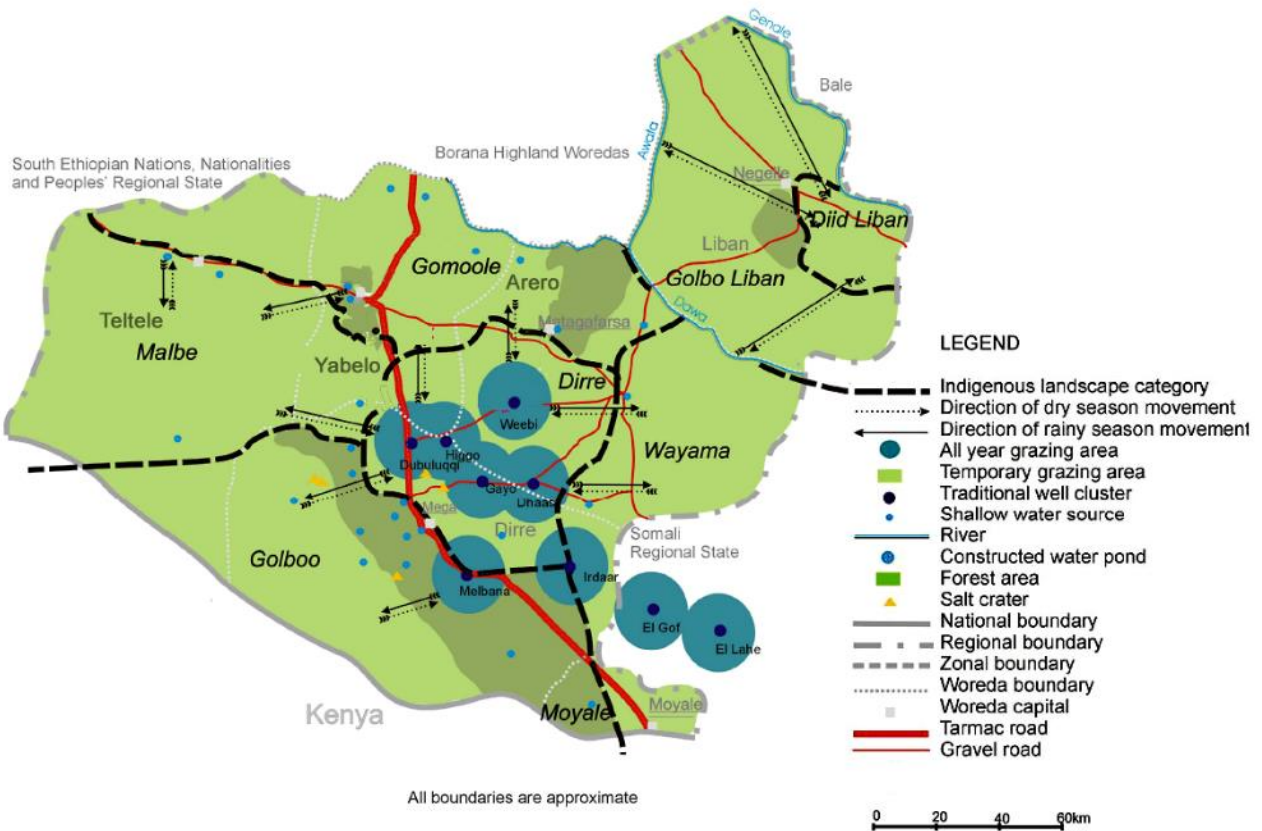
## 7.2 MERGING POLITICAL AND ECOLOGICAL LAND USE PARADIGMS

Interviews with government officials, PCCSR staff members and program directors at SOS Sahel and CARE identified two distinctly different land use paradigms for pastoralists that are either being used on a pilot basis or are under discussion. Any approach to land use by pastoralists in Borana must balance a host of issues, including not only the needs of pastoralists for access to grazing lands and water resources but also 1) the potential for ethnic or clan tensions, and 2) the political and administrative preferences of local officials seeking to deliver services and maintain security. Aligning these considerations is no easy matter, but the choices that are made have important implications for livelihood security and conflict resilience.

The first land use paradigm is the so-called “linear settlement” system that was developed in several areas of Borana in recent years. This is a kebele-level pastoralist settlement pattern along a defined line, with wet and dry grazing areas on either side. On its face, it is “a rational shift from the previous dispersed, diffuse human settlement with households scattered across the kebele” that aims to improve services to communities (Richards et al. 2015). Critics of linear settlements, however, see it primarily as a political mechanism to limit and monitor the movement of pastoralist groups. In some communities, ethnic groups have used linear settlement to exclude other groups from grazing areas. The linear settlements’ reliance on constructed ponds for the system of dry and wet season grazing areas is also thought to degrade rangeland due to prolonged settlement in the same pasture. Pilot kebeles for linear settlement now exist in Yabelo, Arero and Teltele.

The second paradigm envisions the management of natural resources through the certification of *dheeda*, the customary lowland territorial and ecological unit used as communal land by pastoralists in Borana and parts of Somali National Regional State and northern Kenya. Dheedas encompass a much larger expanse of land, running across woredas, with dry and wet season grazing areas based on water points and natural grazing landscapes. The government approved in principle—after lengthy discussion and debate with Gadaa leaders, donors and NGOs—the idea of three pilot dheedas for possible land certification (see Figure 12 for a map of dheeda areas).

**Figure 12: Dheeda areas for natural resource management in Borana (approximate)**



Note 12. This map shows the approximate boundaries of traditional dheeda areas used by pastoralists for NRM in Borana. Regional and local governments recently approved in principle three pilot dheedas for possible land certification under the supervision of customary institutions. Source: Adapted from Homann (2004).

Clear pros and cons exist for each paradigm, and their divergent priorities have different implications for the potential for conflict.

The arguments in favor of the kebele-level linear settlements favored by local governments are that they:

- Offer better opportunities to expand government services, such as education, development extension, human health, livestock health and social assistance.
- Provide an orderly system for resource sharing in a defined and manageable geography supported by development agents.
- Facilitate the administrative organization and oversight of pastoralist communities.

Arguments against the kebele-level linear settlements are that they:

- Limit pastoralists to land of insufficient size and quality to access necessary dry and wet season grazing lands and water points.
- Place pastoralists in an adversarial position vis-à-vis authorities and other communities when they seek to move beyond kebele boundaries to access natural resources.



- Raise concerns for ethnic minorities like Gabras or Gujis about adequate community input (fearing domination by more numerous Borana) and fair access to rangelands.

Those who advocate the traditional dheeda areas believe they:

- Help to preserve and develop the customary practices of Borana and neighboring communities.
- Provide both wet and dry season grazing areas in a well-understood manner with the support of traditional systems.
- Encompass geographic areas large enough for traditional sharing of natural resources among different clan/ethnic groups (Borana, Guji, Gabra, Garre, Degodia, Konso, Burji).

Conversely, critics of the communal land ownership of dheeda areas observe that they:

- Lack strong commitment from local governments (kebele and woreda authorities).
- Require more resources to provide pastoralist services such as mobile education, human health, livestock health and development extension over larger distances.
- Fail to adequately consider existing landscape change and the interests of nonpastoralist users of land such as farmers and commercial business operators.
- Raise concerns about dheeda areas as a creation of dominant Borana interests.

In practice, this appears to be a debate between two “ideal types” of pastoralist land use management and administration. Interviewees from donor organizations said that before agreeing to accept the dheeda approach, regional government officials started to negotiate the certification of pastoralists’ lands based on units larger than kebeles but smaller than the much more expansive traditional dheeda areas. Government officials believed that such a model could help limit grievances and avoid conflictive institutional relationships. Many pastoralist leaders do not see the linear settlement model as a viable basis for pastoralist mobility, and government officials feel the dheeda system undermines their administrative prerogatives and responsibilities. Those responsibilities include assistance with educational and job opportunities for the burgeoning pool of pastoralist dropouts. It was after these negotiations that the government finally decided to pilot certification of three dheeda areas.

A hybrid approach would try to accommodate these competing perspectives. The need for innovative and hybrid institutional models to govern pastoralist areas is being increasingly recognized at the international level and throughout Africa. A recent paper presented at the World Bank by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) stated, “The governance capabilities of both community and state organizations at the local level are key to effectively strengthening land tenure of pastoral communities. This includes the ability of organizations and individuals to interact and collaborate in ways that support responsible governance of tenure and avoid and resolve tenure conflicts...” (Jonckheere, Liversage, and Rota 2017). Similarly, a study from West Africa found that “pastoralism as a way of life and livelihood will maintain its vitality and creativity if institutional and policy innovations are based on constant renegotiation between the formal rules and regulations of the state or development agencies and pastoralists’ traditions, values and objectives...” (Waters-Bayer 2017). The

question is: How are these institutional challenges to be met? The PCCSR project offers one successful model that could help to fill this gap and facilitate the necessary dialogue and collaboration at the local level.

# 8. CONCLUSION: RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF THE PCCSR

## 8.1 COSTS OF CONFLICT

The cost of conflict is generally measured in terms of violent events, property destruction and casualties. But as alarming as these losses are, they are part of what are even more extensive costs.

In pastoralist areas of Ethiopia, conflict is an immediate threat to the livelihoods of entire communities. In times of conflict, livestock mobility is greatly reduced or curtailed, and access to necessary pasture and water may become impossible. Basic household needs such as water and fuelwood are difficult or dangerous to obtain. Markets and petty trade can collapse, as happened along the Oromia–Somali border in 2009, and economic activity in nearby towns can grind to a halt. Under such conditions, schools can be forced to close and the provision of healthcare is at risk. When conflict results in the complete loss of livestock assets, more people are forced to leave pastoralism entirely and become pastoralist dropouts.

It is against those cumulative costs, which have afflicted Borana repeatedly in the recent past, that the value and cost-effectiveness of the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience should be measured. This is especially salient for a country like Ethiopia that prioritizes rapid national development and whose stability is a high priority for U.S. interests.

## 8.2 MAKING CONFLICT PMR MORE RESILIENT

It may be the case that the reduction in conflict in Borana since 2013 is part of a larger trend in improved conflict management at the community level. Efforts like the Alona peace conference and the Negelle Accords showed that—with outside assistance—pastoralist communities could enter dialogue and negotiation and overcome immediate conflict crises. Yet once outside support was withdrawn, neither of those efforts resulted in the lasting effects anticipated at the time. The institutional arrangements that defused those crises were neither sufficiently comprehensive nor durable enough to serve as fully satisfactory models for building conflict resilience.

The PCCSR represents a more multifaceted, institutionally robust—and potentially durable—approach to conflict PMR. In the PCCSR project woredas and kebeles, very few episodes of conflict have occurred, and when tensions or conflict do arise, violations or crimes are reported almost immediately and peace committees intervene quickly, working closely with government authorities.

The most fundamental achievement of the PCCSR, however, is the attitudinal change identified by all project stakeholders, including elders, traditional leaders, women, youth and government

officials at all levels. This is the shift from ethnic attribution of criminal acts and negative characteristics (aggressive, wild, violent, untrustworthy, immoral) to ascribing them to the individuals who commit acts of violence or exhibit those characteristics. It is too early to say how complete or far-reaching this attitudinal change is, but it was the central topic raised in focus group discussions and in meetings with government officials in the three project woredas.

The principal lesson from the PCCSR project is that realizing these attitudinal and behavioral changes across pastoralist communities and ethnic groups is possible within a two- to three-year period by engaging in a labor-intensive process focused on interethnic dialogue and joint activities to address climate challenges and environmental degradation. However, the process needed to produce these results, while not requiring large expenditures, involves systematic, sequential, structured and iterative activities to build knowledge, social capital and trust.

They are systematic and sequential because one step builds on the next, with diverse components including orientation, education, sensitization, awareness raising, training, needs assessment, planning, joint natural resource rehabilitation projects, cultural sharing, and eventually, negotiation and agreement among ethnic groups and local government on community bylaws. These activities need sufficient time to be fully implemented and take hold.

The PCCSR model has structure in its focus on revitalizing and clarifying the purposes and obligations of the peace committees as well as on creating organizational structures for women and youth in the WPN and the PCRC. The effective functioning of those structures is facilitated by a constructive collaborative relationship between local government and customary institutions at the community level. This positive relationship between formal and traditional institutions benefited from the role of Haramaya University as a trusted intermediary and partner.

The PCCSR model is iterative because the series of activities does not move forward without missteps and slippages. Some are common problems of project implementation. PCCSR staff experienced significant procurement bottlenecks and underestimated the costs of the physical rehabilitation of water ponds. But other problems are inherent to the challenges of engaging on conflict issues. Some dialogues take patience and repetition, education and training move forward at variable speeds, and outside events such as the 2015 elections can temporarily derail the process. PCCSR staff had to work with these challenges and the specific circumstances of individual woredas and kebeles to keep the process on track until project communities began to have higher levels of trust and solidarity.

### **8.3 THE ROLE OF CLIMATE ADAPTATION**

Climate change has been an effective organizing principle and center of gravity for the PCCSR project for the compelling reason that it is an “external threat” experienced by all ethnic groups and clans in Borana. Surveys demonstrated that agreement and understanding exists among very large majorities in Borana that rising temperatures have been accompanied by reduced rainfall, seasonal shifts, downpours and frequent drought. This is a situation that threatens pastoralist and agropastoralist livelihoods regardless of ethnic identity and one that creates a

common experience requiring urgent and coordinated responses to ensure adequate access to essential natural resources.

The critical need to respond to climate threats provided a meaningful rationale, corollary to conflict reduction, for interethnic dialogue and collaboration. PCCSR workshops about climate challenges usefully broadened and strengthened the agenda for shared dialogue among different ethnic communities.

Climate change adaptation measures that directly or indirectly reduced competition for grazing areas and water points reduced the potential for conflict. While soil bunds to collect water and reduce erosion were important climate change adaptation activities for the direct benefits they provide for livelihoods, the rehabilitation and sharing of water ponds was a more powerful and important contribution to conflict prevention.

## **8.4 SUPPORT FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

One of the difficulties in measuring the value of a project focused on conflict PMR is that much of what may have been gained is counterfactual. What is certain, however, is that the PCCSR has been used by zonal, woreda and kebele authorities to increase their awareness and capacity to respond to potential conflict and the aftermath of conflict. As analysts have sometimes observed, Ethiopia's governance is "brittle," strong at the surface but subject to fracture (Greene 2011). The activities of the PCCSR helped to boost the responsiveness and resilience of local government institutions.

Having successfully completed its full project cycle and established the basic structures of the peace committees, women's and youth groups, and joint resource rehabilitation activities, the PCCSR could move forward to a new phase of activities at a considerably lower cost than its original budget. On several occasions, focus group participants volunteered of their own accord to help other communities that might wish to emulate the PCCSR model. While moving to new woredas in selected areas would involve start-up costs, the lessons learned from implementation of the pilot project would help streamline financial requirements.

## **8.5 RESPONDING TO THE FULL SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT CHALLENGES**

The peace accords of Alona and Negelle are often described as short-term "fire brigade" responses to crises. The ability to put out the fires of conflict quickly is, in fact, hugely important. The structured approach of the PCCSR project provides a model that is well-equipped to respond to immediate crises and, over the medium term, to create lasting shifts in attitudes and behaviors and improve relations between formal and customary institutions.

Yet challenges in the not-so-distant future could produce new outbreaks of conflict in forms that differ from the ones addressed by the PCCSR so far. The most important of these is the dilemma of pastoralist dropouts and the entire question of the transition out of pastoralism. Both anthropogenic factors (population growth, overgrazing, private enclosures, administrative

boundaries, cultural change) and climate trends (drought, downpours, land degradation) are driving many people, especially young men and women, out of pastoralism. The numbers are hard to quantify but are increasing. Despite the deep cultural roots of pastoralism in Borana, many focus group participants, both men and women, made clear that they would leave pastoralism if given a viable alternative path forward.

Despite initiatives by government and donors, the efforts to date to address this urgent challenge appear to be far from adequate. From the perspective of conflict analysis, there is a high risk that the current trajectory of incremental actions to address the TOP problem will lead to an explosive and destabilizing situation in the future.

One limitation of the PCCSR model is that its focus on climate and ethnic conflict does not yet extend to the question of pastoralist dropouts. This is also reflected in the compartmentalization of donor programs among peace and conflict, employment and markets, and land issues. In a second phase of its activities, the PCCSR model could help raise awareness and explore with local government and businesses possible steps to respond to the swelling pool of pastoralist dropouts.

A second challenge is establishing clearer and more firmly agreed upon systems of pastoralist land use tenure. The divergent priorities of small and tightly administered political units on the one hand and large landscapes for livelihood needs on the other are representative of the basic tensions between state and society in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia. They are also, in part, competing visions of what might constitute adequate responses to Borana's climate threats. Dialogue and negotiation are needed to find workable, possibly hybrid, land use solutions. The PCCSR could contribute to or facilitate some of these discussions.

As religion, government and other cultural influences penetrate more deeply into community life, "hybridity" is also impacting customary institutions themselves. Given the role of traditional institutions in conflict PMR, these changes are likely to have implications for their effectiveness and how they are viewed by their communities, especially by women and youth. By providing organizational structures for women's and youth groups, the PCCSR model can provide a channel for their input and contributions to managing the challenges of this changing context.

# 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to USAID to encourage successful completion of the final stages of the PCCSR pilot project and support continuation of the PCCSR model in a second phase:

1. Ensure that the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience project fully completes the final drafting and signing of community bylaws for all project target communities.
2. Encourage PCCSR staff to work with communities toward diversification of the composition of the peace committees, including a higher proportion of nongovernmental community members, especially women and youth.
3. Hold a by-invitation workshop in Addis Ababa cosponsored by USAID and Haramaya University on lessons learned from the PCCSR, including participants such as the core working group of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Pastoralist Development, Oromia Pastoralist Area Development Commission, World Bank, African Development Bank, IGAD and Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia, as well as other representatives from the Oromia National Regional State and Borana Zone as appropriate.
4. Recognize the positive return on investment from USAID's support for the PCCSR pilot project and its success in strengthening conflict resilience, and actively support funding, diversification and expansion of PCCSR activities for another full project cycle.
5. Encourage the Federal Government of Ethiopia and Oromia National Regional State to support the PCCSR model both financially (operational baseline budget) and as part of their security and peace policies.
6. Support the extension of PCCSR activities in a second phase to other zones in Oromia as well as conflict-prone, cross-boundary areas with Somali and SNNPR National Regional States.
7. Explore ways of increasing and integrating programmatic support to address the challenge of pastoralist dropouts, including recognition of its implications for conflict and the constructive role that the PCCSR model may be able to play in addressing the issue.
8. Encourage the PCCSR in a second phase to assist the Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs for youth in conducting a needs assessment and "ground-truthing" on transitions out of pastoralism. These findings should then be shared with the broader community in the project districts, including local government, small businesses and those in the livestock value chain and supply system.
9. Continue to support discussions among formal institutions and customary institutions to come to a consensus on approaches to the certification of pastoralist land tenure, considering both livelihood and administrative priorities and concerns. Explore ways in which the PCCSR model might support this certification process in its pilot phase and as it evolves.

10. Expand and diversify the interethnic, collaborative climate change adaptation activities of the PCCSR model, including soil trenches for water harvesting, bush thinning and water ponds.
11. Encourage the use of the PCCSR model to explore in greater depth the accelerating impacts of climate change in Borana and the formulation of a more ambitious short- to medium-term menu of climate change adaptation activities.



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# ANNEX A: GUIDING QUESTIONS

**What have been the principal conflict outbreaks or events that have affected the community over the past three *Gadaa* periods? Which identity groups were in conflict? Who were the actors who mobilized or engaged in conflict? What were the grievances or triggers that drove the conflict?**

Did the conflicts involve the following?

- Different ethnic groups or clans
- Access to water and pasture (or other natural resources)?
- Thefts, killings, or other criminal acts?
- Government policies or actions (or the lack thereof)

**How has the PCCSR Project changed the perceptions, attitudes and behavior of the project's different stakeholders (elders, traditional leaders, women, youth, government officials) and their communities regarding:**

Climate variability and climate change vulnerability?

Climate-related NR challenges and natural resource management?

Pastoralist livelihoods, their viability and future; livelihood diversification?

Household security (food, health, education)?

Conflict PMR (elders, traditional/religious leaders, women, youth)?

Conflict PMR (officials at kebele, woreda, zonal, and regional levels)?

Actors who have the capacity to engage in violent actions around grievances?

The role of women in the community (social cohesion, conflict issues)?

The role of elders and peace committees?

The role of youth in the community and the future of young people?

“Vertical” relations between customary and formal institutions (communication, justice)?

“Horizontal” relations between kebeles and between woredas (especially conflict PMR)?

Resilience as an organizing concept for community action?

**How has the PCCSR Project changed institutions, both customary and formal, in ways that affect climate resilience and conflict resilience?**

What institutional changes have you observed?

Have they (or will they) improve life in the community?

Are these changes temporary or sustainable?

Which institutional actors have the capacity to mobilize collective actions on these resiliencies?

How can different levels of government work more constructively with communities?

## **Additional Questions for Specific Groups**

### **Elders and Traditional Leaders**

How has the role of the elders/traditional leaders changed in recent years?

What are the causes of those changes?

What are the effects of those changes on others in the community?

How has it affected community stability?

What have recent trends been in relations with other outside communities?

What have recent trends been in relation to government (kebele, woreda, zonal, regional)?

How do those changes affect the capacity of elders/traditional leaders to work for conflict PMR and climate resilience?

What is your view of the future of pastoralism?

How do you view the changing roles of women and youth?

In your view, what will the role of elders be in the next generation?

### **Peace Committees**

What was the history of the peace committees before the beginning of the PCCSR project?

Why did the peace committees need to be revitalized?

What are the most important tasks and roles of peace committee members?

Are peace committees needed on a full-time or only “as needed” basis?

How should government (kebele, woreda, zonal, regional) interact with the peace committees?

### **Women’s Peacebuilding Network**

How have the role and circumstances of women changed in recent years?

What are the causes of those changes?

What are the effects of those changes on others in the community?

How has it affected community stability?

How do those changes affect the capacity of women to work for conflict PMR and climate resilience?

How have the evolving roles of women affected families?

In your view, what will the role and circumstances of women be in the next generation?

### **Peace and Climate Resilience Clubs (Youth)**

What are the main skills and knowledge you have gotten from the PCCSR project?

What things have you learned about your community that you did not know before?

What are the main concerns of young people in relation to climate stresses and conflict?

What lessons have you learned about climate resilience and conflict PMR?

What information and education do you need to advance your personal goals?

How do you see your future in 10 years or 20 years?

### **Government Officials**

What do you consider to be the main achievements of the PCCSR project?

What were the main challenges that you observed?

Have the PCCSR project interventions been useful to you in your work?

Has the PCCSR project provided the basis for enhanced conflict PMR and climate resilience?

What are the lessons you have learned about the relationships between traditional institutions and government from your experience with the PCCSR project?

What recommendations do you have for building on the PCCSR experience?

### **PCCSR Staff**

What have been the main challenges in the implementation of the PCCSR pilot project?

What do you consider to be the major achievements?

What unanticipated conflict sensitivities did you encounter?

What aspects of project design could be improved? How?

### **Instability Before and After the 2015 Elections**

What were the causes of instability and violence in the project intervention areas around the time of the elections in May 2015?

What were the responses of the government, peace committees and community members?

What lessons can be learned from that experience?

# ANNEX B: PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA

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Dr. Gezahegn Aboset  
Pastoral Area Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Project  
Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries

Sewnet Chekol  
Director General  
Pastoral Area Ensuring Equitable Development Directorate  
Ministry of Federal Affairs and Pastoralist Development

Gebre Terefe  
Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialist  
Pastoralist Community Development Project (PCDP – III)  
Ministry of Federal Affairs and Pastoralist Development

Berhanu Assefa  
Coordinator  
Climate Resilience for a Green Economy  
Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Management

## OROMIA NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE

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Teshome Desalegn  
Security Bureau  
Oromia National Regional State  
Addis Ababa

Fekadu Lebecha  
Water Bureau  
Oromia National Regional State  
Addis Ababa

## BORANA ZONE

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Israel Tesfaye  
Administration

Mitiku Tadesse  
Anti-Corruption Expert  
Administration Office

Damtew Harilo  
Public Prosecutor  
Justice Office

Bizuayehu Mergia  
Representative  
Administration and Security Office

Giro Ahmed  
Representative  
Pastoralist Development Office

## WOREDA OFFICIALS

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Wano Dima

Administration

Yabelo

Haleke Doyo  
Office Head  
Environmental, Forestry and Climate  
Change Office Head  
Yabelo

Wario Godana  
Land Use Management Office  
Yabelo

Zeyitu Kemal  
Women and Children Affairs Office  
Yabelo

Abera Feyisa  
Administration and Peace Office  
Yabelo

Dida Dabasa  
Head  
Land Use and Environmental Protection  
Head  
Gomole

Arero Garbole  
Peace and Security  
Security Office  
Gomole

Boru Dabasa

Vice Head  
Climate Change Office, Forestry,  
Environment and Climate Change  
Gomole

Edin Bagajom  
Water Office Expert  
Gomole

Wariyo Jarso  
Administration Leader  
Administrator  
Gomole

Hassan Huka Wako  
Administrator  
Arero

Ayantuu Abdeta  
Women and Children's Affairs  
Arero

Malicha Gutu  
Peace and Security Officer  
Arero

Sora Kene  
Water, Mines and Energy Engineer  
Arero

## **GADAA LEADERS**

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Abbaa Gadaa Kura Jarso  
Matgafarsa

Kotola Jarso  
Candidate Counselor  
Matgafarsa

Liban Gutu  
Senior Counselor  
Matgafarsa

## **CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

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Tezera Getahun  
Executive Director  
Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia  
Addis Ababa

## **DONORS AND IMPLEMENTERS**

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Brian Gilchrest

Conflict and Security Advisor

U.S. Agency for International Development

Tessema Mebratu  
Program Management Specialist  
U.S Agency for International Development

Folasade (Sade) Owolabi  
Deputy Chief  
Democracy and Governance Office  
U.S. Agency for International Development

Zemen Haddis  
Senior Agricultural Policy Advisor  
Economic Growth and Transformation  
Office  
U.S. Agency for International Development

Dubale Admasu Tessema  
Pastoralist and Livestock Program  
Coordinator  
Economic Growth and Transformation  
Office  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Dida Jarso

Team Leader  
Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement  
through Market Expansion (PRIME)  
SOS Sahel  
Yabelo

Hussein Miyo  
NRM and Climate Change Adaptation  
Technical Advisor  
CARE Ethiopia  
Natural Resource Management  
Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement  
through Market Expansion (PRIME)  
Yabelo

## **PEACE CENTERS FOR CLIMATE AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE**

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Gadissa Tesfaye  
Institutional and Field Coordinator  
Peace Centers for Climate and Social  
Resilience (PCCSR) Project  
Haramaya University

Beneberu Shimelis  
Climate Change Adviser  
Peace Centers for Climate and Social  
Resilience (PCCSR) Project  
Yabelo

Wario Hargessa  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Peace Centers for Climate and Social  
Resilience (PCCSR) Project  
Yabelo

Wario Dima  
Center Head  
Peace Centers for Climate and Social  
Resilience (PCCSR) Project  
Yabelo

## **ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS**

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Ahmed Muhamed Abdulla  
Executive Director  
Oromia Agricultural Research Institute  
Yabelo Pastoral and Dryland Agricultural Research Center Head

## **COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS**

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Residents of Haro Bake, Harboro, and  
Surupha Kebeles Communities

Focus group discussions with 17 men and 5  
women, including members of Peace

Committee, Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Club for youth

Residents of Dhedhertu Community  
Focus group discussions with 10 women and 5 men, including members of Peace Committee, Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Club for youth

Residents of Guto, Kara Gumata and Kaffara Kebele Communities

Focus group discussions with 16 men and 4 women, including members of Peace Committee, Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Club for youth

Residents of Hadho Kebele Community  
Focus group discussions with 11 men and 2 women, including members of Peace Committee, Women's Peace Network and Peace and Climate Resilience Club for youth

## **PRIVATE SECTOR**

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Galgalo Guyo  
Private Businessman  
Cattle Trade from Borana to Adama  
Exports, Milk Collection and Sales  
Yabelo

## **PHYSICAL SITE VISITS**

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Watershed Management Visit at Nanawa  
Grazing Area with PCCSR Staff

Ranchi Pond Visit with PCCSR Staff

Pastoralist Training Center and  
Demonstration Site in Dhedhertu with  
PCCSR Staff  
Guto Pond Visit with PCCSR Staff

Barkaa Dry Season Grazing Land Area Visit  
with PCCSR Staff and Discussion with  
Konso Farmers

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