

Challenges and Options in Governing Common Property

Institutional Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources
Institutioneller Wandel der Landwirtschaft und Ressourcennutzung

edited by/herausgegeben von
Volker Beckmann & Konrad Hagedorn

Volume/Band 32

Fekadu Beyene

**Challenges and Options in
Governing Common Property**

Customary Institutions among (Agro-) Pastoralists
in Ethiopia

Shaker Verlag
Aachen 2008

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Zugl.: Berlin, Humboldt-Univ., Diss., 2008

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung des Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienstes.

Copyright Shaker Verlag 2008

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

Printed in Germany.

ISBN 978-3-8322-6375-1

ISSN 1617-4828

Shaker Verlag GmbH • P.O. BOX 101818 • D-52018 Aachen

Phone: 0049/2407/9596-0 • Telefax: 0049/2407/9596-9

Internet: www.shaker.de • e-mail: info@shaker.de

Aim and Scope of the Series

„Nothing endures but change“. Heraclitus the Ephesian (ca. 535–475 BC)

Institutions, defined as “the rules of the game”, are a key factor to the sustainable development of societies. They structure not only the multitude of human-human interactions of modern societies, but also most of the human-nature interactions. Poverty, famine, civil war, degradation of natural resources and even the collapse of ecosystems and societies often have institutional causes, likewise social and economic prosperity, sustainable use of resources and the resilience of socio-ecological systems. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are those human activities where the interdependencies between human-human and human-nature interactions are perhaps most pronounced, and diverse institutions have been developed in history to govern them.

Social and ecological conditions are, however, ever changing, which continuously challenge the existing institutional structure at a given point in time. Those changes may be long-term, like population growth or climate change, medium-term, such as new technologies or changing price relations, or short-term, like floods or bankruptcies, but all of them pose the question whether the rules of the game need to be adapted. Failures to adapt timely and effectively may come at a high social cost. Institutional change, however, face a principal dilemma: on the one hand, institutions need to be stable to structure expectations and effectively influence human behaviors; on the other hand, they need to be adaptive to respond to the ever changing circumstance mentioned above. Understanding stability and change as well as developing adaptive institutions and effective, efficient and fair mechanisms of change are, therefore, of central importance for societies and an ongoing research challenge for social scientists.

If we want to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and adaptability of institutions, it stands to reason that we have to develop a good understanding of the causes, effects, processes and mechanism of stability and change. This is the aim of the series “Institutional Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources,” which attempts to answer the questions “How do processes and mechanism of institutional change actually work? What and who are the main determinants and actors driving, governing and influencing these processes? What are the economic, political, social and ecological consequences? How can adaptive institutions be designed and developed, and what governance structures are required to make them effective?” These are the questions at the heart of the series. The works published in this series seek to provide answers to these questions in different economic, social, political and historical contexts.

Volker Beckmann and Konrad Hagedorn
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Acknowledgements

I would like to mention different organizations and individuals that facilitated my research work at different steps and in a variety of ways. I am deeply indebted to the financial support of the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, DAAD). I am grateful to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Konrad Hagedorn who invited me to the Division of Resource Economics at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Social Sciences. Within the framework of the CAPRI (Collective Action and Property Rights) cooperation research project between Haramaya University in Ethiopia and Humboldt University Berlin, he provided me all necessary support for the fieldwork. In addition, his encouragement to attend international conferences in different countries where I presented my work was really useful in obtaining feedbacks. It gave me an opportunity to meet experienced researchers. I indeed appreciate his support in the visa process of my family to join me here in Germany. Eventually, his comment on the final draft of the manuscript was very encouraging. Thank you.

Indeed, I express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Benedikt Korf (my co-supervisor) who supported me at various stages. He gave me helpful comments on earlier drafts of the various chapters, taking me through all the necessary steps towards the final phase in the writing up of this book. His visit to the very remote study sites in eastern Ethiopia in 2004 and 2005 gave him a good impression of the situation how pastoralists live which has in turn provided me a good opportunity to benefit from his context specific comment. It was easy to work with him.

I also thank colleagues at the Division of Resource Economics. I benefited from thoughtful comment during presentations at the weekly held research colloquium. I thank Dr. Volker Beckmann for his consistent encouragement that inspired me to work deeply on one of the chapters. I am also indebted to Mrs. Sigrid Heilmann for her support in finding accommodation upon my arrival in Berlin and during return from fieldwork. You made things easier for me. Mrs. Ines Jeworski facilitated my academic work by providing necessary facilities. Both of you were always willing to help me whenever I needed assistance. Thanks a lot for that. Meanwhile, it is indispensable to mention Ms. Juliana Heimlich and Mrs. Annette Kuntz (Studentische Hilfskräfte) for their invaluable assistance in gathering relevant literature from different libraries in Berlin. Otherwise, I could have spent much of my spare time.

Furthermore, I am indebted to other individuals who were involved in the household survey during the data collection phase. Bogale Lemi, Guta Yusuf, Guta Aliyi, Abdissa Mume, and Taddese Firdissa have spent long hours in the field during interviews. Mrs Sinidu Tesfaye working as development agent in

Harshin and Mr. Mahadi Eggie, Deputy Director of Somali Region Pastoral and Agropastoral Research Institute, had facilitated data collection in Kebribeyah and Harshin Districts. There are many others who helped me as translators. They all deserve my words of appreciation. I am also thankful to all households who responded to my questions as well as elders and regional and district state employees who took part in a lengthy discussion. I hold a great deal of admiration to their willingness and patience to spend their time with me. Indeed, special appreciation and thanks goes to Abdi Abdulahi (Dishu) who is a driver at Haramaya University. He drove me to Addis Ababa when I suddenly heard that I had to appear for interview at Germany Embassy on the next day at 5 p.m. That was a very decisive moment in my application process.

I am especially thankful to Dr. Ayalneh Bogale who initially advised me to contact Prof. Hagedorn and facilitated fieldwork in Ethiopia. I have a high regard for the friendship of my country fellowman Bekele Hundie (his wife Zenebech and his kids Christian and Ileni) with whom I have shared similar concerns during my stay in Berlin. The company of my wife Yewubnesh Yadeta and my beloved son Franol Fekadu has given me the momentum to concentrate on my work and lead a happy life. I appreciate your determination to accompany me here in Germany! In fact, encouragement from my friends (Hussein Hamda, Alemayehu Belachew and Abi Taddese) was very valuable. Many thanks to Adnew Taddese and Tsige Yadeta for taking care of my family during the first phase of my study. Above all, the eternal Heavenly Father!

Berlin, January 2008

Fekadu Beyene

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
Table of Contents	ix
List of Figures	xiii
List of Tables	xv
List of Abbreviations	xvii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Pastoralism in Sub-Saharan Africa	2
1.1.1 Multiple Challenges	3
1.1.2 Tenure Security and Land Use.....	5
1.1.3 Roles of Customary Institutions.....	6
1.2 The (Agro-) Pastoral Sub-Sector in Ethiopia	7
1.3 The Study Setting	9
1.3.1 Effects of Pastoral Development Policies and Interventions.....	9
1.3.2 Variability and Evolved Land Use.....	11
1.3.3 Conflict Risk and Cooperation.....	12
1.4 Objectives and Research Questions	14
1.5 Structure of the Book	15
2 Theoretical Concepts and Analytical Framework	19
2.1 Introduction	19
2.2 Basic Terms, Definitions and Concepts	20
2.2.1 Institutions.....	20
2.2.2 Informal Institutions.....	21
2.2.3 Rules.....	22
2.2.4 Basic Characteristics of Institutions.....	23
2.3 Property Rights.....	25
2.3.1 Fundamental Ideas	25

2.3.2	Specificity and Security of Rights	27
2.3.3	Exclusivity and Change.....	28
2.3.3.1	The ‘Cost-Benefit’ versus ‘Governance-Exclusion’ Argument	28
2.3.3.2	Distributional and Economic Efficiency Argument	32
2.3.3.3	Property Rights in Unpredictable Environment.....	33
2.3.4	The Common Property Debate	34
2.4	Distributional Conflict and Bargaining.....	38
2.5	Collective Action.....	41
2.5.1	Meaning and Purposes	41
2.5.2	Factors Shaping Collective Action	43
2.5.3	The Influence of Resource Attributes	49
2.6	Linking Collective Action and Property Rights.....	50
2.7	Analytical Framework.....	52
2.8	Summary	56
3	Background of the Case Study and Methodology	59
3.1	Background of the Region	59
3.1.1	Political and Social.....	59
3.1.2	Ecology and Economy	61
3.2	The Study Sites.....	62
3.2.1	Harshin District	62
3.2.2	Kebribeyah District	63
3.2.3	Mieso District.....	65
3.3	Sampling and Data Collection	66
3.4	Data Analysis and Empirical Methods.....	69
3.4.1	Combining Approaches: A Practical Step	71
3.4.2	Game Theory and Analytic Narratives	72
4	Collective Action and Common Property.....	75
4.1	Introduction.....	75
4.2	Drivers of Cooperative Behavior	76
4.3	Types of Collective Action	78
4.3.1	Water Harvesting	78
4.3.1.1	Ponds	79

4.3.1.2 Cisterns.....	81
4.3.2 Water Wells.....	85
4.3.3 Collective Herding	88
4.4 Determinants of Collective Action	90
4.4.1 Leadership and Rule Enforcement.....	90
4.4.2 Estimating the Determinants.....	93
4.5 Estimating the Likely Effects of Collective Action.....	99
4.6 Conclusions.....	103
5 Property Rights Conflict and Customary Institutions.....	107
5.1 Introduction.....	107
5.2 Distinctions and Evidence on Conflict.....	110
5.3 Narratives and Game Theory as Analytical Tools.....	111
5.4 The Nature of the Conflict	112
5.4.1 Change in Land Use.....	112
5.4.2 Historical Political Factors.....	115
5.4.3 Identity, Cooperation and Resource Mobilization	117
5.4.3.1 Interclan Cooperation.....	117
5.4.3.2 Conflict Resource Mobilization.....	118
5.4.4 Breaching of Customary Institutions	119
5.4.5 Livestock Raids	120
5.4.6 Interrelationships of Causal Factors.....	122
5.5 Application of Game-Theoretic Model.....	123
5.5.1 Strategies and Payoffs.....	124
5.5.2 Mixed Strategy and Probabilistic Choices	128
5.5.3 Equilibria with Mixed Strategies	131
5.6 Conclusions.....	133
6 Customary Tenure and Reciprocal Access Arrangements.....	137
6.1 Introduction.....	137
6.2 Mechanisms and Constraints.....	138
6.3 Flexible Grazing Under Customary Tenure.....	141
6.3.1 Reciprocal Access in Mieso.....	143
6.3.2 Reciprocal Access in Kebribeyah and Harshin.....	146

6.3.3 A Simple Game-Theoretic Analysis	152
6.4 Determinants of Reciprocal Grazing Arrangement	156
6.5 Complexity and Obstacles.....	160
6.5.1 Institutional Vacuum and Boundary Disputes	161
6.5.2 Sociopolitical Challenges.....	162
6.6 Conclusions.....	165
7 Incentives and Outcomes of Rangeland Enclosures.....	167
7.1 Introduction.....	167
7.2 Explanations For and Against Enclosure.....	169
7.3 Endogenous Motivating Forces	171
7.3.1 Land Enclosure in the Pastoral System.....	173
7.3.2 Land Enclosure in the Agropastoral System.....	175
7.3.3 Local Institutions and Enclosed Land.....	178
7.3.3.1 Diverse Rules and Practices.....	178
7.3.3.2 Land Allocation to Private Grazing	179
7.4 Exogenous Driving Forces.....	182
7.5 Consequences of Enclosure Practice.....	185
7.5.1 Socioeconomic	185
7.5.2 Effects on Property Rights	189
7.5.2.1 Relationships among Multiple Resource Users	189
7.5.2.2 Land Allocation.....	191
7.6 Concluding Remarks.....	197
8 Summary, Conclusions and Implications.....	199
8.1 Summary and Conclusions.....	199
8.1.1 Strengths of the Customary System and Some Lessons	200
8.1.2 Challenges to Governing Common Property Resources	202
8.2 Policy Implications.....	206
References	209
Appendix	239