



**Mekelle University**

**The School of Graduate Studies**



**Faculty of DryLand Agriculture and Natural Resources**

***The Working Traditions and their Contribution to Rural Development, in  
Awra Amba Community, Northern Amhara Region - Ethiopia***

**By**

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**Master of Science Degree**

**In**

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**Advisor**

**Kelemework Tafere (PhD)**



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# Declaration

This is to certify that this thesis entitled “The Working traditions and their contributions to rural development, Northern Amhara Region, Ethiopia.” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of M.Sc., in Cooperative Marketing to the School of Graduate Studies, Mekelle University, through the Department of Cooperatives, done by Mr. Seid Mohammed Yassin, Id. No. FDA/GR021/98 is genuine work carried out by him under my guidance. The matter embodied in this project work has not been submitted earlier for award of any Degree or Diploma to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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## **Abstract**

This study is an attempt to describe a community, which is founded by people whose level and faculty of consciousness involved in realization of social and economic problems of the society. The study argues that the Awra-Amba community is highly motivated and committed to find a new culture and existing working traditions that may have contributions for rural development. In this thesis therefore, the researcher examine working traditions that result from revitalization of multidimensional changes by the people to the people, which came largely as a result of the visionary founder motivation and commitment to create new working culture for which can be used as an instrument for social mobilizations in the country.

The discouragement and attack of this community by external cultural, political and socio-economic interests associated with their behavioral pattern and cultural practices in their motivation to create a new culture has largely been responsible for a continuing marginalization of the group. As a consequence a serious of revitalization has followed in Awra-Amba mode of adoption and other aspects of their social and cultural life. The Awra-Amba settlement, social organization, economic activities, cultural practices, and the overall coordination of resources (labor, land, capital and time management) and have contributed a lot for implementations of the existing rural development policies.

Hence, in conclusion the study indicates that it is not difficult to judge the contribution of working traditions of the community to the implementation of the social mobilization strategies. As far as my knowledge and belief is concerned it may be good to apply the values, principles and best practices of Awra-Amba as indigenous community. The researcher have suggested that as valid measure of the successful performance of a group is the degree of which

its behavior corresponds to its values, principles and commitments, Awra-Amba can be an example of behavior that others should understand and follow the pattern.

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## ACRONYMS

ACSI	Amhara Credit and Saving Institution
ADA	Amhara Development Association
ADLI	Agricultural development led industrialization
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BOA	Bureau of Agriculture
CPA	Cooperative Promotion Agency
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EPLUA	Environmental Protection and Land Use Authority
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FDA	Faculty of dry land agriculture
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGE	Federal Government of Ethiopia
FSS	Food security strategy
GATT	General Agreement for Tax and Tariff
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
Ha	Hectare
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HHH	Household head
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance

ILK	Indigenous Local Knowledge
ILO	International Labour Organization
MDG	Millennium development Goal
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MOH	Ministry of Health
ORDA	Organization for Rehabilitation and Development of Amahra Region
PRS	Poverty reduction strategy
Qt	Quintals
SAPS	Structural Adjustment Programme
SHG	Self help groups
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization



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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

To start with, a description of general background of Ethiopia and the Amhara is given, followed by the description of the field work area and methodology used during the research. The thesis report is based on the research finding which introduces the descriptive of the study area, statement of the problem, the research questions, the objective, the significance, the scope and organization of the study.

### **1.1. Background**

Ethiopia is a land of contrast. The country has a long history, mosaic of people and diverse cultural heritage and reasonably good resources for development. Yet, the majority of the population lives in absolute poverty, hunger and disease. The proportion of population below the poverty line is 44 percent (MoFED, 1999) and over 60 percent in 2006 with low literacy among men and women (fact book, 2006). One immediate effect of the population pressure has been diminishing farm size (CSA, 1996). Poverty eradication was and is the central development agenda of the government that guides its development activities. Thus, by the turn of the 1990s economic policies and management under the command economic system, protracted civil war and recurring drought left the economy in deep crisis (ibid).

Ethiopia began the 1990s with a clear vision of reversing the socio-economic crisis of the 1980s and rapidly transforming the economy. The adoption of agricultural led industrialization strategy (ADLI) provided long term development framework for economic transformation. Within the framework of the strategies, accelerated and sustainable growth in Ethiopia can be brought about

by utilizing labour-intensive rather than capital incentive production process.

Ethiopia is characterized by subsistence production, the productivity of which mainly depends on the availability of active labour input. This implies that agriculture requires a strong and healthy labour force. However, available evidence shows that the prevalence of the pandemic is increasing over time, consequently reducing the quantity and quality of labour available for agricultural production (Piot, et al., 2001). It is incapacitating the productive labour force in the sector both for farm and off-farm activities. Besides, the labour loss of the patient through sickness and subsequent death, family members have to divert their productive time to care for the sick and are eventually forced to neglect farm and off-farm activities, leading to a loss of potential income that further worsen their economic position.

Illness and death caused by HIV/AIDS finally leave fewer people available to work in the fields, which becomes critical during peak seasons of agricultural activities. Losing even a few workers during the crucial planting and harvesting periods can scuttle production. Moreover, the pandemic reduces the energy available/required for work and knowledge/skill necessary for production (*Du Guerny, 2002b*). HIV/AIDS is becoming a growing threat to the effort of growth and poverty reduction.

The people of Ethiopia have got a very long social, cultural and economic history of working together to fulfill their socio-economic needs. Agriculture, trade and military operations were carried out through cooperative efforts. Many social events are still taking place in rural Ethiopia through collective effort. The Federal Government of Ethiopia has identified Cooperative form



of business organizations as an instrument of socio-economic change. Many Cooperatives have emerged in the recent past to serve the suppressed and depressed community. Ironically through, the country has abundant and untapped resources which are under-utilized

Policy makers and community developers are increasingly interested in alternative models for local businesses that will be both responsive to community needs as well as stimulate local economic growth. Cooperatives have the potential to foster economic growth at the community and regional level, building on the spirit of cooperation that is already prevalent in rural areas.

In Amhara peasant life the homestead is the basic ecological and social unit of the peasantry. *Donald N. Levin /1965:56/ in his Wax and God noted that 'the average homestead consists of from one to six small round structures, built of wattle /or stone, as in Menz/ and capped with conical thatched roofs. Levin /1965/ in his description of the Amhara peasant life indicates that a well-equipped homestead has one building for eating and sleeping, one for animals, one for grain storage, one as a kitchen, and one for entertaining guests, though for many peasants all these functions are served by a single large building /Ibid/.*

The Amhara regional state is the second largest region in the country having about 90 percent of the population in the rural area with wide range of traditions and religions. Successful cooperation included and sustained by charismatic leader and farmers cooperation driven by communitarian culture and genuine cooperation based on traditional communitarian spirit of solidarity like other regional states, an understanding of revitalizations particularly of changes in social, economic, cultural and political dimensions in the Awra-Amba community is impossible

without an understanding of the larger society in which this community is found. In this section, therefore, an attempt is made to describe the traditional Amhara culture with particular emphasis on the peasant life. Such a reconstruction provides a necessary basis for an understanding of the changes that followed by the newly emerging establishment and introduction of new life philosophy, working culture and traditions of Awra-Amba community.

The Awra-Amba community members, both women and men play a great role in production process like farming, weaving, and spinning and domestic service activities and in consumption patterns. Although the community marked for work ethics, good gender relations, and other. Socio –economic dynamics, little or no attempt is made to the consumption of research inquiry. This research study therefore intends to reveal the socio-economic re-vitalizations to create new and fresh background that have contributions for rural development. Hence, the profound change in their principles and values, their impact on the new working culture and traditions constitute the background to this study.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

In a country like Ethiopia people should work day in and day out to eradicate the existing prevailed poverty, hunger and disease. The fragmented run by individuals and groups hitherto descending through successive generations have failed to properly respond to prevailing economic quagmire of the country as a result of which Ethiopians witnessed social, political and economic tensions for many decades. Besides, certain working traditions that made sanctions on specific social groups have hampered the development of the country. For example, some specializations like blacksmithing and weaving were highly despised curtailing their proper functioning which ultimately undermined their role in stimulating the local economy. Such

perceptions would hamper the required synergy among social groups of different specialization. Undermining local views and practices in turn became an obstacle to concomitant development of the agricultural sector in the country.

In Ethiopia, development policies, programmes and strategies have persistently been applied without contextualizing objective realities of the country. Local norms and value systems are often ignored. For example, development could not be achievable by valuing and promoting a male dominated system within the context of a backward work tradition. In Many Ethiopian societies, the contributions of women in the society are not duly valued; there exist fragile work ethic, and maladaptive economic culture, all of which do not apply to the Awra Amba community.

Although, the traditional Ethiopian social and political system hacked off necks whenever individuals and groups exhibit significant deviations from the established social and political rules, Awra-Amba as a community with its rich indigenous, practical experience and knowledge remained resolute to confidently curve their own political, economical and social place amidst the rigid and conservative Amhara culture. Against all odds, the Awra-Amba community came with a deviant socio-economic format and thus managed to set up a separate and independent cooperative identity which, the writer believes, can serve as a model for others.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The study tries to answer all interrelated research questions that are pertinent to the topic, including the following: What is the genesis of the identity of Awra-Amba community (who is the founder) what are the prominent values, principles and ideas that served as a cohesive

element to bind the Awra-Amba together?, What could be the possible implications to an overall rural development? And what are the existing social, political, cultural and economic pressures? and other related questions?

#### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This is a socio-anthropological and developmental study of Awra-Amba, the name of a small collective community. Although in itself is an investigation of the new culture and existing working traditions of the Awra-Amba, this thesis is intended as a study in the possibilities of revitalizing in social, economic, political and cultural dimensions, change in gender roles and value.

The root of Awra-Amba community is based on the back ground history of the founder (Zumra) childhood experience, redefining moment and vision of an ideal society in 1938 E.C. and the year 1942/43 E.C. These have come to have a tremendous impact on the present Awra-Amba's cohesive and integrated consciousness.

The grand father of the community, Sheik Seid Hassen and his followers, had an effort to form an association of the believers of Alhaim [*Alhaim is a religious group that don't follow either of the traditional Islam or Christianity rather is of conscious righteousness or doing good for all man race*].

#### **1.5. Objective of the Study**

The over all objective of the study is to examine the role of indigenous practices and work traditions of the Awra Amba community on resources co-ordination for rural development in the economic and social dimensions. More specifically the study aims to;

- Identify the existing social system of Amhara-Society which the Awra-Amba are struggling to re-vitalize (with particular emphasis on working culture) and its contribution to rural development;
- Investigate the philosophical underpinnings of Awra Amba community life with emphasis on the cooperative work ethic (the scarification of individual needs to group interests)
- Examine the challenges of survival and expansion of the Awra-Amba society;
- Suggest how new ideas, concepts and complex philosophy of life in an indigenous context can be effectively utilized to bring about social change by using the Awra Amaba community as an illustration.

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

The study is hoped to enhance a clear understanding of re-vitalization in social, economic, cultural, gender roles and value system that the Awra-Ambas have passed through. The most important sector in Ethiopian socio-economy is the rural sector. Indigenous Knowledge of the rural community about this sector will act as a tool for development plans.

The study would also be expected to be of help to development institutions and development workers to review their development activities, so that they could address the needs and problems of HIV/AIDS, harmful traditions, unfair socio-economic inequality of women, health, education, expenditure pattern and resources utilization.

The study will serve to fill the gap in the Developmental and Anthropological investigation of the

Awra-Amba, which exists in the form of casual reports through different Medias. It may thus serve as a workable document for others research undertaking.

### **1.7. Organizations of the Thesis**

The thesis is organized in five parts. The first part introduces the background, statement of the problem, the objective, the significance, the scope, and the problems of the study. The conceptual frame work and relevant literature are reviewed in the second part. The third part discusses the research methodology. Results are presented and discussed in the fourth part and the future prospects of Awra-Amba community present and the conclusions and recommendation sections are finally appended.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

The literature review of the research focused on the major area of investigation for the research. Thus literature those are concentrated on the working tradition of Ethiopia, gender empowerment and development, Revitalizations in social cultural, economical and political transformations, factors affecting rural development and others empirical research results for Ethiopia and others African countries have been assessed..

#### **2.1. Definition**

The term “indigenous knowledge” is used interchangeably with “tradition” and “local” knowledge defined as a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs handed down from generation to generation. Indigenous knowledge is created, developed and adapted to very specific biological, ecological, climatic and socio-economic conditions. The interactions between an infinite number of social, cultural, ideological, environmental, climatic, biotic, physical, and many other variables have contributed to the development of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous technical knowledge refers to people’s technical knowledge and expertise about the environment. Indigenous environmental knowledge is dynamic and involves internally generated and externally borrowed and adopted knowledge. Peasant farmers are not merely passive recipients as will as inactive transmitters of culture (Attfield, 1999, 197).

On the contrary, human beings are the preservers and guardians of culture through its active transmission from generation to generation. In this process of transmissions, human beings not only preserve but also create culture; accordingly, all forms of life style might be totally

abandoned or modified. Therefore, the traits of a culture can not be fixed and defined once and for all as if they are immutable (ibid).

## **2.2. The Dynamic Communitarian Dimensions of Religion**

In recalling the foregoing history of religious activism and revolution against the global capitalist system within the context of Christianity and Islam, the purpose has been to display the ever present potential of religion as a tool for dynamic, purposeful change in society, a means by which to struggle against injustice of all kinds. In the hands of visionaries, religion becomes a viable base from which movements are launched to raise the dignity of the downtrodden or free a people from neo-colonial degradation and oppression. Religion, then, has an important instrumental value in motivating and directing a nation to improve its economic, political, and social condition. What is needed is the leadership of intellectuals of well-intentioned and rightly guided moral insight to apply an appropriate hermeneutic analysis to the religious texts in order to bring out the latent dynamic content relevant to the societal condition at hand-the Bible and the Qur'an-that would point to a socio-economic paradigm would be helpful in moving Ethiopian society forward.

The ethical and moral foundation of economic thought in the context of the Aristotle (384-322 BC), the famous Greek philosopher, was diametrically opposed to interest-taking of any kind on financial transactions: "Money exists not by nature but by law". The most hated sort (of wealth getting) and with the greatest reason, is usury, which makes a gain out of money itself and not from the natural object of it. For money was intended to be used in exchange but not to increase at interest. And this term interest, which means the birth of money from money, is applied to the breeding of money because the offspring resembles the parent, therefore of all modes of getting



wealth, this is the most unnatural' (1258b, POLITICS). Clearly, Aristotle held interest and those who demanded it in a great deal of contempt. For Aristotle, money was basically a medium of exchange and itself not to be held as an object for generating wealth. Thus, interest and those who demanded it were as morally degrading as pimps and prostitutes.

In the foregoing glimpses into the lives of religions leaders, it has been shown that these illustrious leaders put the welfare of the communities over which they had responsibility above the selfish individualism of those greedy, avaricious few. These leaders saw interest-taking, wealth concentration in a few hands, and unreasonable demands for collateral as inimical to healthy socio-economic development. These leaders were far more interested in developing communities that were tightly knit, where all were considered brothers and sisters to one another, and where there was a propensity to work together for the common good. Thus, religions encourage the development of societies that are organic, that encourage communitarians.

The communitarian idea is defined as follows: the community is more than the sum of the individuals in it; it is organic, not atomistic. The community as a whole has special and urgent needs that go beyond the needs of its individual members. The values of survival, justice, self-respect, and so forth, depend on the recognition of those needs. "Individual fulfilment, therefore, depends on a place in a community, an identity with a whole, participation in an organic social process. If the community, the factory, the neighbourhood, or the country, is well designed, its members will have a strong sense of identity with it. They will be able to make maximum use of their capacities if the community or its components are poorly designed; people will be correspondingly alienated and frustrated (Lodge, 1987, pp. 17).

In a communitarian society, “relationships between individuals are governed not so much by contract as by consensus, which may be arrived at through democratic and participative means” (Lodge, 1987, p.17). Community need comes before individual need; the state is an active partner in making sure that the needs of the national society-the communities-are implemented. Finally, the concept of holism is an integral part of the communitarian ideology. Under communitarians, “the idea of scientific specialization is replaced by a consciousness of the interrelatedness of all things. To understand any particular aspect of a community, for example, its economic performance, it is necessary to view the community as a system, perceiving the critical roles and relationships of institutions, such as government, business, labour union, and school.

The significance of this fact is that communitarism, based on national culture that often has at its centre a unifying religious ideology, is central to national competitiveness in the international marketplace. For Lodge and Vogel, the phenomenal economic rise of such Asian nations as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan have been due in no small measure to the communitarian nature of their cultures which arises out of their religious ideologies. According to Porter, several aspects of a national economy are of particular significance: the national cultural and its effect on the purpose of economic activities, the status of capital and labour, existence of sufficient demand, the health of supporting industries, and the industrial structure of the economy. Porter has demonstrated that these factors determine domestic competitive conditions that, in turn, influence the international competitiveness of particular sectors of the economy” (2000, pp. 95-96; italics mine).The main points of the foregoing are as follows the national economy has several important defining aspects, one of which is the national culture and a vibrant national culture that

facilitates national competitiveness often has a strong communitarian core arising from religious values.

It is known that in the study of human society religion seems to be a necessary component as glue providing for people a sense of identity and a meaning to their existence not only as individuals but also as a recognizable social unit. What we call to day 'political rights'. Of course it might be asked how these rights actually accepted among Muslim in different parts of the world. The most important thing for the purpose of this work, however, is to look at the most ideal commandments or responsibilities of Muslim, if they have important amount of influence on the current behavioural pattern of Awra-Amba community. Badawi /1975/ explains that this includes the right of election as well as the nomination to political offices. It also includes women's right to participate in public affair. He indicated the both in Quran and in Islamic history we find examples of women who participated in serious discussions and argued even with the prophet /P/ himself /see also al-Quran, 58:1, and 60:10-12/.

### **2.3. Globalization and indigenous Environmental Knowledge in Ethiopia**

The concept globalization has been interpreted in different ways. As Jan Nederveen Pieters has noted the on going debates on globalization are less sophisticated, less theoretically developed and more arena of ideological posturing and stone. Throwing highly diverse and occasionally indulgent in the assessments they evoke /1997, 370/. But we may consider globalization as a process that involves the spatial reorganization of production the interpretation of industries across borders, the spread of the financial markets, international communication and world wide cultural integration /Attfield, 1999/. The environmental problems have also become a major issue in the world. The focus on environmental problems that are thought to have global implications

/ozone depletion, acid rain, Nuclear catastrophe, and rainforest deforestation/ have diverse attention from localized environmental problem that stem most directly from global capitalism /Marshall 1999/.

Steven Yearly also states even if one looks only at internal differentiation within wealthy industrial countries. A global world is not uniform world /1996, 23/. Hamelonk also challenges the view that the world is storing although are acknowledge the positive contributions or advance in communication and transport technology to the world stress that In real sense our world is expanding. There is more world ever than before in history: more people more nations, more conflict.....most people lead their lives within he boundaries of the “local village”. They may have “window” on the world outside through mass media or telecommunications. This window offers a partial view only and in a case for most people even this is not available since they live in rural poverty without electricity supply, movie theatres or transmitters. Even when they are literate, there are no news papers or books /1994, 2/. More recently, some pioneers in the business community and other writers confirms that certain ecological problems are rooted in world trade. Environmental problems such as green house effects cannot be solved by market solution alone. The unfettered workings of market instructions can have disastrous effects on the natural and human environments /Weizsacker 1994/Gray 1994/. The freedom of mobile transnational capital to locate where environmental regulations are weakest is one of the more vocal of a spectrum of concerns about negative impacts of globalization.

The researcher, submit that unlimited exploitation of resources may lead to the decline of agriculture, individual and community income there by increasing poverty and chronic food

insecurity, and increased competition for scarce resources leading to political conflict and even loss of lives. Hence, free trade and free movement of capital may have a profoundly damaging effect on the natural resources. History also reminds us that regional and global environmental treaties have many weaknesses. Signatory states can violate a treaty and continue to destroy the environment /Weizsacker 1994/. Tom Athanasiou argues that free trade pushes all countries forward the lowest common environmental standards. Moreover, it must do so, and precisely because it propose to throw the poor together with the rich, the weak together with the strong in one fantastic, chaotic, unregulated, planetary market place /1999,501/.

#### **2.4. Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and Modern Agriculture**

In what follows, researchers will look into how peasant farmers and others group in Ethiopia have been influenced by globalization process. The globalization process has marginalized peasants and challenged environmentally sound practices. The globalization of capitalist production and marketing systems undermine the existence of indigenous production and consumption patterns and systems in developing countries in general and in Ethiopia in particular. The disparity between developed and developing countries in terms of technology and productivity has hampered the attempt to build technology on the basis of indigenous practices and value. The imperial government encouraged the large commercial plantations to use fertile lands for the production of luxury crops or inedible commodities destined for export abroad /Cohen 1975/.

The end result of commercial farming in the country was disappointing /Koehn 1982/. In short, cash crop production at the cost of production for local subsistence, mechanized farming and lack of effective land reforms led to environmental degradation. Traditional Knowledge was

devalued, and there was little room for adaptation to individual and local condition. This remind us that some carelessly designed modern development programs have negated or directly destroyed ecologically sound traditional land use and occupational structures in the name of scientific progress.

### ***Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and structural adjustment programs***

Pressure by structural adjustment programs /SAPS/ has affected indigenous environmental knowledge and the economy of developing countries. Freehold will ensure absolute tenure security and provide strong incentives to peasant to invest on their land, and make land transactions easier and more efficient /Dessalegn, 1994/. Open economic framework can result in the deindustrialization of the economy. “It is impossible to think of how the manufacturing industries can survive the intense global competition”. /Befekadu 1999/.

Similarly, the exportation of primary commodities, importation of deep foreign goods, external borrowing and aid have hindered the attempt to develop indigenous technologies in Ethiopia likewise, the “link with the world economy through dependence on exports to generate foreign exchange to pay the debt is creating a situation where weak African States are managed by trade instead of managing trade. It is also worth that people, negative attitudes towards handicraft have equally retarded the development of indigenous technologies in Ethiopia. The people consider the makers of technical devices artifacts social outcasts. The irony is that in spite of their attitudes, the people have used their works. In particular, the rulers used to keep artisans, scribes and musicians at their courts because of their useful works /Assefa 1996/. As Atteh, persuasively says “All over Africa, numerous tools and artefacts have been designed and manufactured through indigenous production system” /1992/. But development bias created by the interaction between

Africa and Europe through political cultural and technological colonization of Africa, Led to the non-utilization of indigenous knowledge and technology necessary for self-reliant livelihood growth and development /Atteh 1992/ Atteh further argues.

Reversal of attitudes by African elites and leader which will enables recognition of the value and potentials of their people and use these as focus for sustained development planning is urgently necessary, ILK /Indigenous Local Knowledge/ is the only heritage that Africans. The rural and the urban can really call their own. Development, based solely on copying or importing the achievement of others while neglecting their own is really under development. It is a denial of one's roots and history /1992/

### ***Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and intellectual property rights***

Under the present patent law in industrialized countries, indigenous countries, excluded from the realm of patent law. That means that the discovery of a product of nature, and the knowledge pertaining to it are not supposed to be patentable, for they lack invention. According to Anthony station and Tim Gay, with traditional knowledge, however, there is no single act of creation traditional knowledge is not the discovery of a single person or group of people, but the result of centuries of collective experience...in which case there was never any one person or group of person entitled to private property in this knowledge /1997, 1990/. The resource that comprises the knowledge of indigenous people is considered to be common and can be accessed freely.

More recently, IPRs have allowed patents on living organisms. Biotechnology brings the corporate patenting of new life forms and the voracious global search for indigenous seeds and plants to patent and market, with devastating effect on developing countries agriculture, ecology

and human rights. Outfield have argued that “IPR may be of use to local communities, but they are basically inadequate and inappropriate to provide necessary protections of and compensation for indigenous peoples individual, and collective rights to their knowledge, their culture, and their resource. As Attfseld, convincingly states: While developing countries bear much of the cost or preservation, they are seldom able to reap the associated economic benefits. These benefits go to biotechnological industries, which market the commercial products of biodiversity for Agricultural pharmaceutical and comparable purposes to do so they depend on access to biological diversity and frequently on the knowledge of local communities, often with out payment to these communities of their countries /1999/.

There is a mistaken belief that develops the capacity to grove food for local consumption. That is misguided. Countries should produce what they produce best, and trade....subsistence agriculture...encourages misuses of resources and damages to the environment /Kneen 1995/. Companies that hold international patents for seed varieties, ask peasants to pay penalties and buy their own seeds from Hem. Under intellectual property rights provisions contained in GATT and enforced by the WTO, exchanging seeds is sometimes viewed as an illegal trade practice although peasant farmers have freely exchanged seeds for generation. To putt matters another way, farmers are not allowed to utilize the seeds for subsequent years unless they pay royalty rights. The newly developed strains are considered the exclusive property of groups that have patented them. Farmers have no rights to benefits from the income generated by the commercial exploitation of such discoveries.

Denmark has also used resistant germless that come from farmers in North Africa, Ethiopia and



South Asia /Seedling 1984, 2/. Teff the indigenous Ethiopian plant is being patented by private companies in USA. Tewolde Brhane reports: “Teff was taken from Dessie area /Northern Ethiopia/ and growth for one season in the use. It is now enjoys protections in the patent office of the U.S by the teff corporation of America....The farmers in Dessie will be breaking the law by simply continuing to grow their own teff” /Tewoldie Brhan 1999, 25/. In short, indigenous people and peasant farmers around the world have challenged globalization processes, which have been promoted by transnational corporations and western capitalist countries. They have tried to protect their resources and knowledge. Researchers, would also argue that indigenous environmental knowledge’s itself cannot be a panacea for all ills. It should be supported by regional and global powers. Local events have global consequences. Thus, development efforts and environmental protection at regional and global levels should involve people’s local practices experiences and beliefs.

It is important to note that the environment has always been the fundamental concern, of the rural people in developing countries and they have made considerable attempt to utilize the natural resources of their local environment in an economically sustainable manner. The rural people have acquired locally tried and tested knowledge of their environment and way of life. Thus, if different global and regional powers, state, environmentalists and the rural people continue to work together, and committed in mind, heart and soul, they will be able to promote environmentally sound development.

## **2.5. Government Policies, strategies and development of Ethiopia**

In Ethiopia, after almost two decades of socialist oriented economic policy under the military regime, the new Ethiopian government has been taking measures to liberalize the economy since

1991. In the agricultural sector, measures to liberalize the input and output markets and increase institutional support for agriculture, such as agricultural research and extension services, have been taken. Whether or not government policies are conducive to investment in agriculture, and whether the incentive structure translates into a more sustainable use of the natural resource base, existing production and consumption patterns and existing working traditions without changes of attitude towards work culture is an empirical question.

Economic policy has focused on assuring the peasantry to be self sufficient in food through rapid increase in the agricultural production, improving the country's foreign exchange earnings and raising rural living standards. The policy seems to stimulate /encourage subsistence farmers to take a dynamic role in agricultural development. This, of course, is an important move in a country where subsistence farmers were not typically viewed as partners with significant share in the process of development. According to government officials and policy makers, the basic reason for the present policy emanates from the realization that the vast majority (85%) of the country's population in the rural areas are engaged in subsistence farming.

Above all a development strategy must be based on the objective conditions of the country; and the previous regimes rural development policies failed because they didn't reflect the interests of the 85 percent of the people who live in the country side practicing subsistence agriculture. A development policy not based on this reality would not be successful in Ethiopia. Ato Addisu /Ibid: 1995-19/ shares the strong concern of his government that privatization of land would result in insecure rural society and the better policy that would enable the small-scale farmer to produce more is adopting improved technology and modern land use strategy. Therefore the government's position is that improvement of farm technology and provision of modern inputs

alone could help to enhance the condition of subsistence agriculture. What is very important is the policy recognizes the peasants as development partners and agricultural development is also perceived as a sine qua non for the realization of broad based national development. It is obvious that the stringent stand of the government has strongly influenced some independent researcher who supports the existing land tenure policy. For instance academics like Hussien /2001: 45-50/ and Gebru /1998:14/ seem to have selected the position of the government, in defense of the status government for genuine fear that it could incur political risk and the would be negative consequences of the current call for privatization of land showing the effects of “privatization” that were identified during the ancient regimes. Those scholars who are arguing against the land policy of the ruling party emphasis on the fact that the land tenure issue should be de-positioned to effect the improving productivity of farmers and significant reduction asymmetrical distribution of wealth among rural households.

### ***Rural development***

Despite this growing concern the problem of rural development seems as intractable as ever before. This is because the agricultural sector in many developing countries is suffering from economic stagnation and has failed to produce sufficient food to keep up with the growing demand stagnation in the agricultural /rural/ sector has contributed a lot towards the overall stagnation in has economic performance of the majority of the developing countries, the least developed countries in particular /Alexandr, Kassahun, Yonas: 27-63/. Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people i.e. the rural poor. It involves the extending of the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek their livelihood in the rural areas. /Phillip Mcmichael 2004: 60-69, Michael P.Todaro Stephen Cdote snith 2004, 15-22/.

Development refers to a complex phenomenon with two equally important aspects. It implies a quantitative concept that might be understood as economic growth and a qualitative concept namely, the idea of 'well being' economic growth is a phenomenon measurable in terms of increasing national income or per capita income where as well being had the population indicates a higher standard of living. The later is a complex notion difficult to quantify as it encompasses a varied number of factors such as the level of satisfaction of the needs of the population in terms of : (0) food and nutrition, housing, health, education, recreation, security and spiritual satisfaction (Micheal P.Todaro and Stephen Cdoye Snith 2004, 15-22). Therefore in the light of the forging, rural development is the outcome of a series of quantitative and qualitative changes occurring among a given rural population and whose converging effects indicate, in time, an increase in the standard of living and favourable change in the ways of life of people concerned. Rural development doesn't refer to any isolated program such as community development, rural animation, agricultural extension or health and nutrition extension, or any of the other terms applied to sectoral programs which should be carried out in the rural areas or within communities. /stain burkey p. 29-39/.

It means rather a comprehensive development of the rural area. As a concept rural development should be analyzed both from the standpoint of increased production which logically promotes increased revenue, and from the standpoint of social advancement arising from a higher level of income and consumption and the satisfaction of human needs above that which is taken to be the basic /IBID/. The main objectives of rural development are necessarily dictated by the salient features of the rural economy of the society in question. A country may develop short-run or long-run rural development objectives depending

on the country's situation. These objectives may include: 1) Increasing per capita income to work for an increased per capita income for the economically active population and hence for the entire population. This aim is justified by the fact that there is a wide gap between the incomes of workers in the rural sector, particularly in agriculture. On the other hand, the income of workers in other sectors increased income for rural people may come either from increase in their output or from higher prices or the combined effect of both. 2) Reduction of the rural exodus to reduce the rural exodus and under employment in the country side. The current force which is driving the young rural population towards the towns and relatively better rural areas is not only economic but social. They can't therefore be induced to stay in their rural environment unless the economic and social problems facing them are solved. 3) Promoting the transition from the status of peasant to that of the status of "farmer" to ensure the gradual transition from the status of peasant to that of farmers, in other words, the transition from a subsistence economy, to that of specialized farming must be effected. This transition can be achieved with radical changes in production techniques.

There are three major stages in the evolution of agricultural production. The first and most primitive is the pure, "low productivity subsistence farming" the second stage might be called diversified or mixed agriculture where part of the produce is grown for self consumption and part for sale to the commercial sector. Finally, the 3rd stage represents the modern farm which is exclusively engaged in high productivity, specialized agriculture catering entirely for the market. The re-orientation and diversification of rural activities the rural sector has been defined as essentially made up of agricultural /including livestock rising/ forestry & fishery. The diversification of rural activities is a necessity and should be achieved once the basic conditions

are fulfilled. This is justifiable for the following resources. 1) With technological progress; a developing agriculture gradually and necessarily releases manpower that has become redundant and unnecessary in the agricultural sector. In other words the shift from labour intensive to capital intensive farming produces a redundant manpower (2) on the other hand agriculture is in growing need of increasing complex service which should be made available by specialized non-agricultural or Para-agricultural companies /e.g. at the production stage: fertilizer trading firms, and repair workshops for farm machinery and responsible for the storage and marketing of products for the supply of various consumer goods and etc./Alexander, Kasahun & Yonas,2006: p. 27-68).

### ***Factors influencing Rural Development***

Rural development, like an action oriented programs, can be aided by two groups of factors, provided that planners are aware of them and utilize them positively: Natural resources and human resources. If on the contrary, planners fail to do so, then the same factors can act as constraints up on rural development. Among the more significant factors which merit closer examination [in the context of traditional society] are economic, technological and infra-cultural, sociological, institutional and political factors The study will give emphasis on the 3rd factor which is much related with the topic of this thesis work. Sociological and institutional factors: sociological and institutional factors often hold the key to the success or failure of development programs, particularly in developing countries. Age, sex and social status are all important in rural community and they play a crucial role in the success of rural development programs, role differentiation has impeded many otherwise well planned programs (Phillip Macmicheal – Todaro. 2004). In many rural communities like Ethiopia, males do not play the same role like females, nor young men and young women as older men and older women. This permeates all

walks of life but is more pronounced in rural life. Rural communities in general are, as the result of their cohesive social organization and institutions, slow to change and to adapt to innovations and new practices, except when it can be demonstrated to them that change brings other benefits such as the acquisition of higher standard of living and social prestige for themselves and their families (ibid).

Religious and other beliefs contribute to the apparent conservatism of rural dwellers and often put a brake on progress. It is in religion that most farmers particularly in Ethiopia seek their explanation for non-rational and rational behaviour. Apart from these, religious observances such as not working on certain days and aversion to certain types of food are impeding productivity, production of cash yielding products, use of productivity, and use of nutritional foods. Absenteeism from work during fasting period is also common in Ethiopia.

The other important point is psychological aversion exists in the attitudes of the rural community to commerce, income and wealth maximizing activities through hand crafts & blacksmithing. These attitudes, habits and practices are difficult to change. Nevertheless with rise in the level of education and literacy among such communities and with the active support of extension services, rural communities can change their attitude particularly when it is demonstrated to them that it is in their interest to do so. Researcher argues the exact statuses and roles of the occupational groups of artisans in Ethiopia still remains rather vague, and the question of the extent to which they may be considered to be “caste groups”. The significance of the issue of rural development is of increasing concern in the world today (Alula Pankhurst, Addis-Ababa University, p. 20). Throughout Ethiopia, interspersed within the peasant population, are pockets

of occupational groups: smiths, tanners, potters, woodworkers, weavers. In the past many of these groups have been despised and were kept apart from the rest of society, being denied access to land and livestock and restricted to their craft activities (ibid).

In some cases they are feared and considered to have links with evil forces, especially the smiths who control fire and iron. They can therefore be considered to have an ambiguous or dual status: on the one hand economically oppressed, on the other ritually powerful. This would suggest that the common description of them as “shemanie,” “budda” and evils eyes in Ethiopia, “castes”, along the Asia model, may be too simplistic a classification.

Donald Levine pointed out that. “Caste groups represent a Pan-Ethiopian social phenomenon” /1974:56/. In fact the presence of caste groups is widespread in much of East and Central Africa /Haberland 1978:129/. Though one can discern common features, we must be cautious about assuming that the same phenomena are involved indifferent cases. The groups may include any combination of the following; smiths, tanners, potters, weavers, hunters, and ritual and or medical specialists. However, the particular combination and range of groups with special status varies from one society to another. The question of the origins of such groups, have been the subject of considerable debate. Two basic approaches can be discerned depending on whether the special groups are seen as originating from outside or from within the dominant society.

In addition to this the key issue that influenced rural development is the fatalistic attitudes induced by religious teachings which in the long-run became part of our culture. The rural community considered life as a stage that could prepare themselves to death /life after death/. Therefore people with this attitude do not give proper attention to development and don't have



value to their life in this world. The effort to pull out oneself from poverty should lay its worst features that every body should struggle against.

In a community where this world is understood as a temporary incident, a place where people suffer and accept what ever challenges to pave ways to the ever lasting life, an area where poverty & hunger are considered as part of the challenges that could be positively accepted. Therefore in an area where these all beliefs and attitudes are highly deep rooted, development is unthinkable. The need to internal freedom at personal and community level which our community lacks comes from the commitment of love of this world. This internal freedom would result in the belief and psychological confidence that life is in his hand and the fate of his life could only be decided by his efforts.

It is this psychological make up that pushed and initiates people to scale up efforts and paved ways to development. A community, who looked at the world as a disguising feature of his there life, who handed over the fate of the world & its people to God and governments /which are considered as out of the control of the people/, could not vision of development. A community or a man with such attitude not only he don't want to vision development and do its best to its realization but also is an impediment to those developed and those who are striving to develop. It indicates to have a wonderful life after death one prefers to be poor should accept. In areas where such attitudes are pervasive /prevail in a community (its members), the deterioration of poverty and hunger should not be surprising. The ever increasing poverty would draw the community in to the pesky attitude which could lead it to nexus highly escalated poverty.

The above explained philosophy of life of the society particularly in Amhara region has its own

repercussion on the working culture. According to the rural household socioeconomic base line survey conducted in 2003, “it come out with the result that 53.4% of households in moisture deficit woredas 57.2% insufficient rainfall areas have more than 13% non-working holidays every month or above 156 days of the year” /survey:2003/ 49-50/. In line with the philosophy of life the rural community gave due emphasis to the traditional institutions descended down from generation to generation. Therefore extravagancy in marriage, funeral ceremony’s and other related activities /Maheber, senbete, sodeka etc / are highly valued and considered to be applauded performance. Any idea contradictory to the above social facts is assumed to be transgression of the established cultural laws. On the other hand the social and economic institutions of the rural community like Ekub, Edir, Wenfel, Debo are not given proper attention to the extent that they could be utilized to maximize common economic benefits of the whole society. Socio –economic survey, 2003/ 49-50/. One can deduce that the rural community is not working to the full capacity it has and it also expends a lot /beyond what it should/ there by expends to nexus food insecurity and ever lasting poverty.

The philosophy of life also hampered the rural community not to diversify its income through different economic activities like off-farm: black smith, handcraft, petty trade, because pejorative connotation have been attached to these professions /specialization hitherto descended down to generation. These social institutions mentioned above are indigenous or traditional cooperations and do have the social responsibility that they assumed from time immemorial. One can dare say that the roles and responsibilities forwarded to them are highly stagnate without any transformation in their social and economic contribution of course it is undeniable fact that these social institutions do serve as a cohesive elements & something that binds the society together

which in turn could serve the society to create social capital. But this all could be practical concomitantly with sound able social and economic transformation induced by changes in social institutions & cultural modifications.

The government exerted its efforts and all resources it has to realize agricultural improvement, through ADLI through the provision of improved technologies, market and credit facilities, and extension services. Through the provision of all these explained above it is hoped that the productivity of subsistence farmers is hoped that the productivity of subsistence farmers would be significantly increased. Despite the fact that much emphasis is given on such pivotal inputs, the level of poverty among rural poor is deteriorating from time to time particularly those with limited access to land & the land less. /Yonas, 2006-15/.

Taking into account that every things are going the same with no change, prove that all efforts by government to leading about meaningful agricultural development poor peasants household level insufficient. Hence, suggests some modifications should be made in the current land tenure. This is because the land tenure systems of the ruling party assumed to be the pivotal factor accountable for the failure of the peasants to increase farm productivity /Yonas, 2006:15/ (Ibid). Be that as it may, a personally believe that even with in the frame work of these two alternative land policies successful agricultural development could not be realized with out changing the protruded thoughts, beliefs and practices that induced the existing working traditions. It is undeniable fact that working traditions do have their own negative consequences in the development of the economy of a country /as explained above/. But working traditions induced by a belief that the economic development of a country as seems total individual efforts to change

their lives are highly instrumental for development. Above all people should believe that individual effort the pivotal issue that could bring about meaningful change in one's life. In other words though the influence on the part of the government and God who are considered to be beyond the control of people has its own positive or negative impact on their lives, they should be firmly convinced that the primary one that decides on the fate of an individual is the effort & ambition of progress of the concerned individual the cumulative effect of which is development.

The people with progressive and flexible working traditions must believe that God and governments have any supportive roles of progress. They could not be in front of any people or individual we strives progress. In a community where hopeful and empowered individuals prevail as a majority the realization of broad based development is seems to be very simple. In a community where the majority is empowered individuals are confident, creative, and capable of developing accepting new ideas and can limit the power of the government /Ibid 48-49/. For the above explained noble ideas to be inculcated and realized to the local ground of the society, revitalization of culture is very important. Revitalization refers to a deliberate, organized and conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture. Revitalization has been thus, from a cultural stand point a special kind of cultural change /Dictionary of Sociology 2000, p.206/.

Nativistic movement is also defined as “any conscious, organized attempt on the part of the society's members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture” /Linton, Ralph,/. Nativistic movements as a number people in a society who collaborate to effect a recombination of elements of the traditional culture and the outside culture to form what is in a sense a new

social reality. This reality is more acceptable to the individuals involved and the effect of reducing stress which these people have been feeling as a result of an unaffordable contact situation. The central essence of the paper is the contribution of working traditions to rural development the case of Awra-Amba. Therefore Awra-Amba is revitalizes who pulled out themselves from the cultural, social and economic aspects of life of the surrounding communities.

The way of life of the philosophy of life of Awra-Amba, their working traditional beliefs, and all their totalities are radically changed and different from the more conservative Amhara society that surrounds them. That is why & I prefer revitalization rather than a more social change or Cultural Revolution as opposed to the prominent work of some scholars (example Solomon, 2005). It is also revitalization because it is a peaceful way of getting out on self from outdated /bad philosophy of life as stated by them/ in to new culture that could step up in to harmonious relationships of communities of every phase, development, world wide out look, equality, equity, peace and the like. This new philosophy of life hold by Awra-Amba induced new working tradition contradictory to the cultural practices of Muslim & Christianity. The working culture that resulted in the radical shifting of the philosophy of Awra-Amba promotes people to work day & night with no days that people could not work on, there is no specific work to be given to specific parts of society there by every body is a black smith, carpenter, waving and spinning, farming /by men and women/ with out any social discrimination.

### ***Health and rural development***

Health and development are linked. From an economist point of view, improvements in health status represent both gains in welfare and investment in the future. Health affects development prospects: healthy individuals can be more productive in their jobs, perform better at school, and

earn more than those who are unhealthy. They require less medical care and hence have more resources available for consumption and investment in other activities (Ainsworth and over, 1993). For example cost born by HIV/AIDS patient, long illness associated with many other diseases

A reduction in land use is attributed to a number of factors, which occur as a result of HIV/AIDS (Ainsworth and Over, 1993; Haslwimmer, 1994; FAO, 1995 and Opeyo, 2001). The impact of AIDS can be studied at macroeconomic and microeconomic levels. The impact analysis of market/sectoral and macroeconomic level critically depends on the availability of response parameters from microeconomic behaviours. The impact of the pandemic on an individual as economic actors indicated in Figure 2.1. Case studies conducted at macro level to analyze the economic impacts of the pandemic on the loss of output due the death of an individual showed an average estimated loss of 116.2 million Birr - i.e. 0.7 percent of real GDP (Zerfu, 2002). Moreover, apart from the output lost due to the pandemic, it resulted in a significant loss to the economy due to high medication/treatment cost. According to the same source, the total estimated cost ranged from 1.7 to 3.5 billion birr, which is from 3.2% to 6.4% of GDP.

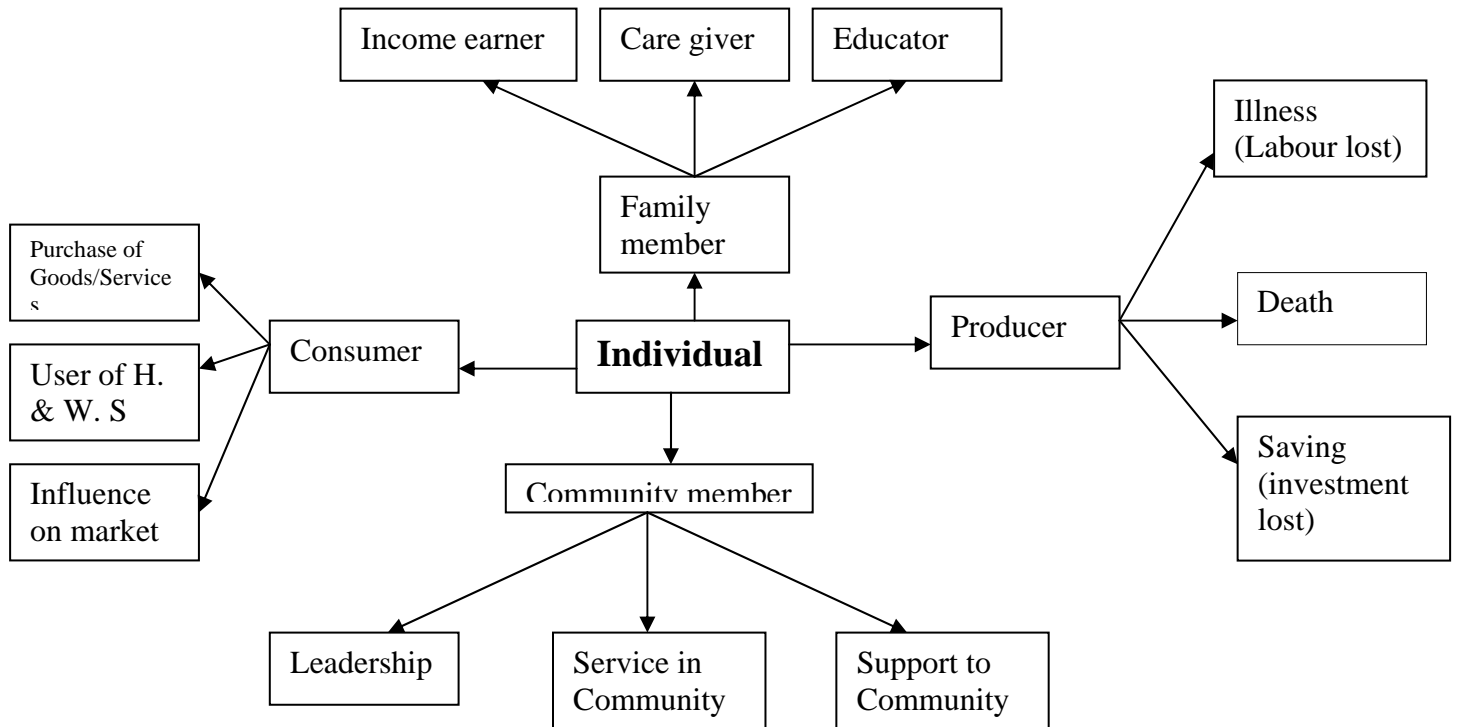


Figure 2.1. The individual with his indigenous knowledge as an economic and social actor

### ***Gender and rural development***

Gender means “the relationship between men and women with in an environment in respect to their roles as they relate to each other in abilities and decision making processes. This results in conflict and minimal productivity efficiency of the activity itself, to the detriment of society itself. It, moreover, underscores the prevalence of role discriminations based on sex in African societies. Socio-economic and cultural factors are ascribed to the problems.

In the Ethiopian context, furthermore, gender disparity in education is prevalent at all levels. The system shows that the situation is worse in rural areas, where the majority of women live. In a study of female students in rural areas of 5 regions, Assefa (1991) found that the main reasons for dropping out were: labour demanded by the family ,unsafe road conditions from home to school

,school distances ,inability to buy learning materials ,uncertainly about future careers ,lack of understanding and support from parents about the purpose and usefulness of education and early marriage and pregnancy. Other studies also posited that women (girls cannot academically compete with men) boys due to the less study time they are left with Zewdie and Junge (1990) indicated that rural women work between 14-16 hours a day, and female students spend a significant amount of time helping their mothers, which leaves them no/very little time for study. In addition, Almaz and Junge (1990) studied 7 schools and found that students, teachers, and administrators indicated the big differences between male and female students in terms of behaviour academic performances.

The study of gender and cross-cultural dynamics in Ethiopia shows that acceptability of women being a productive force is high at a national level. Women are perceived to be working mostly in the informal economic sector, but women could also be in other sectors of the economy /Habtamu et al, 2004: 44-57/. According to this study, women in Ethiopia worked between 8-18 hours a day. Hence women do work more hours than men in Ethiopia /Ibid: 47/ Comparing working hours of men and women, by sex at national level the study indicates that working hours for women are from 13 hours upwards, whereas for men movement is from 13 hours downwards /Ibid: 57/. As a consequence all efforts to combat HIV/AIDS need to gear towards and focus on women and girls as special populations bearing a disproportionate burden of the epidemic and its impacts due to gender disparities and low awareness of the pandemic (WHO, 2006).

Every society has a system of values a set of interrelated ideas, concepts, and practices to which strong sentiments are attached. In this regard Brown /1993:95/ noted: The word has the common



sense meaning of something important to the individual or group concerned. A value, then, is anything-idea, belief, practice, thing that is important to people for any reason. Further, things can be important to us in a positive or a negative way-we may put it that positive values are the things we are “for”, while negative values are the things we are “against,” Brown /1963/, extending his explanation says, there is no society known to us in which the people are concerned exclusively with material ends. Prestige, status, pride, family loyalty, love of country, religious beliefs, and what we may call honour, can be and often are values great enough to cause individuals to sacrifice comfort, well-being, and even life itself /*ibid*/.

It is also clear that without shared values, emotionally satisfying interpersonal relations and individual’s self-regard and sense of purpose would be greatly hampered. Without some set of mutually held principles there would be no way to identify with others; meaningful individual and social life would be impossible. Hence the study of values changes still holds the promise of being a useful way of understanding the motivations and behaviour of individuals and groups /Wilson, 1979:1/. Wilson /1979:2/ also states one of the best known definitions of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action. The process of social change is largely dependent on the ultimate goals of those who seek change, and on whether they perceive themselves as having the capability and resources to reconstitute the social system. Gender hierarchy describes a situation where social power and control over work, resources, and products are associated with masculinity. According to Hess and Ferree sex differences are physiological features related to procreation, to biological reproduction. While sex differences are physical, gender differences are socially constructed /*ibid*/.

Given the studies on the status of women have expanded; the works of anthropologists provided a wealth of material illustrating the diversity of cultural arrangements regulating gender relations. In this regard Tsehai /1991:2/ pointed out that, women's second class status, which is a cultural attribute, is rationalized in various ways. Biological determinants, cited in Tsehai, would say that there is something genetically inherent in males that make them the naturally dominant sex; that some thing is lacking in females; and as a result, that women are naturally subordinate and satisfied with position. In the works of Hirut /2002/ and Almaz /1991/, for example, it is pointed out that gender entails all the problems inherent in defining and selection the cultural particularity. Gender identity is psycho-socially and culturally determined. Gender roles are practices and activities carried out by men and women, which lead to an economically and socially constructed division of work /Hirut, 2002:6, Almaz, 1991:2/. It is also explained that gender is a learned behavior, usually related to one's sex, but sex status does not necessarily determine gender role. However, the differential treatment we receive through socialization process because of status of our sex leads to the development of real psychological and personality differences between males and females /Hirut, 2002:7, Almaz, 1991:2/. Women's subordination, Almaz explains, existing in societies of every degree of complexity is not something that can be changed by rearranging certain tasks and roles in the social system. The potential for change lies in changing the social institutions at the same time as changing cultural assumptions through consciousness-rising and involvements by both men and women /Almaz, 1991:3/.

In relation with this point, Dessalegn /1991/ noted that in Ethiopia patriarchal authority accommodates itself to competing interests with in the households, including those of wives,

juniors, and adult dependents. The degree of intra-household “democracy” varies from a cultural setting to another /Dessalegn, 1991:32. Dessalegn further explains that the division of work existing in a particular social context is not as irrational as it is sometimes made out to be. Where the plough is the main means of cultivation, men do the ploughing and women may be involved in weeding and harvesting /ibid/. As indicated by Dessalegn in Wollo, for example, only ploughing and sowing are exclusively male jobs. Where as, in Wolayta, women’s participate in agricultural work is very limited. Married women here are not expected to participate in crop cultivation. And this is most importantly due to the gender roles in this particular society. Hence in Ethiopia one can understand that the sexual division of work and gender roles in general varies from one cultural setting to another.

Similarly, socialist countries, with more explicit commitments to economic equality, have not been successful in eliminating sex-based inequality /Bossen, 1989:340/. Radical feminists propose that women’s standpoint emerges primarily from the sexual exploitation of women by men: sexual domination therefore determines women’s consciousness and is what must be overcome. They also see women’s subordination deriving from material reality in this case, from the sexual division of the sexual desires as well as the sexual division of work /ibid/. Wilson /1979: 15/ indicated that fundamental long-term and highly persevering social change will not occur unless there are also been a change in the behavioural pattern of society. Value change, according to value change theory, appears to occur when conventional ideas and modes of behaviour are perceived as inappropriate for a new problem and when people begin to distress about this condition.

Very surprisingly, those who take in a new value system may, at least initially be called deviants or revolutionaries, but during the later stages of change they may be thought of as innovators or heroes. As the values, which they respect adequately, solve new problems, others come to perceive the utility of the new pattern and slowly change their own orientations /Ibid/. One can also see the problem of occupation sex segregation in relation to the following idea. In this regard, Williams /1993: 3/noted. The man who crosses over into a female dominated occupation unset or not placed these gender assumptions embedded in the work. Almost immediately, he is suspected of not being a “real man”, there must be something wrong with him to be interested in this kind of work. According to Spence and pod more, cited in William /1993/, women who "cross over" are also subject to suspicious that they are not "real women” but they are far more constrained in how they respond to these prejudices.

## **2.6. Marginalized social groups of Ethiopia**

Recently, however, there are indications that the status of these occupational groups has declined along with a greater emphasis on ethnic identity and cultural survival. Many of the previous prejudices, which had been repressed, seem to have re-emerged. There are accounts of artisans loosing their land and being forced to migrate to look for work. To this day they cannot intermarry with the rest of the population; often they may not eat together with them; they are kept apart at social occasions such as weddings and funerals, at which they are often given the role of musicians, entertainers or professional mourners.

Currently they remain at the bottom of the social and economic ladder, and often live in conditions of abject poverty in small flimsy houses, with little in the way of clothing and possessions, in poor sanitation and health conditions, with less access to education, and an

irregular source of income from selling goods they produce at local markets, where prices are extremely low for their labour intensive products.

They tend to live from hand to mouth, rapidly consuming what they earn, hardly able to invest in assets, often heavily indebted and unable to obtain further credit. Models which emphasize the original separateness of the caste groups may be divided into the following three approaches depending on whether they are considered indigenous to the area or migrants. The question of ownership of means of production is clearly very important and the degree to which artisans, hunters and ritual specialists are excluded from owning land and livestock has some bearing on their status. There may be differences between the 'rules' and practice, and that craftspeople may cultivate land or look after livestock on behalf of cultivator patrons. Also we need to establish whether artisans really own land this is a recent phenomenon. However, we also need to know whether artisans own the means to produce their goods, and what the conditions of exchange for recent development are given the high mobility of artisans, the ownership of the means to produce, and the ability to exchange or sell their wares, some have argued that artisans have a great degree of freedom /Amborn 1988: 26-27/.

It is not clear, however, whether the absence of either would invalidate the caste status, as Hamer suggests. It does seem that the status of the groups under consideration is divinely underwritten often with the support of mythology, rather than merely a question of status differences, though the extent of reference to supernatural justification may vary. Moreover, artisan groups do not marry indiscriminately with other artisan groups. Finally, even when artisans are not differentiated they are clearly segregated from the rest of society in such way that the term caste might be appropriate.

Many authors have equated special groups with occupational groups. Some would argue that given the social division of work the occupational distinctiveness is a defining feature. /Amborn 1988/. Others, however, emphasize the social as opposed to occupational distinctions as more important /Hallpike, 1968:259/. While it is clear that the associations with occupations are frequent, are we dealing with the same phenomena in the cases of hunters, artisans and ritual or medical specialists? In some cases castes had entertaining function sat court and were musicians, singers, storytellers and bards; in other cases they had medical roles as surgeons, dentists, bone setters midwives and veterinary surgeon. Sometimes they had protective roles as servants of the nobility, royal guards and even executioners /Haberland 1978: 131-2/. On the one hand they are clearly despised and ostracized; on the other hand they are often vital to society and play a significant role in ritual and social life. Amborn, writing about the Burji-Konso group, concluded that “though they are significantly different from agriculturalists, they are an integral and important part of society. They are by no means a despised group but a clearly distinctive one /1988: 29/. Likewise Hallpike concluded that they are “not submerged but separate and fully integrated” /1962:259/.

The artisans groups have a lower status in many social settings, and are considered an inferior category of person, sometimes even seen as sub-human. Though they were not slaves who could be purchased and sold and commoners could be punished for killing them, they had few political rights and could not participate in public meetings. Restrictions on intercourse with them were strict and even unintentional rituals. They could not enter houses except on special occasion when they had to sit on leaves which were later destroyed. Food was served to them from leaves or

broken vessels. Even meeting commoners on the roads they had to kneel and look the other way./Haberland 1978: 131/. However, in the religious or spiritual sphere they occupied important positions which are at odds with the idea of them being despised or inferior. In particular in life cycle events, at births, circumcisions, marriages and funerals they often play a very important role. They are also credited with special magical powers as intermediaries between supernatural forces and the rest of society. In times of distress or misfortune they may be consulted and from within caste groups perform important moral services for the dominant group since they provide a reminder of the host group's norms and boost their morale /Levine 1974" 170/. As Hallpike puts it they reinforce the group's "sense of its own identity and its sense of superior rectitude" /1962: 268/.

## **2.7. The rational for child work culture in Ethiopia**

Due to the rapid increase in population a growing segment of the population including children are entering into the labour force at a faster rate and at early age. Absorbing the ever-increasing labour force into productive employment has, therefore, become a major challenge for the country. Although there is very little information on child labour there is no doubt that it is an enormous problem in Ethiopia just as in many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Out of the estimated seven million children between the age of 10 and 14 more than half or 50.1 percent are believed to be economically active (CSA, 1994). In addition each year about 550,000 persons are being added to the labour force and the economically active population has been growing at a rate of 3 percent. Experience elsewhere shows that children below the age of 10 are also economically active. Therefore, the incidence of child labour could be even higher if the working children below the age of 10 are included in the above figures. Everyday observation also suggests that the incidence of child labour even among those 10 to 14 years of

age might be much higher both in the urban and rural areas than suggested by reports. Visual observation shows that a large proportion of the Ethiopian children are victims of famine, disease, poverty, civil war, family displacement, and social instability all of which are contributing factors for a high incidence of child labour. According to recent ILO estimates and projections, the participation rate of children in the world between the age of 10 and 14 has been estimated to be around 13 percent in 1995. But the corresponding figure for Ethiopia was more than 42 percent (Basu, 1999). While the participation rate of children in economic activities of the same age group will be less than 10 percent by the year 2010 globally, it will be about 40 percent in Ethiopia.

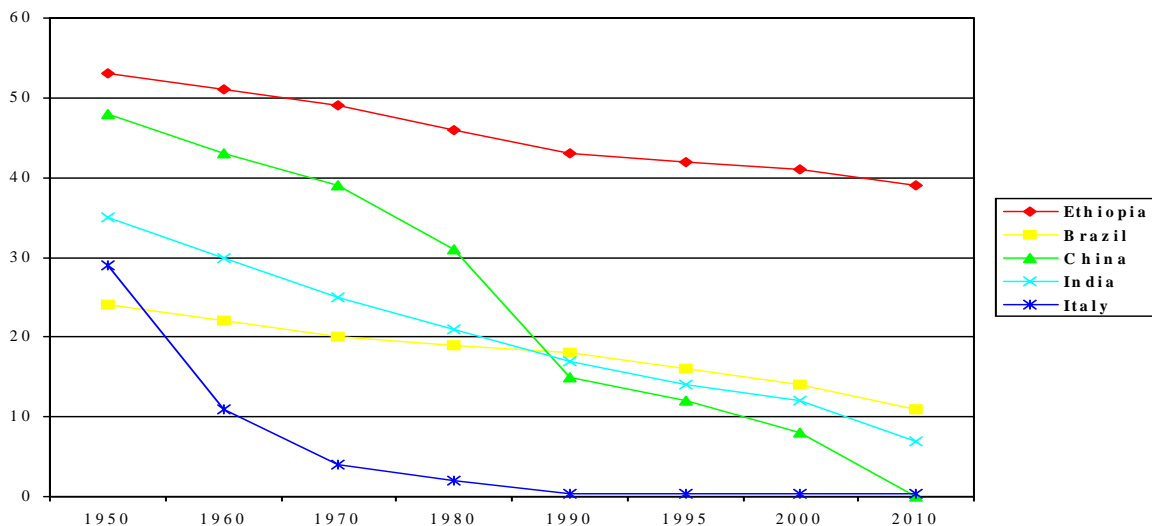


Figure 2.2: Labour Force Participation Rates for children 10-14 years for Selected

The literature suggests that poverty is the clearest manifestation of child labour and the incidence of child labour usually declines with rising per capita GDP. As argued well by Basu and Van (1998) it is not because parents are irrational and unsympathetic to their children that they send them to work but primarily to increase household income or as part of a survival strategy to



minimize the risk of interruption of the income stream. It is often, a mitigation mechanism against a decline in income. The fact that poverty is one of the main predisposing factors to child labour undoubtedly places Ethiopia as one of the candidates for high incidences of child labour. Ethiopia is one of the poorest nations on earth with a per capita income of less than US\$ 110. Out of the estimated population of more than 58 million more than 53 percent are under the age of 18 years (UNICEF, 1998). Moreover, since about two third of the Ethiopian families live on income below that required to meet in minimum basic needs of the family (UNICEF, 1992) there are adequate reasons to expect a high incidence of child labour in Ethiopia. Most children in rural Ethiopia between the age of 7 and 14 herd livestock and completely miss any form of formal education.

So when they grow older and finish herding they face difficulty finding work because they have few other skills other than herding and fall back in an environment where there is already high unemployment. Until now there is no compulsory education system in the country. Enrolment rates both in rural and urban areas and at all levels is one of the lowest in the world. For instance, the gross enrolment rate in primary schools in 1996/97 stood at only 35 percent which, therefore, suggest that more than 60 percent of Ethiopia's children who are out of school may be in paid or unpaid work in one sector or in another.

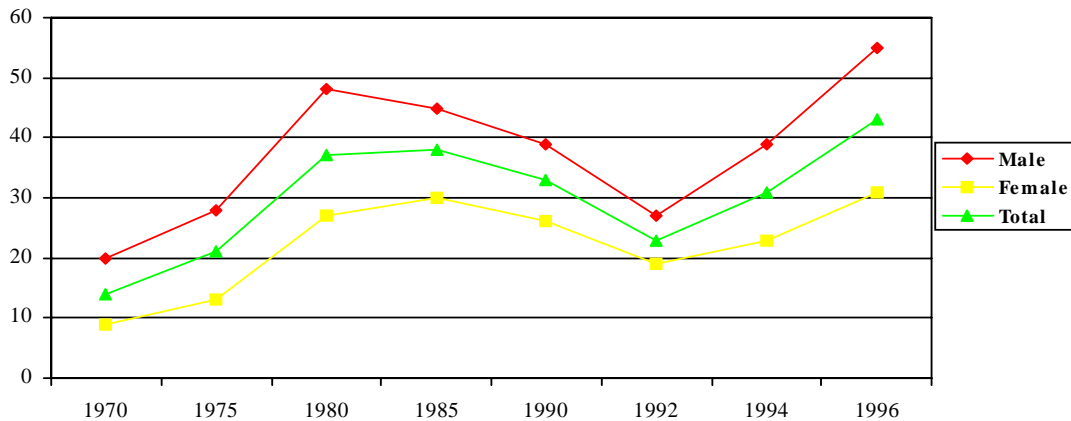


Figure 2.3. Trends in Primary Gender Enrolment Rate for Ethiopia by Sex

The results show that most children in rural Ethiopia perform some form of work either in the house or on the farm. Labour force participation is common even among those below the legal working age or those supposed to be in school. Excessive work in the house or on the farm or in the labour market will have serious implications on the development of children. If work participation exceeds an acceptable threshold level the educational development of these children could be seriously affected. The results underscore that the determinants of child labour are complex and many out of which household asset is but only one. A single intervention on the problem, which ignores its complexity, may not produce much success. Hence, the problem can only be addressed through a multifaceted approach that includes social, cultural, economic, and regional factors of revitalizations.

### ***Household income and Child Work culture***

The link between household income and the allocation of children's time is one of the most important aspects of child labour that has received much attention in the literature (see, for instance, Psacharopolous 1997; Patrinos and Psacharopolous, 1997; Kassouf 1998; Canagarajah

and Coulombe, 1998; Grootaert, 1998; Blunch and Verner, 2000; Ray, 2000). According to the insufficient income hypothesis, households are compelled to send their children in the labour market, because their income is low.

Several empirical studies have documented that the contributions of children to family income in developing countries can be substantial, ranging between 10 and 40 percent of the household income (see, for instance, Sharma and Mittar, 1990; Swaminathan, 1998; Cain, 1977; Patrinos and Psacharopolous, 1997; Myers, 1989; Kassouf, 1998). Hence, household poverty, which is manifested in terms of low or declining income, has often been singled out as the most important reason that under-aged children are pushed into the labour market. Nonetheless, the relationship between household income and child work remains still controversial and inconclusive. While the participation of household heads in off-farm employment opportunities may lower the probability of child work, Pooling together available labour resources for specific activities is also a common practice in rural Ethiopia in order to ease the problem of labour shortages, particularly during peak seasons. A traditional labour-sharing arrangement is a labour-exchange practice, where households decide to share the available household labour for farm work in a rotating manner. Local practices such as "debo" or "wonfel" are concrete examples of labour-sharing arrangements in Ethiopia. The results show that participation in traditional labour-sharing arrangements reduces children's likelihood of attending school by more than 3.5 percent and raises the likelihood of work specialization by more than 5 percent.

# CHAPTER III

## Materials and Methods

### **3.1 Introduction**

As the study purports to investigate the working tradition and indigenous values of cooperation among the Awra-Amba community and thereby spot the implications it could have on rural development, a qualitative and quantitative approach constitute the methods of data collection and analysis. Accordingly, this chapter includes a description of the study population, data collection and procedures, appropriate data management, statistical analysis, data validation and entry process, as well as the limitations.

### **3.2 Description of the Research Site**

The Amhara National Regional state, which is located in the Northern part of Ethiopia, is one of the regional states in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The region is situated between 8<sup>0</sup> 45 N latitude and 35<sup>0</sup> 46 E to 40<sup>0</sup> 25 E longitude and has an area of approximately 160, 553Km<sup>2</sup>. The region is bordered by four regional states i.e. Tigray, Afar, Oromiya, Benshangul and Gumz in the North, East, South and South West respectively and by one African country Sudan in the North West / *Atlas of the Amhara National Region, planning and economic development Bureau, Bahir-Dar, June 1999*/.

The region is divided into eleven zones and 105 weredas including six zonal centers that have the status of Wereda. South Gondar is one of the administrative zones and Fogera is the Wereda in which the Awra-Amba community is found /*ibid*/ . Fogera woreda is one of the nine woredas of South Gondar zone in the Amhara National Regional State. It is located at a distance of 55km away from Bahir Dar /the capital of Amhara region/ having a total of 29 /25 rural and 4 urban/

administrative kebles with a total land size of 117, 414 hectare. Out of which about: 56,228 ha /48%/ is being utilized for growing annual and perennial crops, 27,880 hectare for grazing 55,854 ha for forest and bushed and 23,221 ha for settlement / *Wereda rural development office and ORDA unpublished material*/.

Topographically the Wereda is classified into three major categories covering 76% plain, 11% hills and 13% undulating. The Fogera plain that covers several square kms of the area is partly located inside the Wereda. Based on the information obtained from the three year strategic plan document of the Wereda rural development and agricultural office, the projected population size of the Wereda is 233,579 people for the year 2004 of which 206,767 /88.5%/ live in the rural and are engaged in agriculture. Consequently the document indicates that 92% of the rural people obtain their livelihood from mixed farming where 29.3% of the inhabitants have no oxen which are a means of production and an indicator for wealth status /*ibid*/.

When we look into the various income sources of the Wereda population 64.6% of the annual household income is derived from the crop sub-sector followed by a 34.9% contribution of livestock sub-sector while the remaining 0.5% is obtained from the sale of trees wood and crop residues. The current average land holding size of a household is estimated to be 2.11 ha where 1.4 ha is for cropland and 0.7 ha is for grazing /*ibid*/.

In addition to income livestock there are sources of food means of cropping in crop failures means of repository of wealth and sources of natural fertilizer for the soil. Moreover they provide the power required for ploughing threshing and transporting agricultural produce and rural people in the Wereda.

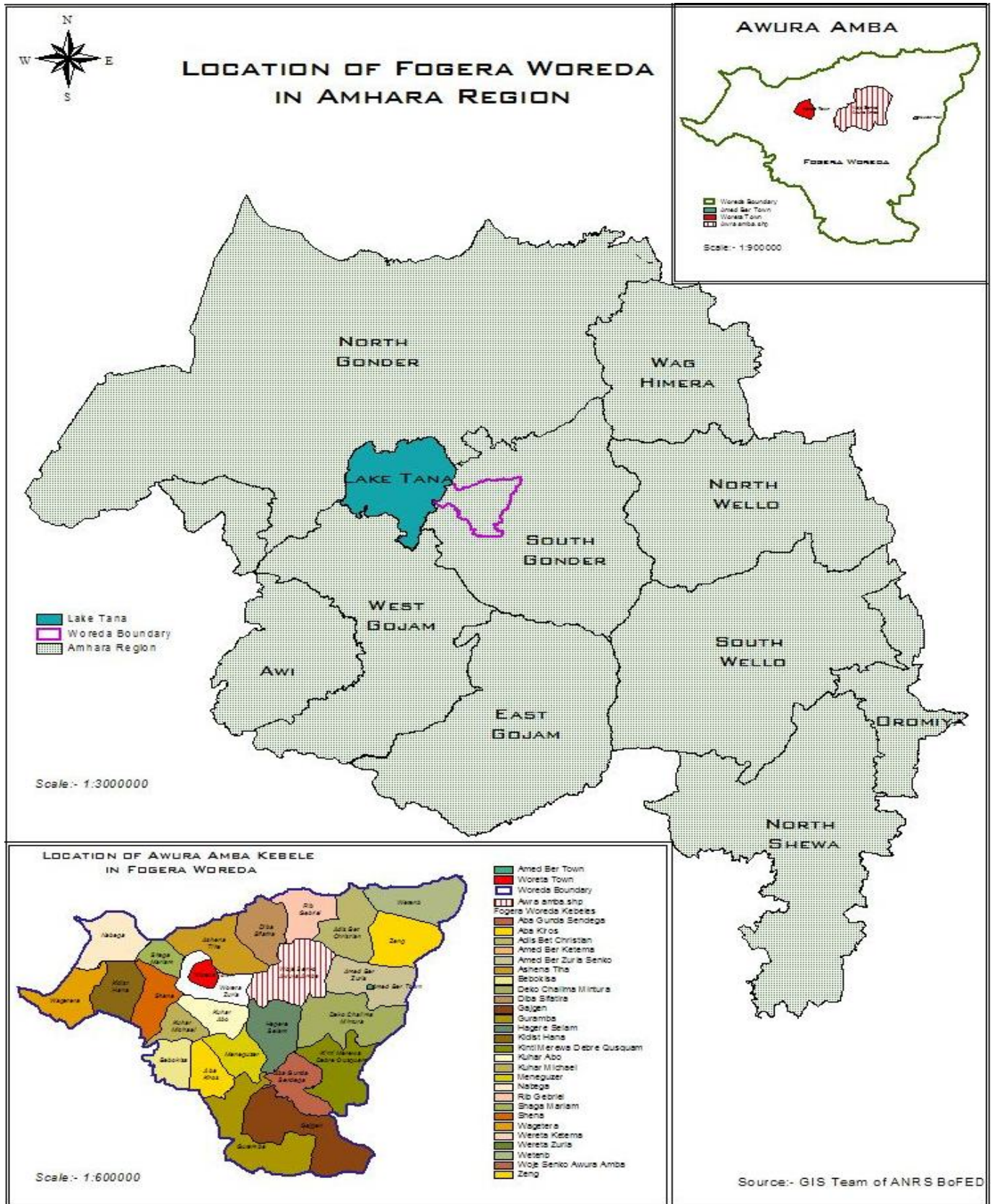


Figure 3.1. Map of Amhara region and the Woreda of the study area

### ***Location of Awra-Amba and an Overview of the Sub-Water- shed Area***

Awra-Amba is found in Fogera Wereda of the Amhara regional State. According to the study made by a project planning team of organization for rehabilitation and development of Amhara region /ORDA/ Awra-Amba is 13.7km away from Wereta capital of Fogera Wereda and 68km away form Bahir Dar the capital city of the Amhara national regional state. It is geographically located between 11<sup>0</sup>5535- 11<sup>0</sup>5607 N latitude and 37<sup>0</sup>47 50- 37<sup>0</sup>4750 E longitude / *unpublished project planning material of ORDA*./

The total area of the sub water shed according to the study of the planning team of ORDA is estimated to be 668 ha and out of this currently 591 ha of land is used for cultivation 22 ha for grazing, 17 forest land 38 ha for settlement and homesteads /*ibid*./

According to the same source, the altitude of the Awra-Amba sub water shed ranges from 1900m to 2200m / *ORDA unpublished material*/. The major landforms in the area are flat undulating and rolling plain in the down stream, and mountain and hills on the upper stream of the watershed. The slope of the area ranges between 2% to 50% while the average land slope of the Awra-Amba sub water shed is estimated to be 10% which left the dominant landform of the watershed is rolling plane /*ibid*./

ORDAs study indicates that the altitude of the sub watershed /Awra-Amba area/ ranges between 1900 meter 2200 meter and the average altitude is estimated to be 2050 meter. Thus the mean growing period temperature is estimated to be 18<sup>0</sup>c. The average annual rainfall of the sub watershed is estimated to be 1440 milliliters. Based on the traditional agro climatic classification

the Awra-Amba area is characterized as Woina-Dega. The major crops that grow in the area are teff, millet, nuge, maize, beans and peas.

The site has a good vegetation cover and among other indigenous trees Acacia and Eucalyptus are very common in the Awra-Amba area. However, deforestation remains to be a major challenge. A small stream drains the watershed from South to North. Two intermittent streams in the southwest and south east feed the stream. The two of them merge near Awra-Amba village and form a stream named Ginde Newr that flows north to Mizawa stream and Mizawa flows further north to Rib River, which in its turn drains to Lake Tana. Ginde-Newr stream bounds the village in the east.

The Awra-Amba area is bounded by small mountains which are called Debora from the north, Tizaba from the North and Kaso from the West direction. It is also bounded by hills like Enko from the northwest, and Delebo and Zeebura from the north. In the upper part of the watershed there is vast communally owned grazing area. This section of the watershed is marshy all year long, which is an indicator of shallow perched water table.

Awra-Amba is the name of a village found in Turigne got of Woje in Aura –Amba kebele in Fogera Wereda, located about 68kms far from Bahir Dar via Woreta Town. More specifically, as we go along the main road from Woreta to Debre Tabor Town /capital of south Gondar zone/ after 11 kms drive it is situated at two kms distance away from the main road diverging to the right direction. The two kms road is paved by the Awra-amba community themselves. The



village is geographically located between  $11^{\circ}55'25''$ - $11^{\circ}56'07''$  N latitude and  $37^{\circ}45'50''$ - $37^{\circ}47'50''$  E longitudes.

The neighbouring kebele administrations of Awra-Amba community are Sinko and Addis Medahanialem kebeles from the east Wodo kebele from South East, Diba, Tihua and Medhanialem kebeles from the West, Eniko and Goha kebeles from the south and seyefeatra, Rib Gabriel and Rib Kidanemihret kebeles are from the north direction. The nearest neighboring village “*gotes*” around the community include quarke from the south, Tizaba and makesegn from the east, Arba-chane from the west and jib-Gudeguade from the North West. According to the land survey result of ORDA surveying team, the total land area of the village owned by the community is only 43 hectares with a land use pattern of 28.2 hectare cultivated land 11 hectare grazing 1.3 hectare and bushes and 2.5 hectare settlement.

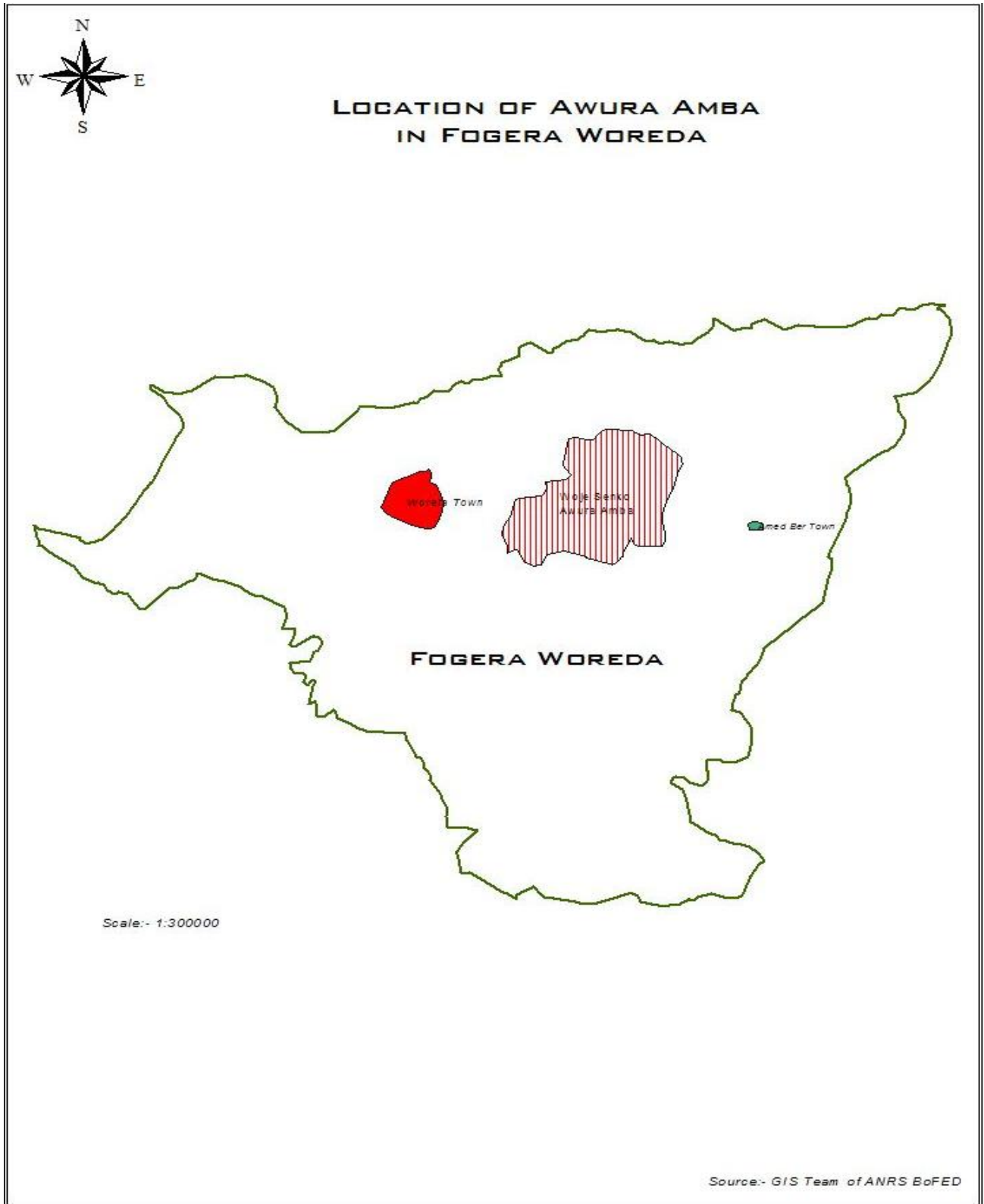


Figure 3.2. Map of the study area

### **3.3 Data Sources and Procedures**

The Awra-Amba community is a small social group consisting of 90-100 households. The total population size is 380-400. This research covered 88 households members of the Awra-Amba Community, of which 53 were male headed and the remaining 35 were female headed.

The distinctive nature of the Awra-Amba community in their life philosophy, working traditions and other related issues are complex and interlinked which require a comprehensive research approach to understand the system. To this effect, in this study of the contribution of working traditions of Awra-Amba community to rural development, information regarding the social and economical dimensions and evolution of the community is obtained from different sources using triangulated methodologies. Structured household questionnaire, participatory focused group discussion (FGD), conversational interviews and participant observation were the primary sources of information for the study. The information from the primary sources has also been supported by secondary sources.

#### ***3.3. 1. Primary Data Collection Methods***

A combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods have been used to gather necessary information. In line with this, household interview, Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with the community members, making an in depth informal interviews with individuals from Awra-Amba community and neighbouring social groups, and direct participant observation on various activities of the community were the main methods used. Each of these data collation methods is briefly discussed.

### ***Sampling framework***

In order to have relevant information, the researcher used a census method of household interviews due to size manageability, homogeneity, and good access of communication of/with the community

#### ***Household interview / censuses/***

First of all, a modular questionnaire was designed in such a way that it addresses relevant variables which are useful to explain: demographic characteristics, social, cultural, political, economic dimensions and other distinctive characteristics of the Awra-Amba Community.

The researcher has used closed ended and open ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in a way such that it addresses all the relevant variables and study objectives, and was duly tested before the actual study commenced.

#### ***Focus Group Discussion (FGD)***

Similar to the design work of the household questionnaire, major and more relevant issues of discussion among the members of Awra-Amba were identified such as gender roles, empowerment of women, and access and rights of members to resource (education, health etc) Accordingly, an in depth discussion was conducted with several groups representing all parts of the community (age, gender, socio-economic profiles). Each focused group comprises 6 to 8 members of participants. The major objective of this FGD was to get all the necessary information related to the socio-cultural and economic dimensions as well as future directions.

Focused group discussions were also conducted with other communities residing around Awra-Amba community in order to assess the overall perceptions and attitudes towards the seemingly strange philosophies and value systems of the Awra-Amba. Discussions often focused on their

opinion towards the working cultures, gender equality, social bondage etc. of the Awra-Amba community in comparison with their own situations.

### ***Participant Observation***

As participant observation is one of the important data collection techniques in a qualitative research (Taylor and Borden, 1984:15-75, Sparsleys 1980;53-62). The researcher also tried to employ this method in the study in order to have a better understanding of various issues including their social participation (marriage funeral, neighbour and child relationship etc) . Accordingly, important information is gathered through observation of relevant events and processes in a natural setting and through face- to-face interactions with various sections of the community. There was no communication barrier as the people spoke my language. The hospitable and friendly atmosphere emanating from a good sense of trust has made participant observation easy for me to apply

### ***Informal Interviews with Key Informants***

Aimed at obtaining the perspectives of people on the issues central to the study, a general interview guide approach and informal conversational interview was employed as a method of data collection. The individuals approached through this method were twelve members (Six female and six male) including the founder of the community who has long years of experience as a leader. The informants were believed to have extensive knowledge on Awra—Amba Community ranging from its genesis to the social evolution in time frame.

### **3.3.2 Secondary Data collections**

The researcher has made attempts to use secondary sources such as books and journal articles. Of late, the local media and researchers from within the country have shown interest in Awra Amba mode of life and social realities. Hence some have produced scientific articles which I found important to cite in my thesis. Besides, referencing was made on to the official records from governmental and non-governmental sources to augment my primary field data. The Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (BOFED), Food security coordination office, SIDA, Cooperatives Promotion Agency (CPA), Environmental Protection and Land Use Authority (EPLUA), Organization of Rehabilitation and Development of Amhara were among the major sources of secondary data. Others include Ethiopian Airlines bulletin, Visitors registration book available in Awra-Amba, and the local by-laws of the community it self. A documentary film produced by Amhara Region Mass media Agency was also consulted.

### **3.4 Data validation Process and Management**

Maximum efforts have been put to keep the quality and clarity of the household level data. The raw data is well cleaned and verified carefully both on the field through supervising the collection process and in the office for credibility of the results. Error and vague records are corrected immediately before the fieldwork is completed usually compilation and computation technique are used to the verification and preparations.

Every completed questionnaire is checked by the researcher on the next day after they are filled. However, since all enumerators were exercising the validation activity at night on each questionnaire, filled during the day time, it has simplified the validation work of the researcher.

After completing the validation work in the study area, the researcher had moved back to Bahir-Dar and made his professionals associates in making a final checking and organization of the questionnaires for coding and entry.

### **3.5. Method of Data Analysis**

In this study, descriptive statistical analysis is mainly used to get the general understanding of the characteristic feature of the Awra-Amba Community and comparing some variable figures with regional and national figures of the same.

Primarily, descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, percentage and other required statistical results are reported from the data analysis process. Similarly, appropriate univariate and bivariate analysis using cross tabs is also applied to understand relationships between some selected variables. At the same time, other relevant statistical analyses such as mean comparisons among two and many variables are carried out to describe different variables that might have importance in understanding the status of the community at a household level.

In line with this, for the sake of speeding up the research work one data organizer and encoder are employed to complete a computer based data entry process. After the data entry was completed, the data was imported to Statistical package for Social Science (SPSS) for analysis. Further, data cleaning has been made intensively using SPSS by identifying outliers and missing values of variables by looking into frequency distributions.

### **3.6. Limitations of the Study**

Generally, the research work is conducted according to plan and without much difficulty. But this does not mean that there were no problems and limitations being encountered. Firstly, there was time constraint for data collection instruments of participatory observations. Secondly, there was a budget constraint to start the data collections timely. Thirdly, shortage of literature review on working traditions. However, the approach I used to overcome these obstacles was successful



## CHAPTER IV

### Results and Discussions

This chapter reviews primary data and secondary evidences regarding the work culture and life philosophy of Awra-Amba community and its contributions in socio-cultural and economic transformations. It hints at innovative policy directions and realizes the effect of new trends for rural development.

#### **4.1. The Awra-Amba Community: The Founder's background history and challenges**

It is of some interest to note that the Awra-Ambas were not originally one group and that are not the descendants of specific lineage system. Rather they were members of different peasant communities living in the surrounding areas within Amhara region. Originally, the majority /almost all/ of them were Muslims (Solomon, 2005). According to the case history made by the researcher, the founder of Awra-Amba community is Zumra Nuru. He was born on August 23, 1946 G.C. from his mother Tirusew Kasaye and his father Nuru Muhammad. The birth place of his mother is Simada /South Gondar Zone/, whereas his father is from Wollo, Tenta Wereda /Amhara Region/ the place called Amba-Mariam. So the birth place of Zumra is Simada in Amhara region a place where his parents met and got married (Ibid, 2005).

In 1950 when Zumra was a four years old child, his parents have changed their residential area to Estie worda Amhara region; hence he grew up in a place called Yesho Michael, which is found in this Wereda. Zumra explained that his grand mother was Christian and her place of birth was Estie worda, Timeka Mariam kebele, and his father's mother was also a Christian and her place

of birth was Simada both in Amhara region. Upon the death of his father, Zumra's guardianship passed to his close relatives whose love for and protection of Zumra persisted long after the death of his father. Even though Zumra was well protected by his relatives in his childhood he inclined to tour in different places at his younger ages.

At the age of seventeen or above /he is uncertain about the exact age/ he married a lady, Zubayeda Muhammad. They lived more than 30 years together in happiness. Although, Zumra, like the rest of the younger married men of his area, had to work in agricultural activities and help his family, he had continued traveling to different areas just to release his thoughts in order to get his followers. In 1965/66 he went to a village called Michael Debire /Libo Kemkem woreda of Amhara region/ and started living in a place called Demuna Chalema /woudo kebele/. During this time he was sharing his ideas to other people. Later in 1966 he met a group of people at a place called Sinko /Fogera woreda, Alem-Ber kebele/. This group of people was followers of the so-called "Alahim" Muslim sect. The leader of this sect was Sheik Seid Hassen. What is Alahim religious sect? Fortunately the researcher has got the chance of interviewing son of Sheik Seid in Amed-Ber Town /South Gondar/ about their belief system.

Alahim believers are distinguished from Muslim religion by their liberalism, and they do not practice the main institutions of Islam such as fasting and Sala't/. Other wise they advocate the ideal principles such as: a man of truth, a brother to his fellows, a helpful and dependable brother/sister, kindness to parents next to the worship of God, kind treatment and companionship to wives, women's right similar to those of men, and the like. The leader of this sect Seid and his

followers were living at a particular place called Sinko village /Fogera Woreda, Alem-Ber kebele/.

The Alahim religion followers are now estimated to be 200 in Amed-Ber, and in the surrounding villages of Awra-Amba. There is uncertainty in this number of course, because census has not been taken. Zumra, highly influenced by Seid and his belief , therefore, had a frequent contact with the Alahim religious group. In 1972, he brought his family from Yeshe-Meicael /Estie woreda/ and started to live at Wudo /Demmuna chalema keble/ which is very near to Sinko /seid's residence/. And later he shifted his residence and started to live with Seid at Sinko. As he got tiered of their constant critics, Zumra, left with his wife and kids and began living in the community known as Awra-Amba. The people of Awra-Amba gave him their attention and welcomed his idea or creating heaven on earth. In 1972 when he settled in Awra-Amba there were 66 households with their 60 hectares of land who agreed to live according to his new lifestyle, as other people in the surrounding districts politicized his activities and began accusing him he began to realize what he dreamed of since childhood wasn't going to be easily realized.

In 1984 Seid and his followers had an effort to form an association of the believers of Alahim religious group. The neighboring Muslim religion followers and other Christian peasants, however, were not happy with this movement. They consider the Alahim movement as those who are degrading the proper Muslim religious rules, as if they are with no religion and are deviants. They were reported to Dreg /the ex-socialist government of Ethiopia/ officials as supporters of Ethiopia people revolutionary party /EPRP/ which was anti-Derg party at that time. Since then their movement to establish Alhim religious group association was interrupted by Derg officials.

In the mean time i.e. in 1981 sheik Seid died when he was at Gondar prison in 1985. After the death of seid, Zumra again started to organize his followers in the form of farmers' producers cooperative. Again due to the problems his effort has not been materialized. Rather Zumra was a prisoner on September 5, 1986 by Derg officials. In this regard he has the following to say: 'I was taken to a prison on Sep 5, 1986 and got out of prison on Feb 30, 1986. Hence I was jailed for about 6 months. The reason was some people reported to Derg officials that I was supporting anti- Derg movements in the name of our belief system.

The people mainly didn't want to hear about women's equality to man and children's rights" says Enanaye Kibret, a member of the community (a married women) engaged in guiding visitors around the community as a member of reception committee." They are also upset because we work everyday regardless of holiday and Sundays, which they don't because of their faith, but our faith is based on working hard for the betterment of our life's and supporting people who deserve our helps". She says, we have made a lot of sacrifices ranging from imprisonment to displacement, Zumra recalls after eleven years of exercising his new life with the community he ended up in jail for six months with out appearing in court and not being told why he was arrested. I later realized their intention was to fighting and stop us from living the life we choose, Zumra says. As a result, by the time he was realized from prison in 1986 the number of his followers had declined to 19 from 66. In the final days of the Derg regime in 1989 Zumra and all of his followers the whole Awra-Amba community left their homes in the middle of night and descended on Bonga /GinbaDistric in southern Ethiopia, to save their lives. After the change of government we came back to Awra-Amba all fertile land we used to won were taken by those people who were against our life style.

## **4.2. The Evolvement of Philosophy of Life and Working Traditions**

In a community where there is no equality of men and women and there exists strict division of labour between men, women and children that they obey the social rules and regulations in which they can't speak out to express their ideas and views, people don't work in specific days which are prohibited by religious laws, conflicts prevail because of religious and other differences, an indigenous idea had been developed by a young boy of not greater than 13 years of age who deeply realized the negative impacts of the prevailed ways of philosophy of life.

According to the in depth interview made with Zumra Nuru, the pioneer of the new philosophy of life of the Awra-Amba community, he was born in on August 23, 1946 E.C from a farmer Muslim family. The first instance that Zumra found himself against the established laws in his childhood was when his mother Tirusew Kassaye / / accused him of eating Christian meat in their Christian neighbors. Zumra Nuru Muhamed asked his mother why he was not allowed to eat meat while the meat was similar to the meat they have at home and her answer was "Muslims are not allowed to eat Christian meat and vise versa" and she then snatched the meat from him and gave it to the chicken, an incident which he still remembers up until today. However, he was not satisfied with the answer provided by his mother as it was very unsatisfactory to the strong arguments posed by him. He then continued to ask why, how, when and where create difference to eat as all of us are human beings and the meat was also from our animals?

These all complex questions were raised in the presence of his father Nuru Muhamed /originally from Tenta woreda, south Wollo zone/ who realized the questions being forwarded by his son are intractable by the standards of his wife and himself with significant knowledge of the Quran.

Nuru Muhamed told his wife to respond to the questions forwarded though they are very complex even for the religious intellectuals. Zumra, having realized the fact that his mother could not answer his extra ordinary questions he stopped forwarding questions then after.

Besides, Zumra was strongly surprised by the social structure that divides people in different social strata, division of labour that unreasonably and irrationally put people in to a corner while their contribution to development is very vital, the value of the society to children, elders, women, differences existed among the society, their working traditions and other related philosophy of life. The issue that surprised Zumra very much was the way his father had been treating his mother. She used to work in the field equally with his father and she was also loaded with work at home even after she came from field. It was also a must for his mother that she had to wash his father's feet without which she had to be cursed. That became a headache for Zumra in his early age. His father was also bitten his mother for reasons emanating from a minor conflict of ideas. So, at the age of six, Zumra was realizing these complex social, political and economic issues.

Zumra had also realized that all injustices that had been practiced at his home were the replica of the society. So, he came to the conclusion that “ ” it is prevailed through out the areas he traveled like Wollo, Gondar, Gojjam for 5 years where he learned every skill being practiced in the community. As the ideas of Zumra were unique and he was persistently asking questions of the social justice and other philosophy of life contrary to the already established Muslim & Christian religious doctrines dominant in his birth place, he was considered mad. During that time, he had been forwarding questions like the following:

- Why don't women have equal access to education, health and other opportunities?

- Why don't mothers get proper respect?
- Why don't men share work that is usually given to women and what is the rationale for this?
- Why are people creating differences in religion by giving different names to God while God is one irrespective of names given to him by different languages?
- Why are people synthesizing and pronouncing differences of color among human beings while we are of the same stock? He argues that the color difference among human beings is the same as difference between white and black cats.
- Why are people ostracizing the skin scraper, the weavers, the blacksmiths and other social groups disregarded societies and their professions regardless of their importance to the society in particular and the country at large?
- Why are people envying each other, disliking each other masked by religious and other differences while the essence of all religions centred on humanity?
- Why people nostalgize the second world for which no body can't be sure at the expense of the practical world the fate of which could undoubtedly be shaped by the cumulative effort of human beings?
- Why are people striving to have a comfortable second world at their hand? Can't we create a heaven in this world?
- He asked where we can get God if God is to be found every where it is in my heart, soul, eye and what not..... So, why people establish Mosques and Churches where God could be kept locked and unlocked as they wish?
- Why are old people not given due regard and thrown to churches and mosques for care regardless of their considerable contribution in the society?

- Why is the culture of the society rigid and conservative that doesn't allow individuals especially of emerging children to think freely and go in their own way so long as they are reasonable?
- Why do religions restrict days to work and days on which people of that particular religion should not work, if people who follow a specific religion don't want to go to work like farming, grain milling and others, why do they rest in these days? Do people of this country that are suffering from poverty and hunger should take rest and be the dumping place of grain and other gifts?

Zumra Nuru was restlessly raising these issues and other related religious, social, economic, political and cultural matters that tied up the society not to step up in to development since his childhood. He went out of his birth place /Estie/ to the different parts of the Amhara region where Zumra found the complex problems in every area he visited. After 5 years of travel, Zumra came back to his birth place at the age of 18 and asked his family to arrange marriage for him. At this time, his parents got relief thinking that Zumra had abandoned his life philosophies and married him to a girl named Zubayeda Mohammed in his locality as per to the traditions of the community and lived together for 30 years. A year after his marriage, Zumra started distributing his products to the helpless elderly people and other parts of the society. This time his parents started accusing him of neglecting his family and as if his madness revived. Zumra said that he had been repeatedly asking himself whether or not he was mad but he found himself that he was right and it was those against his idea that were not right and irrational who unreasonably reject his ideas.



It was at the age of 18 that Zumra firmly convinced himself to struggle and revitalize the old social, economic and political system for the betterment of the society. However, he found it very hard and challenging that needs strong sacrifice including one's own life. By the time he decided to face the statuesque and the complex challenges of the future ups and downs that he has to go through, it remembered him an eagle which hosted in a mountain in front of his village during his childhood. For reasons he doesn't know still, the villagers were consistently biting the eagle to remove it from the mountain. Regardless of the efforts made by the villagers to up root the eagle from the mountain, it remained there and the villagers finally lost hopes and involuntarily allowed it to settle. The area where the eagle settled was named as “ ” /literarily “*mountain of the above all*”.

Zumra Nuru was capable of forecasting what could confront him when he was planning to revitalize the existing philosophy of life. And he was also confident enough that he would emerge successful through ups and downs on the way to revitalize the deep seated philosophy of life and hampering working traditions. It was this confidence in his mind and the envisioned success he dreamed to enjoy that made him to associate himself with the eagle which settles in the mountain with out the will of the surrounding community. Zumra said, having realized this all complex multifaceted problems of the community in which he grew in particular and the country at large, he decided to be a change agent when the need arises from within/without any form of outside stimulus. Then after, Zumra moved to different parts of the country and discussed about his thoughts and finally settled in the village where he was able to mobilize about 66 house hold heads with 60 hectares land at the very beginning and later decline to 19 members on the basic principles, values and philosophy of life he wants to prevail for the betterment of the country and human kind at large.

Therefore, Zumra considers himself as a change agent like waves on a sea; made of the same water but rise up above the water according to the needs of the situation and merge into the water again when the need is over. Zumra strongly believes that the direction which this change will take should be decided through interaction with the people with whom he is working, rather than unilaterally by himself acting alone or on behalf of outside interest. Every thing should be opened to endless discussion and be carried out with in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Surprisingly enough, Zumra argues that whoever lacks this trust will fail to use slogans and instructions.

Hence, Zumra is an unusual person who emerged spontaneously from a rural community begins reflecting on problems and eventually involves others with defined & radically transformed or revitalized philosophy of life and working traditions. Zumra, having no formal education surprisingly explains that every thing should be people oriented i.e. it is man/human that can create happiness that can realize development and civilization etc. So, participation in the bureaucratic and rigid hierarchical political, social and economic structures we have would merely be a catchword with out genuine meaning. According to Zumra, genuine commitment would mean loving the human race, respecting mankind with all differences and totalities like religion, color, race, job specification, ethnic group and the like. The color difference that exists among human beings is like the color difference among cats. What is very important for him and his community members is humanity.

The Awra-Amba community have no any stated religion that categorizes them to this or that rather they all believe in one divine power. Zumra argues that it is the categorization made by people that served as a benchmark for differences and conflicts we observe today. All religions of the world base their basic principles on human beings and they tell people to love and respect

each other, support one another and create a peaceful world. But by giving different names to one divine power, we see people of the world killing each other, destroying their environment and doing things contradictory to rules set by their respective religions.

What matters for the Awra-Amba is not the differences that exists but the humanity that is shared by all regardless of these differences. In line with this, the Awra-Amba believe the idea that even though one cannot confidently say what will happen after death i.e. up to God, why don't we create a peaceful world where people love and respect each other? Why can't we create paradise on earth which is solely in our hands? This spiritually highly developed and well structured philosophy of life of the community induced its own values, principles and working traditions which could fit with their thoughts and other basic realities. The newly established values and principles of the community are being realized through social, economic, cultural and other institutions which are instrumental to the very existence of the Awra-Amba. These institutions came about through cultural and social changes.

#### **4.3. Socio-Cultural transformations in the Community**

Culture is how people structure their experiences conceptually so that it can be transmitted as knowledge /information/ from person to person and from generation to generation /*fuglesang, 1982*/. Each of us is very much defined by our social relationships and cultural traditions. The Awra-Amba convincingly blame the rural community in their surrounding that social relationships are rigidly defined and cultural traditions are strongly and relatively static where an individual may not even perceive himself or herself as an individual. Freedom of the individual is vividly subordinate to the interests of the family, the clan and community.

Social relationships are established and cultural traditions are maintained through ceremonies and various festivities in their surrounding but highly disguised by the Awra-Amba based on the firm stand and argument that it is this social foundation that made the people highly extravagant. Accordingly, members of the Awra-Amba community believe that a person has to have greater freedom to choose his/her roles and be tolerated for his difference and even appreciated thinking that his/her ideas of difference could hopefully enrich each other.

Table –4.1: Responses on Life Philosophy

<b>What are the life philosophy?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Respection of Humanity	31 (18.3%)	22 (20.7%)	53 (19.3%)
Believing in Human Equality	46 (27.2%)	32 (30.2%)	78 (28.4%)
Respection of Self rights & Obligations	10 (5.9%)	5 (4.7%)	15 (5.4%)
Making Love & Peace for common life	48 (28.4%)	31 (29.2%)	79 (28.7%)
Believing in work & Avoiding dependency	19 (11.2%)	7 (6.6%)	26 (9.4%)
Believing in discussion & conference	1 (0.6%)	0	1 (0.4%)
Avoiding bad cultures & Practicing good ones	14 (8.3%)	9 (8.5%)	23 (8.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>169 (100%)</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>275 (100%)</b>

Some of the cultural and social changes manifested as the result of the change of the total philosophy of life of the Awra-Amba community include the following:

- Believing in the absolute equality of man and woman as it is indicated in table 1 of the survey showed that 28.7percent of responses considered making love and peaces for human being,
- Equity, humanity and mutuality among human being(men-women) members of the community as it s indicated in the same table of the survey showed that 28.4 percent of the believing in equality of human being ,
- Eradication of division of labour based on gender and other differences,
- Differences are valued individuals and indoctrinated to have self-appreciation,

- Children are allowed and respected to have their independent view. As long as they are rational or reasonable, children are always to have a high opinion of themselves,
- Harmful traditional practices, like genital mutilation, early marriage, “WARSA” /wife sharing/ and others are highly disguised,
- Elderly people are highly respected and kept together as comfortable as possible for the fact that they have done their own shares in their productive ages,
- Highly transformed working traditions with out having specific days of working and not working. And they have religion categorized to neither of the dominant one we know but believe in the diving power regardless of the names given to him by respective language speakers of people in the world.

The above information on social and cultural transformations in Awra-Amba community members being gathered from focused group discussions is also strengthened by the household survey result of the study as depicted in the table below:

Table –4.2: Frequency of Responses on Existing Working Cultures

<b>What are the existing working cultures in Awura-Amba Community?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Absence of work division by sex but by ability	50 (35.71)	33 (38.37)	83(36.73)
Giving high value & respectation for every work	20 (14.29)	9 (10.47)	29 (12.83)
Working all days in a month effectively	46 (32.8)	33 (38.7)	79 (34.96)
Keeping equality of women	12 (8.57)	7 (8.14)	19 (8.41)
Respecting, cooperating & self help eachother	9 (6.43)	2 (2.33)	11 (4.87)
Not committing bad practices	3 (2.14)	2 (2.33)	5 (2.21)
<b>Total</b>	<b>140 (100)</b>	<b>86 (100)</b>	<b>226 (100)</b>

The most important ideal philosophy of life upon which the entire Awra-Amba culture is base what might be termed the oral value of work (Solomon, 2005, Addis-Ababa). It is the principle of the value of work, which has become the measure of devotion of Awra-Amba to its original ideas. In this regard the founder of the community, Zumra, noted the following « we cannot survive without work .It is through work that we can satisfy others needs of ours ».The community member sin the focused group discussion also reinforce this view towards work explained about it was the following « it is because of work that we survive .Work in any sort is our basic need to ensure our survival for work is the essence of our life. This attitude towards work did, of course originated with with Zumra, the founder of the community.

In the community all works are equally valued with in the absence of division work by sex except the ability to do work to the maximum possible quality and quantity. As can see from the table -2 of the above household survey, 36.73 percent and 34.96 percent of the respondent give values for absence of work division by sex and working all days of the months and years .And the researcher has got the opportunity to observe whether the community celebrates religion

holidays or not like( MESKEL, FASIKA, NEW YEAR, EID ALFETIR, AREFA, MEWLD)and others no ways in Awra-Ama community. The researcher has been stayed with them all the date holidays .No date of celebrations religions holily-days except new-year singing and playing traditionally among themselves by making all elderly people of the nucleus the day . Zumra thought about work, is not only influence some of the surrounding, but served to shape his subsequent followers. Emphasis on work had long been integral to the founder life. And this had helped him to earn income, to help the poor and influence people to be hi follower. As hep put it:

*Through work man became one with himself, society and nature. Work is not merely the factor which establishes man contact with the land and his claims to the land; it is one of the principle forces in the building of the ideal community. Hence, the ideal of work as ultimate value represents ,in the case of Awra-Amba community, a cultural revolutions(solomon,2003) as opposed to /or as slightly agreed with my comments. It is not revolution rather it is revitalization which does not primarily based on sex but as a moral value for both sexes participation in any work.*

Awra-Amba Community, then, is a community which is founded, for the most part, by men, women, fired with conviction and purpose, mission and vision, devotion and commitment, who banded together and deliberately conscious actions to be workers; by so choosing, they reversed both the traditional prestigious hierarchy and patriarchy. Instead of aspiring to rise in the socio-economic ladder, they are aspiring to socio-economic equality through social and economic cooperations and equality of human being. For Awra-Amba ,then ,valuing lighter tasks for women and to raise the status of man ,but work which is a moral value of men and women ,which is the highest vocational goals; it is a means of self realization.. In this regard a 48 years old man

informant says: *All human being are equal. There is a thing such is female task, and such is male task. Both sexes can and should perform task based on mutual understanding to satisfy their basic needs.*

*Another 43 years old women informant added: « we cannot survive without work .It is through self work and social co-operation that we can meet our social and economic necessities. »Hence, the value of the work in the community no one can survive without work. Every capable members must work with no classification of task based age and sex with exceptions of few. Exceptions might be made in certain cases like for the elderly, the sick and when a woman is on materiality leave (for three months) and treated by the social security fund of the community, which they accumulation their communal income. Stealing and begging have no place in Awra-Amba, which are the absolute rule of the community.*



*Plate 1. Local weaving by Women in Awra-Amba community*



*Plate 2. Local spinning by men in Awra-Amba*

## **No Division of Works by Sex in Awra-Amba Community**



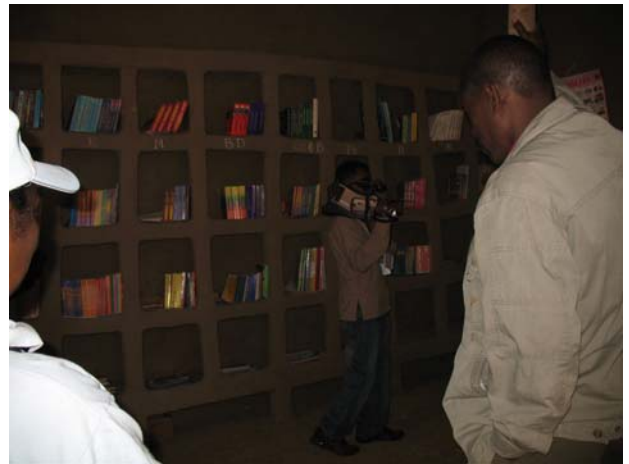


Plate 3. Social and Economic Co-operation actors of Awra-Amba Community

Table – 4.3: Responses on Harmfulness of the Existing Working Cultures

Sex of HHH	Are the existing work cultures harmful?		
	Yes	No	Total
Male HHH		53	53
Female HHH		35	35
<b>Total</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>88</b>

As indicated in the above table 4.3, 100 per cent of the interviewed responded that the existing working tradition is not harmful rather it creates social bond and socio-economic viability.

### ***Self Reliance of Members of the Awra-Amba Community***

Every member of the community of Awra-Amba is self reliant. The Awra-Amba's feel and believe that it is their own efforts that are driving the development process. They also convincingly speak that it is they themselves that should contribute the maximum of their own human, financial and material resources to the betterments of their community and the country and that assistance from outside is only for what they cannot yet manage by themselves. Zumra explains that, attitudes must be encouraged from the very start and self-reliance is a question attitude than of money and materials.

According to Zumra, self-reliance is doing things for one's self, maintaining one's own self-confidence, making independent decisions either as an individual or within the context of a collective group to which each member has voluntarily allied himself/herself. It is for this end that Zumra and his community always tell their children to come up with new ideas, concepts and practical lessons whenever they send them to school. They always tell their children that Zumra has created the "ideal" community with out having formal education and thus they are also expected to innovate and to create new ideas and the like. Therefore, children in Awra-Amba community are relatively having better mission, vision and targets to innovate something that could benefit their community and their country. To sum up, decisions and actions taken by members are based on self-confidence and self-determination. Awra-Ambas are confidently speaking that their sons and daughters have a high opinion of themselves and of their own ability to change their situation for the better.

#### ***4.3.1. Gender Relations and empowerments in the Community***

There has been studies concerning women in Ethiopia, but in which many observers commented on physical hardships that Ethiopian women experience through out their lives. Such hardship involves carrying loads of woods and water over long distance, grinding food items manually, working in the homestead, keeping children and cooking.

Girls are exposed to traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, which leave them with life long health complications especially during and after childbirth. During childhood, girls are socialized to be obedient, submissive, shy, virginal and imaginative /MEDAC 1999/. Compared to men, women have less access to credit. Despite the responsibility they assume for child

bearing, agricultural production and other activities, women have been subordinated to men in their communities. Traditional laws still excludes women from their inherent rights access to resources /UNCEF 1991 b 55-56/.

In addition, girls from age 5 and above are given heavy household responsibilities in collecting fuel wood, fetching water, looking after siblings and assisting in farm and animal husbandry tasks, chores that are well beyond their physical capacity and which preclude their attending school. Since they are also forced to marry early, they became pregnant too early, have too many pregnancies with out proper spacing and are not only at risk vis-à-vis maternal death but their children are also exposed to the same risks, a situations which /Zumra himself explained to the researcher profoundly in a great details. However, unlike the situations in many rural people of Ethiopia .A married woman in Awra-Amba community has a right of using birth control in order to have limited number of pregnancies and protect her from the bad consequences and for better livelihoods of the family. 100 percent of the respondents are assured about the awareness and practices of family planning. This is confirmed not only by female but also male households as shown in the survey result table below:

In Ethiopia women are traditionally suffering from socio-cultural and economic discrimination and have fewer opportunities compared to men for personal growth, education and employment. As in other traditional society, a woman's worth is measured in terms of her role as a mother and wife /MEDAC 1999, CSA 1998. Apart from historical, cultural and religious factors, the current situation of women in Ethiopia is exacerbated by the overall poor economic situation. Poverty, economic insecurity, vulnerability, poor social service provision usually affect the entire

population but place a heavy burden on women who are usually responsible for household welfare in terms of provision of food, fuel, water and child care. /MEDAC 1999/.

By deeply realizing this complex and intractable problems of women, Zumra started asking questions related to women like, do women have an extra power that they undertaken in and out door activities of their families?, why don't they have rights to choose their partners as men do?, why don't they have an equal access to education, health, other resources and opportunities as men do?, why are women are subject to physical harassment by their husbands?, why don't men want to share activities at home?, why don't women equally participate and decide on issues that concern their family and their life? Why don't women work farming and other activities that men can do?

Besides, Zumra also said that women are mothers, sisters, daughters and wives, so who does deserve respect and glory. According to him, the Quran says "heaven is at the foot of mothers/women" which implicates to what extent women are valued, respected and loved by the Islamic scripture. He further stated that the constitution and the government have stressed the importance of gender equality even if such equality is far from being a concrete reality. According to Zumra and other members of the Awra-Amba, addressing gender inequality is much more complex than addressing racial discrimination in this country. This is so because the society and its culture is very rigid and inhospitable to other new ideas, competes and ways of life that could enrich the existing culture. Transforming perceptions of gender roles in order to affect women's position in the society from grass root level is a major issue of concern and policy, since pressure need to be maintained up on the people to promote fundamental change. Not

pressure in the sense of enforcement but persistent indoctrination of the people that it is the man and the society that could highly benefit from the absolute equality of women and men.

Therefore, women in Awra-Amba enjoyed equality with men and there is equity in access, opportunity and resource allocation. Regardless of the status that a woman has, married or unmarried, divorced or widowed she is equally respected for the mere fact that she is a human being. Accordingly, from the household survey result 68.6 percent frequency of responses assured that unmarried or divorced women in Awra-Amba community are seen equally as others and 31.4 percent frequency of responses have also told us that they have no difference in attitudes as before for unmarried or divorced women.

Table – 4.4: Responses on Perceptions for unmarried or divorced Women

<b>Reasons for Attitudes for Divorced and Unmarried Women</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Seen Equally as Others	49 (64.47%)	34 (75.56%)	83 (68.6%)
No difference in attitude	27 (35.53%)	11 (24.44%)	38 (31.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>76 (100%)</b>	<b>45(100%)</b>	<b>121 (100%)</b>

Besides, Women in Awra-Amba community equally participate in all affairs that concern their life and the community. Not only participating, their voices and ideas are also equally accepted (men). In all committees of the Awra-Amba community, women are delegated by half and even in some committees by large numbers. Women are also leading some of the committee as a prime decision maker on various community matters. This is confirmed by the household survey result with the frequency of responses of households on types of women leadership and decision making participations in Awra-Amba community as depicted in the table below

Table – 4.5: Responses on Types of Women Participations

<b>What are the Types of Women Participations</b>	<b>Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Leadership in Various Committees	51 (60%)	34 (40%)	85 (40.9%)
Decision making role in HH resources	11 (47.8%)	12 (52.2%)	23 (11.1%)
Meeting, Voting & to be elected	31 (62%)	19 (38%)	50 (24%)
Ordering & Controlling in HH Resources	15 (60%)	10 (40%)	25 (12%)
Involving in Males' work activities	15 (60%)	10 (40%)	25 (12%)

During the focus group discussion, it was believed and expressed that respect ion of individual rights be it woman’s right or man’s right is a pivotal issue for social, economic, political and humanitarian reasons. They further justified that the number of women and men in the world is almost balanced and equal. It is man that violates this natural law. They also asked that what would be the fate of men, half part of the society, if all women revolted against men. We all could go into non-existent. So, women with all their power and patience have burdened every evil for the worth of both partners. Hence, all community members in Awra-Amba have already internalized the issues of gender and human rights, they also made them practical. Sons and daughters also have an equal access to education, health and other resources and opportunities as per the economic status of the family. According to the rural socio-economic survey conducted in Amhara region in 2003, early marriage is commonly practiced in rural households. Children married below the age of ten are usually facing different hardships. This morganatic usually results in divorce which in turn results in prostitution. It also creates burden of carrying responsibility of a family which is beyond the scope of children. But in Awra-Amba early marriage is unthinkable. Marriage is always contracted between the two couples. According to the survey result indicated in the table below, 97.7 percent of the households have responded that marriage in Awra-Amba is established between the agreements of both partners with out the interference of their respective families.

Table – 4.6: Responses on way of Marriage

<b>How Marriage is formed?</b>	<b>Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Agreement of both Partners	52 (60.5%)	34 (39.5%)	86 (97.7%)
Agreement of boys & Parents of Girls	0	0	0
Agreement of Parents only	0	0	0
Agreement of both Partners & Parents	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (2.3%)

In line with this, not only the women who don't accept husbands that could come through parents, but also the community as a whole considers it as cultural taboo. In this regard, Zumra usually states that 'women in the surrounding area, if not oppressed by their husbands, are oppressed by their own limited knowledge and poverty but women in Awra-Amba are not dependent on their husbands'. Other women members of the Awra-Amba community confidently assured that it is only one woman because of health reasons that is dependent on her husband but the rest of women do have equal contribution to their family which made them confident and independent individuals.

Divorce in Awra-Amba has to vividly justify to be allowed by the community. It is allowed for acceptable reasons like sexual incompatibility between partners, if one of the partners is found to be ideal, violates the right of the partner and other related reasons. But one is not allowed to divorce her/his wife for reasons that are not convincing for others. If one has divorced with out any justified reason the likelihood of that person to be married again is questionable. So, husband and wife usually love and respect each other. Accordingly, as shown on the survey result table below, 90.9 and 82.9 percents of the interviewed households have responded that unhealthy sexual intercourse and infertility problems respectively the major causes resulting divorce in the community.

Table-4.7: Response on Causes of Divorce

<b>What are the Causes of Divorce?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Unhealthy Sexual intercourse problems	49 (61.3%)	31 (38.8%)	80 (34.9%)
Being Idle mindness & work alergic	25 (65.8%)	13 (34.2%)	38 (16.6%)
Not respecting human rights	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (1.7%)
Infertility	42 (57.5%)	31 (42.5%)	73 (31.9%)
Existrence of repeated Disagreements	19 (55.9%)	15 (44.1%)	34 (14.8%)

Women play a key role in leaderships and decision makings in various committees, household resources, community meetings through votes and convincing ideas. Women also have inalienable rights to use birth control mechanisms with out the knowledge of their husbands if necessary. Because of many reasons mentioned above women in Awra-Amba are honest, frank, outspoken, confident to assume any responsibility forwarded to them in their standard. According to the respondents the reasons for respecting of individual rights in the community are the clear awareness on humanity on the part of the community members, clear understanding of rights and responsibilities, and for the fact that community members are fully aware on the economic, social, cultural & political importance of respecting these rights.

The respondents also confirmed in 100 percent that there is no extra work burden shouldered on women and there is no reason for this to happen. In this small village where one can find about 388 people or 96 household heads men occupy themselves with cooking and weaving as women might taking part other activities of men. In this small village, century’s old gender based discriminatory attitudes and practices to wards women have surprisingly been uprooted where women are equally accessed and provided with equal opportunity with men. The social and economic system in Awra-Amba has assured women’s rights to equality in every aspect of life through mutual respect and understanding with men. Both parts of the society created an



environment which enabled women to equally initiate ideas and participate in the formulation and implementation of development plans of the community.

#### ***4.3.2. Newly Emerged Values and Principles in the Community***

Zumra has critically looked in to the old ideas, culture, and habits that should radically be revitalized and pointed new values, principles, working traditions that have to be put in place to give life to his vision of creating heaven /paradise/ on the earth. Further more, many aspects were simply done away during the first year revitalization. Any member of the community considers marriage ceremonies with costs of whatever, varies festivities related religion and other cultural affairs, early marriage, theft, lying, violation of human rights, addiction, emotions that are not based on reasons which could probably lead people to conflicts, and violation of rights of children as cultural taboos. One way of determining the ways in which culture influences behaviour is to examine the value system of people. This idea is convincingly explained by Zumra and other members of the community to the surprise of any new comer for these people are with no formal education to raise such complex sociological and anthropological issues.

Cultural level values in Awra-Amba are perceived operating much like institutions. According to Zumra and some other community members, values are a set of working rules used to determine who is eligible to make decisions in some arena, what actions are allowed or constrained what aggregation rules will be used, what procedures must be followed, what information must or must not be provided, and what pay offs will be assigned to individuals. Moreover, values are considered as ideas and standards of the Awra-Amba community to be allowed in pursuit of motivated goals. What is very interesting in Awra-Amba is all members including Zumra believe

that values at either level are transformational and very important while serving as guiding principles in life.

**The basic principles of the Awra-Amba community are:**

Recognition of the fact that, mankind is above all things. Humanity is above all difference that should harmonize people to challenge economic and environmental problems. Every member of the community firmly believes that a man/women or being human being is above all things. This worldly life should be given a forerunner value than any other things. People should agree and convince each other to relentlessly work and create a paradise on earth. Trust among members of a community and social capital has of paramount importance for the betterment of people life. The principle undoubtedly justifies that it is man and his concerted effort on this world that make every thing realized. God and government do only have supporting roles. They don't agree with phrase " " /literarily *God allows it to happen/* whenever people miss some opportunities. It is a man himself that missed the opportunities because he was not in a position to exploit the opportunity by his personal weakness.

Absolute equality of men and women is a prime issue every body talking about. There is a firm stand among members that equality of men and women should be respected not only for economic, social and political reasons but also basically for moral and psychological issues. A male is a female by his mother's side and a female is a male by her father's side. So, we can deduce that men and women are inseparable in their nature and have the right to be equally addressed.

The Awra-Amba communities do not believe in any category of religions we have, but one divine power, the almighty whose ultimate end is creating a world where social justice prevails. So, they are arguing that Awra-Amba as a community is doing its best to create paradise on earth as God created it somewhere. People should also be productive and work hard in all days of the year. They state that days are similar and do have equal importance if people work on them. The productivity and production also depends on our efforts and other relative factors of production but not on the will of God, who unreasonably presumed to order people not to work on some specific days. God is always willing for every body to work hard and produce as per his efforts and other factors. Awra-Amba communities work hard in all days of the year in every aspect of economic activity including weaving, farming, petty trade, black smithing and others. According to the rural socio-economic survey result conducted in Amhara region in 2003, 53.2 percent insufficient rain fall areas have more than 13 non working holidays at every month or above 156 days of the year as opposed to the researcher's sight.

Marriage is always contracted by the will of the two partners with out any cost of whatever sort. Cost in relation to marriage is highly disguised which is considered as a key factor for our under development. Theft lies, prostitution, harmful traditions on children, unplanned wastage of time and resources, back biting corruptions, crime and provocative behaviours are considered to be taboos in their emerging culture in the presence of which peaceful life, development, considerable thought and social justice based on win-win principles is unthinkable. For the eradication of the above misbehaviours, people should understand the worst effects of these behaviours for peaceful coexistence of people. This is clearly indicated by the household survey result shown on the table below on how to get justice in Awra-Amba community:

Table –4. 8: Responses on How to get justices

<b>Why there are no Crimes on Women?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Making Discussions on the Issue among Eachothers	15 (13.8%)	11 (14.5%)	26 (14.1%)
Making Family Conference in every 15	13 (11.9%)	10 (13.1%)	23 (12.4%)
Submitting the Issue for a justice committee	53 (48.6%)	35 (46%)	88 (47.6%)
Submitting the Issue for General Assembly	18 (16.5%)	19 (25%)	37 (20%)
Above all, submitting the Issue to Gov. Justice & Order Office	10 (9.2%)	1 (1.3%)	11 (5.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>109 (100%)</b>	<b>76 (100%)</b>	<b>185 (100%)</b>

Religious and varies cultural festivities are highly condemned by the emerging culture of the community as a binding principle by the same analogy explained above. They surprisingly ask others about the importance of religious festivities after the death of a person, do these festivities have spiritual or any importance to dead or otherwise to those who are alive but wrongly spending their resources. Sorrow mourning after burial ceremony of a death person is considered as self affecting culture by the Awra-Amba community. They go out to works just after they buried the died body. In this regard, the Awra-Amba communities are easy condolence and try to cope up the problem they face as much as possible.

Traditionally, the elderly are treated with respect in indigenous Amhara culture where the Awra-Amba communities live and elderly are cared for with in the extended family system. They also play cultural practices and financial contributors /when they are well to do families/. But, because of economic factors, the breakdown in traditional support system and a decline of the extended family, the old aged are increasingly becoming vulnerable.

According to the discussions made with people outside Awra-Amba and Awra-Amba itself, the hosts for those elderly people in some areas of Amhara region are mosques and churches.

Meaning that, the role of churches and mosques to host the helpless poor elderly people are providing such facilities and services as social security, housing, health and others. However, in Awra-Amba all of these facilities are institutionalized and treat the elderly together in houses confined to them unlike the surrounding members of the society who separately treat the respective families /especially those who have elderly in their family/. Zumra and the community members say that the logic behind the full fledged respecting and treatment to the elderly lies on the fact that these people have done their own share during their working ages /a time where they can do a lot and contribute much to their community and their country development/. In Awra-Amba, children are considered as part of the society that could determine the fate of the future and hope of the coming generation. The mainstay of course should be laid down by their parents who carry the responsibility of up bringing them. For this end, they are highly valued, respected, appreciated and always motivated and encouraged to create new idea for further enhancement of their community.

#### ***4.3.3. Health in the Community***

Health is one of the fundamental social development indicators of the country. Getting healthy services is part of human right, and with out it economic development of the country becomes inconceivable (*Amhara, 2006. p.89*). In the region, the first categorized diseases are all types of malaria, intestinal parasitic worms and diarrhoea. Since 80 percent of the land mass of the region being favourable for breeding malaria, about 75 percent of the people is exposed to the outbreak. Thus, this disease brings a negative influence on productivity (*ibid, 2006*).

Millions of Ethiopians, especially those residing in the rural areas faced various diseases that are preventable which include malaria, tuberculosis and childhood illnesses. Maternal, infant and

under five mortality rates are still among the highest in the world. For the realization of millennium development goals the government of Ethiopia has designed health sector development programs concomitant with the plan for accelerated sustained development to end poverty /bld/.

To address the health problem of the country the government introduces “accelerated expansion of primary health care coverage” and the Health Extension Program /HEP/. The health policy of FDRE focuses primarily on “providing quality promoting, preventive and selected curative health care sequences in an accessible and equitable manner to reach all segments of the population, with special attention to mothers and children. “The policy has a particular emphasis on establishing an effective and responsive health delivery system for those who live in rural areas”.

Accordingly, it is possible to say that prior to the formulation of the health policy of FDRE; the preventive approach aimed at addressing health related problems has been pioneered by the Awra-Amba community since its foundation. In line to this, the Awra-Amba community has a committee consisting of there members primarily aimed at regulating members of the community not throw even a piece of dirty material. It also further enhances the level of awareness of the members on combinable but preventive diseases. Every body is aware of the facts and hence committee members are not as such burdened on these responsibilities forwarded to them.

The houses and their style of construction are very similar with other rural houses in parts of the region but different in their cleanness and the way they are being handled. Concerning this fact, it is well explained by Ethiopian air lines magazine “selamta” as “The small community has of the most immaculate village houses----with pristine clean rooms, white washed interiors, fire stoves

with chimneys and small alcoves for beds covered with mosquito nets. The pathways around the village are clean-swept and flowerbeds decorate the outside of homes”. Unlike the health conditions and status of houses in the surrounding areas, houses in Awra-Amba are very clean where people could not easily be contracted to communicable disease like malaria. Every member of the community is obliged to keep his/her personal hygiene through the already established and delegated committee and no member of the community is observed to violate the social rules as stated by many of the community dwellers. The system therefore has already established and sustained which every body hopes to lead in to a sustainable system that reaches the desired universal access target.

With full understanding of what is going on in Awra-Amba in environmental sanitation and preventive mechanisms adopted, Doctor Theodros Adhanom, State Minister of health, visited the community and invited the leader, Zumra Nuru, to participate in health conference that held in Bahir Dar where Zumra was awarded about 23,000 Ethiopian birr for he created model community in that could successfully kept its surrounding from communicable diseases. With regard to HIV/AIDS, the policy adopted in 1998 the low status of women and the increased vulnerability of street children, adolescents engaged in transactional sex and AIDS orphans that risky located the prevalence of the pandemic in this country. For this as a solution the policy identifies the empowerment of women and youth to enable them to protect themselves against HIV infection. */National adolescent and youth reproductive health strategy 2007-2015 MOH, P.8/*. These all activities planned in the policy are implemented, made practical and fully internalized in Awra-Amba community. Empowerment in Awra-Amba is taking control of one’s own life, i.e. women gain the ability to do things.

They set their own agendas and they change events in a way previously lacking. They are capable of consciously or incautiously forcing changes in their daily life with men. Children are also highly valued and considered as the hope of the better future. Transactional sex on both men and women and children is unethical. No body intends to do that. But, if the need arises it could be materialized through marriage by the good will of both marrying partners.

Based on the above clearly observed facts the principles and values of the society are deep rooted in the community. HIV/AIDS has no any favorable ground to join the community. For Awra-Amba it is not the HIV/AIDS that frustrates them, but other communicable diseases that could be contracted from other areas. The community surprisingly ask questions that why people are pronouncing speak about the negative effect of HIV/AIDS more than poverty. HIV/AIDS is very simple to mitigate than poverty in our context said Zumra Nuru.

*Table – 4.9: Responses on Awareness on HIV/AIDS by sex of HHH*

<i>Sex of HHH</i>	<i>Do you have awareness on HIV/AIDS?</i>		
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male HHH	52		52
Female HHH	35		35
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>87</b>		<b>87</b>

The community members confidently talks that are free of the pandemic. They are also fully aware about the ways through which the pandemic can be controlled. All respondents (100 percent) assured that every body is aware of the mechanisms by which one can protect himself from contraction of HIV/AIDS.



Accordingly, during the household survey of the study 98.9 percent of the interviewed households have responded that they have awareness on HIV/AIDS. See also the following table for the survey result on the response of the community on types of cares to be taken against HIV/AIDS.

Table – 4.10: Responses on types of cares to be taken against HIV/AIDS

<i>What are the types of cares against HIV/AIDS?</i>	<i>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Determination of one by one	51 (44%)	23 (29.5%)	74 (38.1%)
Protection & Cares for couples	49 (42.2%)	32 (41%)	81 (41.7%)
Not committing free sexual intercourses	3 (2.6%)	6 (7.7%)	9 (4.6%)
Not making sexual intercourses	13 (11.2%)	15 (19.2%)	28 (14.4%)
Making blood test before marriage		2 (2.6%)	2 (1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>116 (100%)</b>	<b>78 (100%)</b>	<b>194 (100%)</b>

#### 4.3.4. Education in the Community

Any member of The Awra-Amba community including Zumra, acknowledge the considerable values and importance of education to develop the level of consciousness of the society in every aspects of life and for further technological and economic advancement. Because of this understanding of the value of education, the community established a committee consisting of 5 members to carry out responsibilities related to education.

Table– 4.11: Educational Status of HHH by sex

<i>Educational Status of HHH</i>	<i>Sex of HHH</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Illiterate	2	11	13 (14.94%)
Read & Write Only	30	13	43 (49.43%)
1-4th Grade	12	7	19 (21.84%)
5-8th Grade	8	2	10 (11.49%)
9-12th Grade	1	1	2 (2.30%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>87</b>

According to Zumra, he doesn't want the children of the Awra-Amba community to do activities as he used to it in his life. He wants them to be creative, innovative and capable of initiating the better world through individual and groups cumulative efforts. In this regard, as can be seen from table-12, all interviewed 88 households 68 of them have on average 2.56 school age children. From these 68 households 67 percent of the respondents are sending their children (on average 2.55) to school.

Table –4.12: Mean Number of Children by Schooling Status

<i>Sex of HHH</i>	<i>Mean No. of Children by Schooling Status and Sex of HHH</i>			
	<i>Total School Age</i>	<i>School in</i>	<i>Not in School</i>	<i>School Drop out</i>
Male HHH	2.82	2.8	1	
Female HHH	2.21	2.18		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.56 (68 HHH)</b>	<b>2.55 (67 HHH)</b>	<b>1.00 (2 HHH)</b>	<b>1.00 (1 HHH)</b>

Children in Awra-Amba as explained in the previous chapter are free to think, independent and allowed to come up with new ideas. For this end, they are always motivated to read books, to raise and drop ideas, study and to conduct research. Zumra is always telling them that if they don't come up with new ideas, and can't create valuable things to the well being of their community (country), where and what is the significance of their education. If they are going to school simply for reading and writing they are good for nothing and it is better for them to work their agricultural activity with out wasting their time. So, education in Awra-Amba is deeply internalized unlike the other society in their surrounding which seems to understand education as a means for change of livelihood. Hence, education in the community recognised and implemented as key factors of development.

In this small village of about 388 people, there are one small, one medium and one big communal library where members can use and read which is one of the manifestation of the love and nostalgia of the community to wisdom, as part of an instrument through which the community could bridge itself to the rest of people in any country.

Table – 4.13: Responses on whether HHHs are beneficiary of Mass Media and press

<i>Sex of HHH</i>	<i>Are you beneficiary of mass media?</i>		
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male HHH	51 (96.2%)	2 (3.8%)	53 (100%)
Female HHH	30 (85.7%)	5 (14.3%)	35 (100%)
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>81 (92%)</i></b>	<b><i>7 (8%)</i></b>	<b><i>88 (100%)</i></b>

Regarding the exposure to mass media, 92 percent of the respondents in this rural community are beneficiary of mass media and press. The type of the media and press they use includes Radio and Newspaper. From the 92 percent of the households who have exposure for mass media, 98.8 percent of them have responded that they are being benefited from their exposure to mass media. They appreciate the information they are getting from the mass media and press.

The types of benefits they maximize includes awareness on current national and international issues 33.3 percent /enables to shares experiences of others in technologies 25.7 percent, market information, the worst effects of harmful traditional practices 29.8 percent /though internalized in advance/ and others which further broadens the scope and quality of understanding of the community members. See the following household survey result of the research study mainly on the benefit they are obtaining from their exposure to mass media.

Table – 4.14: Responses on types of Benefits obtained from Mass Media and press

<b>What are the types of Benefits?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Getting awareness on country dev't & International affairs	40 (37.7%)	17 (26.1%)	57 (33.3%)
Able to share experience of others	5 (4.7%)	2 (3.1%)	7 (4.1%)
Knowing new technologies, knowledge, laws & orders	24 (22.6%)	20 (30.8%)	44 (25.7%)
Knowing marketing information & harmful traditions	32 (30.2%)	19 (29.2%)	51 (29.8%)
Mental satisfactions	5 (4.7%)	7 (10.8%)	12 (7%)
	<b>106 (100%)</b>	<b>65 (100%)</b>	<b>171 (100%)</b>

**Demographic Characteristics of the study area**

Population is considered as a resource because of the fact that it is the source of the important factor of production like labour and entrepreneurship. Since labour is one of the factor of production it follows that population growth should contribute to economic growth. All the population problems centre on this or issues of whether changes in the structure of the population add to or subtract from the economic well-being of the nation. Population might be considered as a liability rather than an asset if its growth rate is not matched by an equal or greater growth rate of the economy.

Table – 4.15: Responses on Women's Rights of using Birth Control

<b>Sex of HHH</b>	<b>Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male HHH	53 (60.2%)		53 (60.2%)
Female HHH	35 (39.8%)		35 (39.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>88 (100%)</b>		<b>88 (100%)</b>

Awra-Amba, to be sure, is an agricultural and industrialized village consisting of men and women who inhabit a common geographic area and make their living by tilling small plot of farm land weaving and spinning in a cooperative fashion. According to the household survey result,

the total number of household members living in Awra-Amba community is 327 during the survey.

Regarding to the sex distribution, of the total 327 household members, 164 are male and 163 are female. Demographically, of the total household members, 48.62 percent are active labour forces (15-64 years of age), 2.14 percent are elders (>64 years of age) and the remaining 40.7 percent are children (<15 years of age). This implies that, the active and productive labour composition of the community exceeds the non productive labour by 5.78 percent. In other words, the labour dependency ratio existing in the community is about 74 percent. This is to mean that, 100 productive labours would have responsibility of shouldering other 74 non productive labours in the community. Accordingly, this figure of dependency ratio existing in the community is lower than the regional average figure (101 percent) of the same. In line to this, the average household family size in the community is 3.73 which are smaller than the regional figure (5.2) by 1.47. We might have inferred that there is better awareness of family planning management of the community. See the following household survey result for the detail.

Table – 4.16: Distribution of HHs Members by Sex of HHH

<i>Sex of HHH</i>	<i>No. of Family Members by Sex</i>			<i>Average Family Size</i>	<i>No of Family Members by Age Catagory</i>			<i>Labour Dependence Ratio</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>&lt; 15 Years</i>	<i>15-64 Years</i>	<i>&gt;64 years</i>	
Male	135	101	236	4.47	104	130	3	0.82
Female	29	62	91	2.6	29	59	4	0.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.74</b>

In other way of expression, 63.6, 35.2 and 1.1 percents of the total interviewed households have a family size ranging from 1 up to 4, 5 up to 8 and greater than 8 that could be possibly grouped as having a small, medium and large family size respectively.

See the following household survey result for the detail

Table – 4.17: Family Size of HHH by Category and Sex

Sex of HHH	No. of HHHs by Category of Family Size			
	Small Family Size (upto 4)	Medium Family Size (5-8)	Large Family Size (>8)	Total
Male HHH	26	26	1	53
Female HHH	30	5		35
<b>Total</b>	<b>56 (63.6%)</b>	<b>31(35.2%)</b>	<b>1(1.1%)</b>	<b>88(100%)</b>

This would imply the existence of a better awareness and practice of family planning in the community which would have its own impact on household food security, economic transformation and concomitant development

#### **4.4. Economic Transformation in the community**

Ethiopia, with a population of more than 70 million, occupies 1.1 million hectares of land. Agriculture, employing about 85% of the work force is serving as a mainstay of Ethiopia economy. Subsistence based small holder agriculture is the prominent farming system in Ethiopia where it attributes about 50% of GPP. /workneh – 2006:36/.

The agriculture of Ethiopia, however, has not been able to feed the rural population, let alone all population of the country. The agriculture has been productive enough to ensure farm house holds food security through own production and/or purchasing capability. Both chronic and transitory food insecurity is severe in Ethiopia /FDRE & MoFED, 2002/. Currently, about five million people are entrenched in chronic food insecurity-poverty trap. Of this, 2.5 million are in Amhara region. Apart from the chronic food insecurity problem, an additional of three million people faces seasonal hunger almost every year. The most important reasons for chronic rural food insecurity in Ethiopia and in the region in particular include unreliable rainfall pattern, small

size land holding per household /more than one third of the households own farm less than 0.5 hectare, which is under rain fed agriculture and inadequate for subsistence production of food crops/, use of less productive traditional production technology, soil degradation; internal conflicts and poor transport and infrastructure /FDRE 1996/. To transform agriculture in to sustainable and more productive sector, it should be made to provide better food access to rural population through direct food production or indirectly by enabling people to purchase food, using cash income from marketed non-food farm products and off-farm cash income /FDRE, 2002/. But we observe things otherwise.

Regarding to the study area, the characteristics of the farming system is nearly weinadega agro-ecology, where the dominant crops are sorghum, teff, and bolekie being grown on 10.23 hectares of land owned by 96 households communally. If the land holding of the whole community is divided among all household heads, it would be nearly 0.091 hectares of land. Accordingly, as compared to the regional figure, it is almost insignificant. But the whole area inhabited by the community is about 17 hectares of land which includes their houses, library, milestone, and other constructions.

The cropping pattern of the study area is a mixed system and the three major agricultural land uses are field crop production, homestead crop production and pasture production. Though, animals and pasture production are being implemented in Awra-Amba, animals are fed at home because of shortage of land for pasture. By the same analogy /absence of farming land/, fallowing is not practiced in Awra-Amba. The land used for farming in Awra-Amba is medium in its fertility where the community could produce 32, 118 and 5 quintals of teff, maize and bologie crops respectively in 1998/99 production years from a total of 10.23 hectare of farm land. See

also the yield of each crop production from the following table of secondary data information community.

*Table –4.18: Communal Crops Production and Productivity in 1998/99 production year*

<b>Major Crops</b>	<b>Land use (hr)</b>	<b>Production (qt)</b>	<b>Yield (qt/hr)</b>
<b>Teff</b>	5.75	32	5.57
<b>Maize</b>	3.73	118	31.64
<b>Bollokie</b>	0.75	5	6.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.23</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>15.15</b>

For considerable homestead production, shortage of garden area is claimed to be significant constraint. Absence of farm land is very serious challenge not only for homestead vegetable production but also for crop production. The land in the hands of the whole community which is about 0.09 hectares in average is very insignificant for the society even to sustain let alone to talk about food security. The community is, of course, flexible and open to accept and apply yield increasing technologies to enhance the income status of its members /individually or through their cooperatives/. Regardless of the common production technologies i.e. fertilizers and high yielding varieties of the major crops that are used to enhance production and productivity, the community could not support itself through income from agriculture. This is because as they explained the land is not enough even for the community to sleep, let alone to till. However, crop production increases since the past three years because of use of agricultural inputs, application of cultural practices, availability of technical supports from agricultural experts, favourable climate and distribution of rain fall pattern and the newly established supportive working culture of the community. Accordingly, 95 percent of households assured the increased production as the cumulative effects of the above mentioned factors. See the following table for household responses on reasons for increased crop production of 1998/99 E.C.



Table –4.19: Responses on Reasons for Increase of Crop Production

<b>What are the Reasons for Increase in Crop prod. Of 1998/99?</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Using Agricultural Inputs	35 (34.3%)	18 (27.7%)	53 (31.7%)
Availability of technical supports	3 (2.9%)	1 (1.5%)	4 (2.4%)
Existence of favourable climates & good rainfall distribution	34 (33.3%)	26 (40%)	60 (35.9%)
Using Compost	5 (4.9%)	7 (10.8%)	12 (7.2%)
Making Cultural practices timely	25 (24.5%)	13 (20%)	38 (22.8%)
	<b>102 (100%)</b>	<b>65 (100%)</b>	<b>167 (100%)</b>

Besides, the shortage of farm land which is a pressing problem of the community has also forced them to engage in these none-farm income generating activities. These none-farm income generating activities are significantly considered to be important means of supporting the livelihood of all of households in Awra-Amba. Almost all are engaged in none-farm income generating activities through out the year. According to the household survey result, 97.7 percent, 94.3 percent, and 73.9 percent of the households have responded on handcraft, agriculture and trading activity to be their first, second and third rank of occupation respectively on which their livelihood based upon. See also the following survey result table on household occupations by rank.

Table – 4.20: Households' Occupations by Rank and sex of HHH

<b>Sex of HHH</b>	<b>Responses on type of occupation by Rank</b>					
	<b>1st rank</b>		<b>2nd Rank</b>		<b>3rd Rank</b>	
	<b>Handicraft</b>	<b>Trading</b>	<b>Agr.</b>	<b>Trading</b>	<b>Agr.</b>	<b>Trading</b>
Male HHH	52	1	50	1	1	41
Female HHH	34	1	33	0	0	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>86 (97.7%)</b>	<b>2 (2.3%)</b>	<b>83 (94.3%)</b>	<b>1 (1.1%)</b>	<b>1 (1.1%)</b>	<b>65 (73.9%)</b>

From the focus group discussion and household survey results, the off-farm income opportunities /e.g. handcraft, agriculture including allied agricultural activities, petty trading activities/ followed by self employment occupations as a whole are very important and contribute

significant share of household income. This implies the presence of already locally developed strategies on how to promote non-farm activities that are linked with available resources and forward and backward linkage activities of agriculture and small scale / / industry processing through diversifications of household occupations.

The remarkable developments /achievements/ observed in this community could further be enhanced through the provision of rural credit facilities as most of the households face serious shortage of money to undertake none-farm income generating activities and achieve beyond the already achieved success. Accordingly, among 88 interviewed households, 94 percent of them do face shortage of money (insufficient money) that could not enable them as profitable as intended. It is only 5 percent of respondents that had had access to credit the source of which were ACSI /Amhara credit and saving institution/ ten years ago.

Table 4.21: Responses on having shortage of money for Non Farm Activities by sex of HHH

<i>Sex of HHH</i>	<i>Do you have shortage of money by Sex of HHH</i>		
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male HHH	50	3	53
Female HHH	32	2	34
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>82</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>	<b><i>87</i></b>

For the better enhancement and further diversification of their economy, 97 percent of the households have responded that they badly need skill trainings on modern weaving and spinning, general mechanics and metal works, wood works and other trainings that could enable them create or innovate activities. See the following table of survey result on household responses on the type of skill training they need to promote none- farm income generating activities.

Table- 4.22: Responses on Skill Training Needed on Non-farm income generating activities

What Types of Training do you need?	Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH		
	Male	Female	Total
Modern Weaving & Spining	47 (35.6%)	31 (41.3%)	78 (37.7%)
General Mechanics & Metal Works	50 (37.9%)	27 (36%)	77 (37.2%)
Modern Bee Keeping	28 (21.2%)	17 (22.7%)	45 (21.7%)
Innovative work creation	7 (5.3%)	0	7 (3.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>132 (100%)</b>	<b>75 (100%)</b>	<b>207 (100%)</b>

#### 4.4.1. Food Security and Vulnerability in the Community

When we come to the concept, FAO has defined the observation of food security as assuring to all human being the physical and economic access to the basic foods they need. This concept depicts the aspects of availability, access, and utilization all times of enough food for an active healthy life”

#### **Food availability of the Community**

Findings of welfare monitoring survey /CSA, 2004/ indicates that only 1.53 percent of the households of the region in the rural areas are found to have the current year production which lasts in feeding themselves more than 12 months. More than half of the households (i.e. 65.74%) production is sufficient only to feed themselves for 9 months period or less. In Awra-Amba Community 100 percent of the household respondents assured as all have food secured/covered all months of the year.

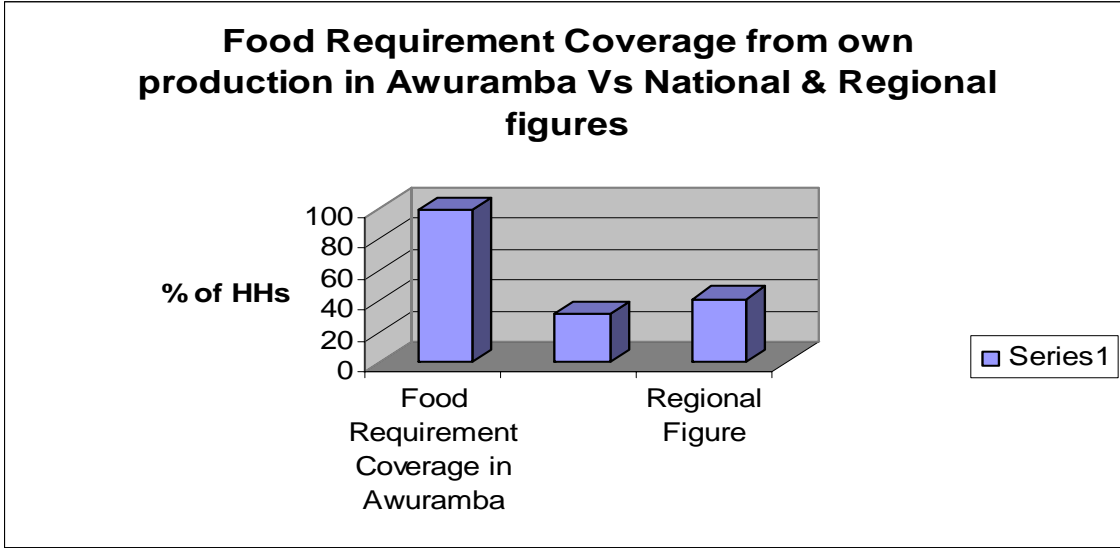


Figure 4.1: Comparison of HHs 10–12 months of food requirement coverage with National and Regional figures

When we see the utilization /consumption aspect of the region, there is lack of awareness on what to eat how to prepare food etc. In addition, there is a problem of culture /feeding habit which needs great concerns (CSA, 2004). In the case of Awra-Amba, extravagance or unwise utilization of resources is considered as harmful traditions or bad practices. The availability of food crop production and productivity of Awra-Amba is 15quntal/ha. Comparison of average food crops productivity of Awra-Amba Community with national and Amhara is depicted in the figure bellow.

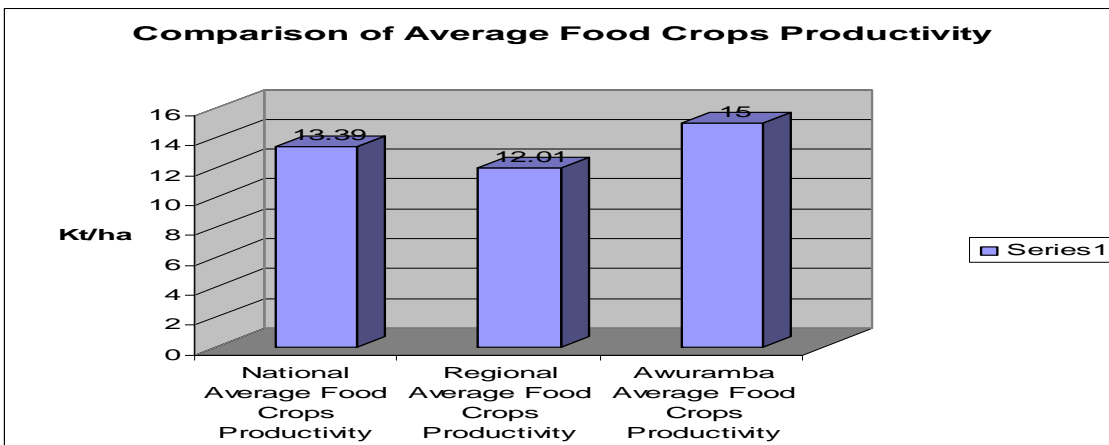


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Food Crops Productivity with National and Regional Figures

Despite the facts that the recent regional food balance sheet computed by BoFED(march 2002) based on the major food crops produced in main season shows an upswing in the food availability ratio i.e. 99.7%(considering 2.25 quintals in wheat, equivalent/person /year which is more than 2,093 calories per person per a day, on the assumption that the contribution that could come from the major food items account to be 85% of the total calories intake of a person),on the contrary, the same sources reveals the prevalence of food shortage, as there were about 3.2 million people(19% of the Amhara) in the 66 woredas (58% of the woredas in the region) exposed to drought and disaster in the year 2000/01. The graphical presentation of comparison among per-capita food crops Production supply of Awra-Amba community with the standard per-capita food requirement is shown in the table below.

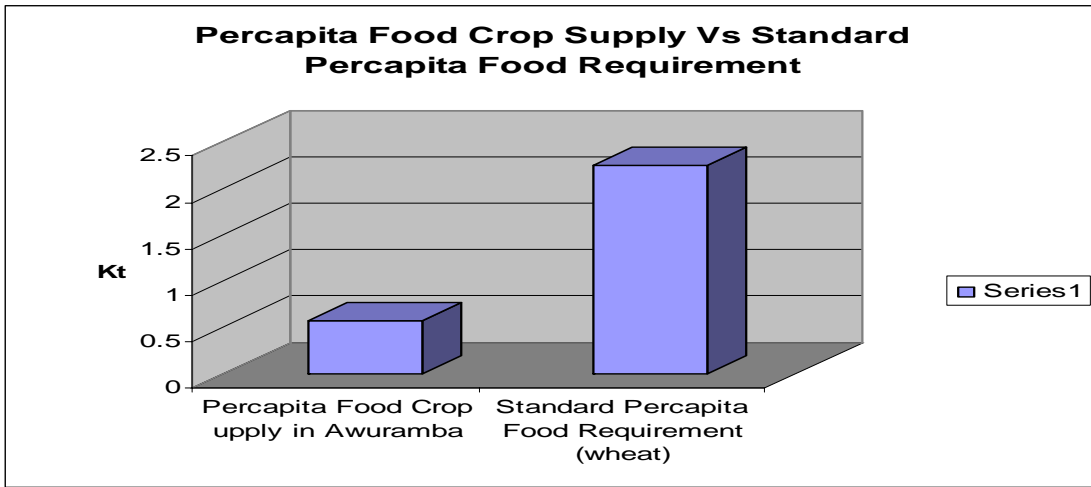


Figure 4.3: Comparison of Per-capita Food Crops Production with the Standard

### Access to food in the Community

Access to food is another aspect of food security. Access to food is another aspect of food self-sufficient; the problem at the household level is apparent (BoFED, 2002). Although compared with other regions, Amhara has a high population of livestock approximately 35% of the nation’s animal population with low utilizations rate due to lack of information (BoA, 1997). Agriculture

is a broad sector constituting sub sector that produces a wide range of products. To main reliable development alternatives at present to accelerate the development of agriculture is promotions of mixed farming or diversification .Promoting mixed farming on the limited plots land to which farmers have access will make a significant contribution to make farmers incomes more secure is the case at present in Awra-Amba community. Practicing diversification in agriculture also contributes to a more efficient utilization of both labour and land resources in Awra-Amba community. There are more than five types of diversified source of income both with communally and privately as can see from the able below:

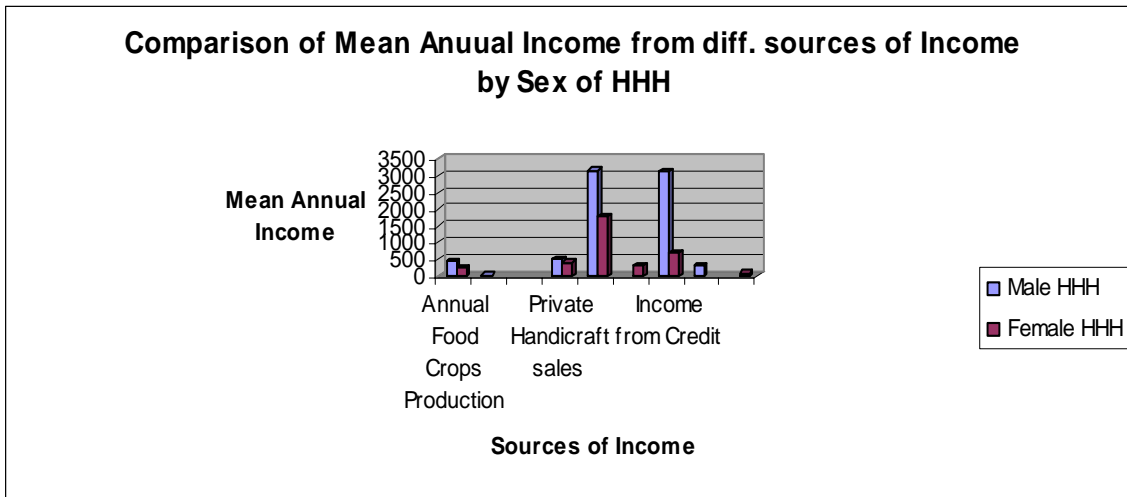


Figure 4.4: Comparison of HHs Average (Mean) Income from different sources

**Per-capita income of the Community**

The mean average per-capita income of Awra-Amba is 1004.9. researchers of food security offices of the Amhara considered income level, the annual per-capita income of the household should be 840 birr is the standard per-capita income according to the current price of 1998. As you can see from the figures below the mean average per-capita income of Awra-Amba is higher than the regional standard of per-capital income.

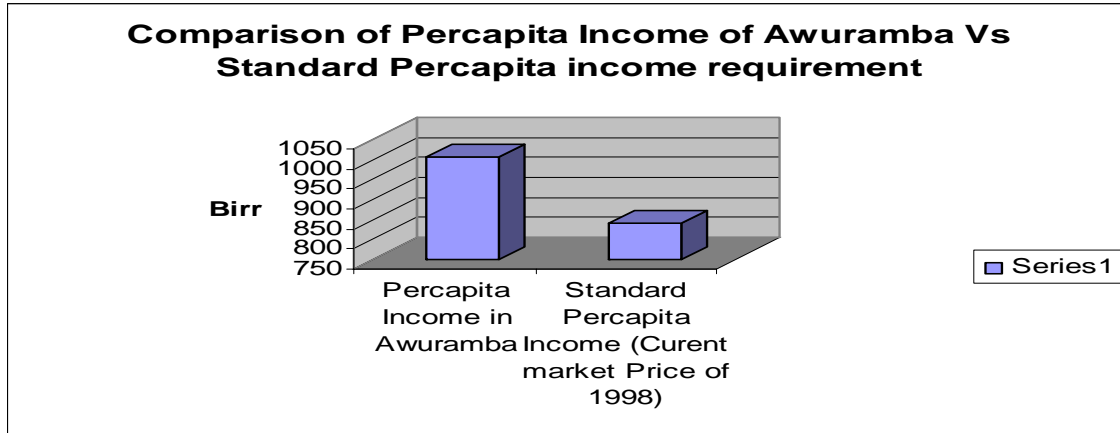


Figure 4.5 Comparison of per capita income of Awra-Amba versus standard per capita income Requirement

#### 4.4.2. Income and Resource Management in the Community

In Awra-Amba making men and women co-equals in the economic life of the community has destroyed a women’s economic dependence upon her husband. This is due to the fact that as members of the community women can working and create an income equally as men can do. Since the women can work every types of work as what men can work, they are not restricted only in the domestic sphere. They earn their own income from the community’s share and their private income generating activities, and can support their family as equally as their husbands. Accordingly, a woman of 42 years of age said that she participate equally in the economic activities of the community and could get as equal share as her husband so that we equally support our family without dependence on one another. Similarly, a divorced woman of 45 years of age said that I had no fear of losing my sources of economic support when I divorced. Hence, in Awra-Amba, a woman satisfies her economic needs, not as a dependent of her husband whose work provides for her, but as independent worker in her own right whose contribution to the economic welfare of the community almost equals to that of her husband.

Moreover, by destroying the traditional division of work based on sex, woman's inferior position in the Awra-Amba economy was abolished and, as it has been said previously, sexual division of work is minimal. Both men and women shared the work in the kitchen and other traditional "female" occupations, and they both shared the community work, and in other traditional "male" occupations. It might be said that it is the land shortage that leads men to cross over in female dominated tasks like weaving cotton, and that scarcity of resources and exclusion by others that has lead the Awra-Amba community members to integrate and cooperate highly among themselves and peaceful coexistence. The study however shows that the life style of Awra-Amba is highly related with their value systems and principles. It is a common practice in Awra-Amba that while women work in the fields like clearing /Gulgualo/ and sowing, or while they work in the weaving machines, or when they go to market, men take their turn at kitchen work.

In Awra-Amba, weaving and spinning activities significantly increased the cash incomes of members relative to their income from agricultural activities. During 2006/07, Awra-Amba distributed an annual female household income of Birr 2,439 and male annual income of Birr 4,507 in 2006/07, which is annual income. The cash income from weaving is greater by 2306 birr per member than that of farming income. The total estimated average income of households was only birr 3,748 for the year 2006/07. This income include the income of the couple from the community's annual income distribution (income that generated from the community agricultural and weaving activities) and the income from family weaving at the household level which is an average of annual income 1004.83 birr. See the following household survey result table on annual average household income in 1998 by different source of income and sex.

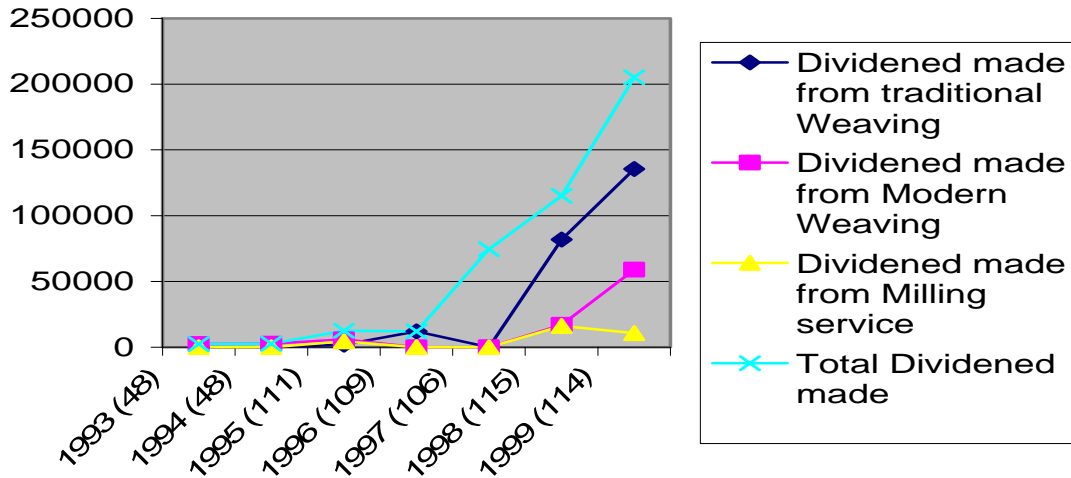


Table –4.23: Annual Average HHs Income in 1998 fromy different Sources of Income

<i>Sources of Annual Income</i>	<i>Average Annual Income (Birr) by Sources of Income and Sex of HHH</i>		
	<i>Male (N)</i>	<i>Female (N)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Annual Food Crops Production	437.56 (50)	252.00 (28)	370.95 (78)
Vegetables & Fruits Production	30.00 (1)		30.00 (1)
Private Handicraft sales	505.80 (51)	401.96 (28)	469.00 (79)
Communal works Earning	3168.00 (50)	1800.00 (28)	2676.92 (78)
Relative Transfers		300.00 (1)	300.00 (1)
Credit	3134.71 (7)	700.00 (3)	2404.30 (10)
Bee Keeping	288.80 (5)		288.80 (5)
Others		80.00 (1)	80.00 (1)
<i>Diversified Sources of Income</i>		<i>Annual mean</i>	
Annual Food Crops Production		370.95 (78)	
Vegetables & Fruits Production		30.00 (1)	
Private handicraft		469 (79)	
Communal works Earning		2676.92 (78)	
Transfers from Relatives		300.00 (1)	
Credit		2404.30 (10)	
Bee Keeping		288.80 (5)	
Others		80.00 (1)	

The data from the household survey indicated that related to the land shortage of the community, farming is a secondary source of cash income in Awra-Amba, which constitutes the smallest total household income that both men and women are benefiting from. Women’s cash incomes are as equal as that of men in the community. Awra-Amba narrowed the gap in income by gender among household members. Those separated, divorcees, and widow equally share benefits of the community. They have no fear of loosing their husbands, because husbands are no longer the only economic providers of the family. Coming back to the changing gender roles of Awra-Amba, it is apparent from the description of the household’s resource management that its relationship involves intense economic and social cooperation. There is to be sure, a division of work based on mutual understanding in the Awra-Amba as a whole, and it should be stressed that this division is an important expression of “economic cooperation.” Hence related to the economic structure of the household the Awra-Amba has put an emphasis to end the patriarchy. The superior position of the husband that was the privilege of the “economic provider” in the

society is getting minimized significantly. The aim of the Awra-Amba then is to weaken the traditional family by destroying the seat of the father’s authority. In this it is getting success.



**Figure – 4.6: Trend of Dividend payment made to members of cooperative from Traditional and modern handicraft activities and milling services**

The figure above shows a growth in their dividend payment year after year.

### **Market access and problem of the community**

The transitions from a centrally controlled economy to market economy in the agriculture sector has stimulated the farmers to produce more products each years and to improve farming practices by using proper inputs (MOFED). As Halloway,et.al (2000) apply put it ,enhancing the ability of poor smallholders farmers to reach market and actively engage in them , poses a pressing development challenge. Difficult market access restricts opportunities for income generations. The major problems of Awra-Amba community to that restrict the market access is lack of cooperative legal personality, market centres and raw materials. The sources of raw materials are mainly from Bahir-dar, Wereta and some times from the surrounding market and Adiss-Ababa.

The major buyers of the Awra-Amba Community products are traders, visitors, farmers and weavers of the neighbouring kebele significantly as you can see from the table below

**Table 4.24: Frequency of Responses on the potential Customers for the products by sex of HHH**

<i>Potential Customers</i>	<i>Frequency of Responses by Sex of HHH</i>		
	<i>Male HHH</i>	<i>Female HHH</i>	<i>Total</i>
Traders	51	35	86
Visitors of the community	49	32	81
Community Members themselves	37	32	69
Farmers & Weavers of neighbouring kebeles	45	31	76
Trade Exhibition & Bazar Participants	0	2	2

#### **4.4.3. Change in Expenditure Patterns in the Community**

The effect of Awra-Amba resource management is strongest for women that it has considerable impact on their expenditure patterns. The cash expenditure on food grains is positively related to the income of the household, given the number of months of food required. Household members have some necessary expenditure on food items, cloths, medical costs, children education costs and other expenditures on cotton and other items necessary for weaving activities, and also for other industrial goods like gas oil. Cash in the hands of the couple living in a household understood this expenditure based on their mutual consent, rather than the authority of one over the household resource.

In this regard a woman of 57 old aged who is my key informant has said “*I buy food grains, butter and I buy oil and other food items. If I told my husband to buy some items and other additional ones he could do that, no problem. The income we got is ours, for common use for our own consumption*”. Hence women retained control of their incomes.

There are no needs of transferring cash to their husbands. Awra-Amba incomes seemed to have led to a more open recognition of this. In Awra-Amba household whoever has money buys food. In deed one of the older women argued: when in the household the man and the women are the same as regards expenditure. A man of 50 also said *“Our women help us in man ways. They do have equal access to income. They have equal household resources. They are also equally responsible for household expenditures. They have also a good ability to manage cash and help their husbands”*.

A man remarked that an effect of Awra-Amba household resource management is that more women bought their own clothes, for their husbands and children, to help their husbands. These expenditure patterns are associated with other women ceased to have regular cooking responsibilities. Then, if still active, they have more time to earn cash and made larger purchases. They also spent cash on medical and education expenses for their children and husbands. They saw themselves as having to provide for their own needs where possible, and also sought to aid their children and husbands. The husband too has same feeling of responsibility to their wives and children.

In this way Awra-Amba equalizes resources access and might have shared the burden of household subsistence provision among the couple a shift that was absolute at one end i.e. the husband as economic provider. See the following household survey result on annual average household expenditure

Table – 4.25: Average Annual HHs Expenditure by type and sex of HHH

Types of Annual Expenditure Items	Responses on average annual expenditure by Sex of HHH		
	Male	Female	Total
Food	51 (18.9%)	29 (18.9%)	80 (18.9%)
Medication	49 (18.1%)	28 (18.3%)	77 (18.2%)
Clothing	50 (18.5%)	29 (18.9%)	79 (18.7%)
Education	36 (13.3%)	21 (13.7%)	57 (13.5%)
Power Energy	47 (17.4%)	27 (17.6%)	74 (17.5%)
House construction	13 (4.8%)	1 (0.6%)	14 (3.3%)
Others (raw materials, water )	24 (8.9%)	18 (11.8%)	42 (9.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>270 (100%)</b>	<b>153 (100%)</b>	<b>423 (100%)</b>

However, the ability of the members to some extent depended on the entire sources of the community, which has a very limited amount of arable land and depended on traditional and modern weaving activities, which are very prominent sources of income for the entire members. Hence their life continues not towards a hand-to –mouth pattern like before now. An old man of 60 explains the relative poverty of the community said “Some of our members who migrated to southern part of the country come and visit us frequently. But they don’t like to stay with us. There are still very few who left us and migrated to other areas as a result of our government attack. But women who are separated or divorced from the migrants are still with us”

**Per-capita Annual Food Expenditure**

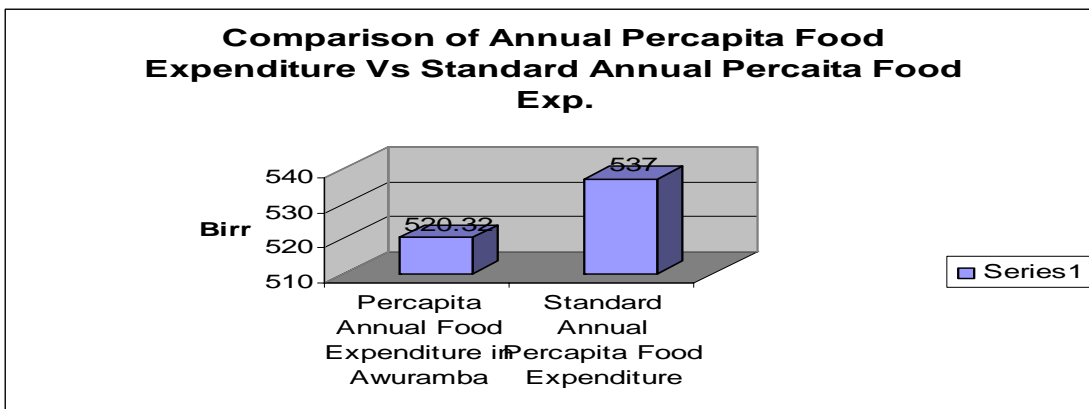


Figure 4.7: Comparison of Percapita Annual Food Expenditure Vs the Standard

### Status of living standard in the Community

Living standard conditions of the peoples are one of the development indicators in social and economic and cultural dimensions. The living standards of the community have improved, as reported by majority of the respondents as indicated in table 4.26.

**Table 4.26: Responses on the status of living standard**

Status of living standard/sex of HHs	Responses on status by year			
	1998(compared to 97)		1999(compared to 98)	
	improved	not improved	improved	not improved
<b>Food Availability</b>				
Male	53		52	
Female	35		35	
<b>total</b>	<b>88</b>		<b>87</b>	
<b>Quality of shelter</b>				
Male	34	19	34	18
Female	18	17	19	16
<b>total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Quality of Clothing</b>				
Male	53		53	
Female	34		35	
<b>total</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>88</b>	
<b>Access to social services</b>				
Male	53		53	
Female	34	1	34	1
<b>total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>87</b>	

### 4.5. Political Transformation in the Community

It is becoming evident that community development initiatives which contribute effectively to economic and social development can only prosper if accompanied by profound transformations in the social economic structures of a society (*stavenhappen in pearse & stiefel 1979*). Development necessary involves structural transformation which implies political, social and economical changes (*Hettne, 1982*). Rural developments takes place in a political context and it means nothing but a social transformation in rural areas by which poverty will be eradicated through attacking the existing power structure. This has not been conspicuous in past development thinking which has assumed a social frame work that will change without conflict. Transformation means those without conflict. Transformation means those without power must

gradually gain this to achieve some basic needs at the expense of those who already possess considerably more than basic need (*Bengtsson, 1979*).

Another area of concern is the different relationship between autonomy and interdependence. Autonomy is the capacity of individuals' communities, and national states to make independence decisions. Working against autonomy is the increasing levels of social, economic and political interdependence at all levels of global society. Without significant autonomy there can be no genuine growth with equality.

The most important achievement assured by the Awra-Amba community is participation of women in all matters that affect their life. It is acknowledged that considerable work has been done by the international community, the United Nations system, development organizations, and women themselves to promote and protect women's legal rights for equal participation in all spheres of life. A number of international declarations, plans of action, strategies and legal instruments have been put in place to ensure this. However, as the picture of women's share in the key decision making processes shows, women's marginalization and subordinate position is a global phenomenon which transcends class and geographical boundaries. The most important issue to be raised which is uniquely achieved by the Awra-Amba society is absolute participation of women in all aspects that affects their life.

#### **4.5.1. Social Control and Organization in the Community**

Although the various Awra-Amba committees are held on a temporary and rotation basis, those who happen to hold these committees do shoulder considerable responsibilities. Moreover, as is noted below, though the tenure of committee is limited to two or three years, only a small number

of Awra-Amba possess the necessary skill required to cope with the complexities of such responsibilities as chair man or chairperson, secretary, treasurers, etc. So that in effect these committees rotate among a small core of twelve to fifteen persons.

In this regard, a woman of 57 years, who was my key informant, says: we elect those of our members who can read and write, who have a good management skill, who have a good exposure to Bahir Dar and other towns for our public relation. Those who have these qualities are elected repeatedly. Constant surveillance of the general meeting is subject to its power of recall. Committees, in Awra-Amba are therefore, elected by general assembly on the basis of ability and demonstrated performance, and one which is always open to recruits chosen by the community meeting should it chosen by the community meeting should it deem them capable of holding committee responsibilities.

There are 13 different committees: rules and regulations preparation committee, security committee, appeal hearing committee, development committee, monitoring and evaluation committee, problem solving committee and etc. where women have been assigned in more than half proportion. Women not only equally represented in every committee of the community but also are significantly heard and influence every decision. Every 2-3 years these all committee members are substituted by any member of the community so that every member of the community could regularly exercise leadership. As explained at the beginning of this chapter expressing ideas, views and attitudes as free as possible is committed to have their own views and express their ideas and fully participate in family and community affairs as per their capacity. Their ideas and contribution in the community decisions are highly appreciated and applauded. These all moves are deliberately done with the intention to create well prepared, expressive and



responsible citizen. In order to understand the dynamics of social control in Awra-Amba, which has few patterns of formal authority, it is necessary to grasp an essential psychological feature of this community. The community has a committee who act as the general regulator and a sort of liaison officer for contacts and as represents the community in public, collecting prize and paying taxes to the state. The committees are elected on the basis of merit.

The general assembly meetings are made in the most important decision and sometimes those less important. The election of committee the annual income distribution, the annual planning and expansions of agricultural and other development activities all are debated in general meeting. Turning back to leadership and social control, the expansion of activities made it impossible for Awra-Amba to operate with on the basis of a general meeting alone. Hence if become necessary for them to institute a kind of farms leadership comprising different committee serve for 2-3 years. So far elections have taken place happened mans times with in 27 or 30 years period. The leaders act as patrons and they are considered as “first among equals” perhaps a closer follow up of roles and status might reveal emerging in equalities.

Hence, leadership responsibility within the Awra-Amba is an assignment give to committee members by the general meeting regardless of the sexes. It should nevertheless be emphasized that those who occupy these committee enjoy no special privileges and receive no material rewards. Their power, moreover, is limited by the fact that major decisions are made, not by them, but by the general assembly which can be held any time when it is necessary.

**Table 4.27 Members Participation in Social Organization**

<i>Committees</i>	<i>Members</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Development Committee	4	1	5
Controlling Committee for Development Committee	1	2	3
Weekly Development Committee	4	1	5
Controlling Committee for Weekly Development Committee	1	2	3
Complain Hearing Committee	1	2	3
Education Committee	3	2	5
Lost Money Handing Committee	2	1	3
Work Assignment Committee	1	2	3
Elderly Care Committee	3	2	5
Patients Care Committee	2	3	5
Security Committee	3		3
Reception Committee	2	2	4
By Law Preparation Committee	8	7	15
Sanitation Committee	2	1	3
Problem Solving Committee	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>68</b>

Source: Solomon, 2005

Every legal systems and political organization of the community are intentionally established in the way that satisfies the political, social and economic interest and participation of men, women & children. The political transformation of the Awra-Amba community expressed in absolute participation of women, a deliberate up bringing of children and full participation of the members of the community in all matters paved a way for other people in their surrounding to think freely (to think out of the box) and go in their own way. Therefore the contribution that Awra-Amba is doing to the surrounding society in particular and to the country at large, is very significant above

every thing else, in the political philosophy they have towards children, women and any aspects of differences.

According to the Awra-Amba community any differences let alone among Ethiopians who are highly intermingled in different aspects, among human beings are considered as insignificant for the fact that all these differences are below the grand identity “being human” shared by all human kind. Hence Awra-Amba as a rural community is not bounded by their own economic, social & political context. They strongly argue why Ethiopia & its people remained behind the time while it is the origin of human kind and the pioneer of human civilization.

In a world where conflicts of different types (interest like territorial disputes, control of government and economic, conflicts of ideas which include ethnic conflict, religious conflict and ideological conflict) has been causing human and economic catastrophe from immemorial. Conflict of what ever kind in Awra-Amba is considered to be an event/phenomenon to be happened among individuals or groups who put themselves at one extreme and they want to solve their problems through rationale round table discussions. Therefore, conflict in all its totalities is not allowed and has no place in Awra-Amba.

The Awra-Amba communities consider people who provoke them and want to fight with them because of their attitude, philosophy of life and their other unique features as they know nothings (who don't really understand difference as the essence of humanity. So, they always want to treat this people as a child who come to attack his mother using a knife but treated otherwise i.e. kissed and told the worst side of his attempt. The only way of conflict mitigation/conflict resolution according to the philosophy of life of the Awra-Amba is through round table

discussion with the clear intention of accommodating interests of all parties in a reasonable and rationale manner.

### ***Communitarian an alternative way of life***

Awra-Amba community is an isolated establishment in the midst of Amhara peasant communities. The community consists of 96 residences or homes constructed by wooden walls, small, medium and big libraries which are constructed by indigenous products and the community themselves. The Awra-Amba community, the communitarian life, and its public images and a kibbutz derived thereof. In Awra-Amba, men, women and children work together and live in separate homes for their convenience and privacy of life.

The principal Awra-Amba ideology is “from each according to his ability and to each according to the general fund”. In principle resources are shared indiscriminately. Such features have led the people in and around neighbouring communities to develop various images about the Awra-Amba as a community in which everything is collective property including access to women and children.

The community consists of different categories of people; the elderly and sick, adult men and women, young boys and girls and children. There is no division of labour among the able-bodied. They are engaged in farming, weaving and spinning activities without making any division of labour by sex. Kitchen cooking activities are exclusively done by both men and women on the basis of ability, skills and availability of labour. Weaving and spinning are considered as the most profitable activity since it constitutes the lion's share of the community income. Indeed, the community is also known for its quality cloth. Different kinds of clothes are

produced ranging from utilitarian to decorative objects. Weaving and spinning are practiced intensively and a big corrugated iron sheets house has been constructed to serve as a workshop by themselves in 2007.

The kitchen is one kind, organized under sections for fasting and non -fasting food as it is not necessary. There is no preparation of alcoholic beverage including ‘tella’. Children are engaged in attending learning and studying playing games and helping their parents in accordance with their timetable they have for every weeks. Children’s of Awra-Amba community are collecting fire wood and fetching water, weaving and spinning .Care for Childs are also the daily routines performed indiscriminately by taking turns. There are no celebrations of holidays except new years. There is no work on all the saints’ day plus the Sabbath which amounts to more than half of a month in other parts of the country (Amhara region (*Professional Associations of Sociologist and Anthropologist, 2007, P.42*). As opposed to the researcher sight, some of the saints days such as st. Georgis, st. Michael and st. Mary’s days are celebrated and the local people and the clergy from church are invited to attend the feast (Ibid). No ways in Awra-Amba community.

### ***Common Property of Awra-Amba***

The study shows that any person who is attracted by the values and principles of Awra-Amba and can respect these values and principles can join this community. Hence those elderly and the sick members are those who joined their community by own initiative as they are attracted by the principles and good deeds of the community, are also distributed through their social security fund to the elderly and the sick who cannot now actively participate in the economic activities.

The community owns unfairly a small compound: a grinding mill since 1995 through Amhara development Association support; a weaving and spinning workshop (constructed by Netherland Embassy and ESRDF of Amhara; 10.5 ha. of farm land livestock (16 oxen, 11 cows, 14 carts (tija) 1 donkey, 4 sheep's etc). All are considered as community property. There are any other elements of private property to increase their source of income through weaving, spinning, bee keeping etc in their private residence to cover their personal expenses. Food and dormitory services are occurred privately in according to individual convenience and even to motivate higher performers and agreed with the free market competition and policy.

#### **4.6. The Contributions of Awra-Amba to Rural- Development**

The government of federal democratic republic of Ethiopia has already set basic economic development goals. In order to achieve these economic development goals, it is imperative to have a complete rural development vision. The government is embarking agricultural led industrialization development strategy, so as to realize its economic development objective.

According to FDRE rural development policies, strategies and directives document, one of the basic directives of rural development strategy is extensive and proper utilization of human labour. In a county where there is scares capital, maximum utilization of human labour and natural resources is logical. The quest for rural development leadership and social mobilization has therefore key place in our development endeavours so as to attain the strategy and directives. One of the best contributions of Awra-Amba community to rural development at least in short run is for social mobilization and rural development leadership. Government and non government organization are asked them as an instrument for social mobilization in different mass medial of regional, national and international wave length for multidimensional purposes.

#### **4.6.1. Tool for Social Mobilization**

The concept of social mobilization stems from the concept of social capital. Social mobilization emanates from the recognition that a genuine democratic participatory approach to development is essential element for success and sustainability. Awra-Amba community would play a great role in realizing the social mobilization strategy of the country for rural development. It enables to organize for collective action, by pooling resources and building social solidarity required to resolve common problems and work towards community advancement.

It is one of the best practices of Awra-Amba in empowerment of women and men to organize their own democratically self governing groups or community their initiatives and commitments. Member, groups /community organization which enable them to initiate and control there own personal and communal development as opposed to mere participation in an initiative designed by an external organizations (laws, policies , strategies , development theory imported) from industrialized country in our case has challenged by Awra-Amba Community.

Social mobilization is an alternative approach to traditional (indigenous) approach of rural community to development which parts the people first and peoples them for participation, decision and all kind of empowerment. Social mobilization is empowerment of people including marginalized and vulnerable group /community through awareness creation as well as self-organization to encourage the people to make use of their own potential and resources. Joint learning (self- educating of Awra-Amba creative knowledge diffusion based on good practices and innovative learning approved in participatory planning are entry point for a people (community central development process to achieve short medium and long development on

suitable manner with democratic participation of peoples. Arranging and creating different events usually have positive contributions in the process of social mobilization. Among the different event annual experience sharing events and annual farmers' festivals are the key events.

The Awra-Amba has fulfilled all the criteria set by rural development ministry office to select model community for social mobilization strategies. The communities (members) are an exemplary and model community for the implementation of the Social Mobilization Strategy due to the following reasons:-

- They are against dependency syndrome,
- They have an open door policy to accept new ideas and rural transformations,
- They have willingness to transfer their experience to others,
- They have willingness to practice new technology,
- They are being exemplary and prominent even in community work,
- Awra-Amba People /communities/ has committed to fight poverty, hunger and diseases and backwardness.
- They have clear and transparent social committee for development arrangement and program implementations.
- They have brought tangible development change using local potentials.

Awra-Amba community has conflict resolution mechanisms to protect human and property rights. There are many other social control committees in the community as it has been explained in chapter 4. Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are also important so that dispute can be resolved quickly and less formally as it has been practiced in Awra-Amba Community and it is good opportunity to disseminate to the rest of the county as experience sharing. Principle and



values of Awra-Amba Community like trust, mutually, solidarity; honestly, loves respects are important means for sensitivity and commitment to solve their problems efforts and constraints. The value and social capital of Awra-Amba Community has a significant contribution to take into modern cooperative movement to connect the bridge of rural development.

#### **4.6.2. Relevance and Ethos to Modern Cooperative Movement**

The historical background, the life philosophy, the quality principle of the two wings of human beings made them as a unique community. The historical and eventful walk of Awra-Amba Community towards humanity, gender equality, cares for elderly people and child socializations has created a good working culture and social solidarity. The Awra-Amba Community has brought a new practical transformation in social, economical and political dimensions.

The way of life the culture of self help /mutual help, the social and economic cooperation among each others, the communitarian life and the utilization of common resources has a great role to play for modern cooperative movement. In Awra-Amba Community the experience of self-reliance, social committee, general assembly, social leadership, social responsibility, concern for the community, social capital, common property, respecting of human right, honesty and member commitment are the challenge of modern cooperative movement.

In Awra-Amba Community individual freedom is maximized, the economic power is concentrated in the hands of all members the community, slavery is not created, and inequality is buried self confidence ad self reliance social group is created. Common man /women has a voice of say in matters affecting his own social, economic and cultural frontiers embedded in the daily life their Community more than cooperative form of organizational means uphold all the traits

which form the very basis of new social order.

The realization of heaven on earth through principle of work, ,principle of moral values and liberty principle would achieved through autonomy, independence, equity, equality, social harmony, self-reliance, mutuality, solidarity, empowerment and common good as a means to love and, respect human being as above all central issues of the community. Human beings are superior form of all animals with noble mission and high purposes /Zumra, 2007. A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enter-prise (ICA, 1995) as agreed with the skywalk and fit for the value and principle of Awra-Amba Community.

The Awra-Amba Community as pioneers for new conceptualized ideal ethos and philosophies of cooperation were not created, a need for some law was not felt to regulate the working of the cooperatives like Rockdale initiated by Sir Robert Owen. Thus, in Europe, the cooperative law was the creation of the cooperatives. Contrary to this, in most of the developing countries, the cooperatives were creations of the cooperative laws (*ibid*). *As of agreed/ opposed with Ato Zumra initiated a umber of experiment for realization of heaven on earth through love and peace to all human being as an instrument of equitable social and economic justice. The Awra-Amba Community new practical work culture, commitment, values and principle might be the pioneers for all cooperative laws and legislations in our country.* In Ethiopia, context, the existing cooperative legislation with an international standard recognized by ICA and ILO for that it is member oriented, member driven, member friendly and business oriented. And also it is the governance of the entire cooperative sector, which should matter.

The modernization process of the economy system in Ethiopia distinctively started in the early 1960s as old as the founder of Awra-Amba Community. Realizing the overall pressures and giving importance for community organization for the first time in 1960, the government issued a decree No 4 of 1960 to provide for the establishment of the farm workers cooperative societies. The decree was ineffective and the government issued another proclamation in 1966 which was effective until the end of the imperial government in 1974(*ET. Negarit Gazeta, 1966*). Cooperative movement in Ethiopia has been more than four decades of its existence. In these years it has extended its scope to a plethora of activities of human life and business areas. In many countries cooperatives were established in rural areas to improve the economic status of rural people. Following the nationalization of rural land communal farming were formed through force by the Derg government and the enactment of proclamation 1978/138 comes with major objectives for developments. The proclamation stayed effective until the end of the government in 1991. The present government issued cooperative proclamation No 85/1995 and No 147/1998 which amended two times until now. (*Negarit Gazeta, 1998*). Awra-Amba Cooperatives played a great role as instruments (tools) for rural development in social, economical, cultural and political dimensions in every walk of life. In commercial agriculture, cooperatives are essential organizations to enhance bargaining power and be able to benefit the small farmers fully from the market transaction. In most of the cooperatives are located at the grass root level. The grass-root level members are not much educated and they are not sound in the knowledge.

The government took effort to form peasant associations at the grass-root level to cultivate the idea of cooperation to them and provided the legal support to protect the cooperatives. But they have not properly guided to keep uniformly to the grass-root level as in other developing

countries; the cooperative sector of Ethiopia also faces the organizational and structural resources, political and legal monitoring and evaluation problems. Of all problems are inadequate professionals, commitments, work cultures and of all denial the importance of indigenous knowledge and attitudes of the people. The people of Ethiopia have got a very long social, cultural and economic history or working together to fulfil their socio-economic needs. Agricultural production (Debo, Wenfel), social participations (Idir, Equb etc, trade and military operations) were carried out through cooperative efforts. Generally, many social events are still taking place in rural Ethiopia through collective efforts. Why it becomes inefficient and ineffective or otherwise failure in its cooperative movement in Ethiopia for more than four decades of its existence.

The need of the hour is to follow, develop and promote the principle and value of Awra-Amba, as indigenous local community from grass-root in order to improved agricultural technologies through agricultural research, extension support, infrastructure development, health, education, provision of credit facilities, developing sustainable policies and strategies, developing workable organization structure, secured land tenure system, creating good market for the produces, water harvesting and management, export potentialities, promotion of natural resources, poverty alleviations, food security and food self- sufficiency that comprises economic, social and political development of a country .

#### **4.6.3. Walking the walk of cooperative value in the community**

All the way of walking the walk of Awra-Amba Community has a significant contribution in social, economical and political development of the country especially for cooperative movement of the world thus cooperative play a prominent role in country's where there is widely

diversified agricultural economy. Therefore, the community traditional ways of cooperatives are highly instrumental to both to their basic needs and to rural development. Awra –Amba traditional cooperation emerged as an anti-thesis of the exploitative tendency of the socio-economic era in the county initiated by Zumra after a number of experiments for making as an instrument of equitable economic and social order for all human being.

Awra-Amba Community also on the analogy of a state has its defined area of operation /community (territory) is constituted by its members (population) on voluntary and mutual basis for their common goods it is managed by general assembly /social committee /a board of directors (government) in accordance with its by-laws in consonance/inconsonance with or without the cooperative law enacted by the state. Awra-Amba eliminated the unequal power relationship and gender segregations would bring about a new and successful era for cooperative and attract new active and committed people into membership.

The Awra-Amba community values are the very basis of cooperation; operation of cooperative principles strengthens cooperative values and also gets strength from values. Basic cooperative values are permanent nature, while the cooperative principles are open for change and modification from time to time depending upon development of cooperatives and development within cooperatives, changes in national and world economy and other events, external factors influencing the general environment and government policies, working experience etc.

A civilized community of Awra-Amba is identified by the extent is prefects rights of an individual (women, men) as a part of the community (society) as a whole. Social

philosopher(founder of the community)from rural society defined human beings are the measurement of every thing and identified the rights of human beings as rights of life, rights of freedom, right of property, right of contract and right of education. Articles 22 to.27, cover economic, social and cultural rights, the right to work, the right to social security, the right to work the right to rest and leisure the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, the right to education and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community (UN General assembly, adopted the universal declaration human right, 1948) as agreed with unique community.

The value of cooperative principle manifests itself only when they are operative or else they had no significance .The principle and values of Awra-Amba community are more qualified than any other international values and principles in many ways. Both the cooperative principles and values are significant for cooperative identity. Values are “walking the walk” of cooperatives in every walk of life for concomitant development. “Basic cooperative values” would mean which are above the influence of time, place and people (R.C. Dwivedi, 1997). That is the values which would not change. By implication it would mean that there would be some values which may change according to local needs (Ibid, 1997). It is a community where theoretical background changed into practical background for the last 36 year (1964-2000 E.C) without any violations of their principles and values by themselves. Due to the attitudinal changes, devotions and commitment of the community founder, leader, members and their bye-law of Awra-Amba

have the following actively applied values of Awra-Amba could be considered as socio-economic justices- equitable pioneer Community.

- 1 Self-help values (activity, creativity, responsibility, independency, do it yourself

- 2 Mutual help values (cooperation, unity, collective action, solidarity, peace
- 3 Honesty, trust (in business, management, including personal management etc.
- 4 Non-profit interest values (resource conservation, elimination of profit as driving forces, social responsibility, utilization goals, not profiting from others.)
- 5 Awra-Amba Community democratic values are equality, participation, equity) conscious decisions, self –reliance and independent decision based on free will, family conference/free discussion among family members) or deliberate action (Participation (in share capital, management, deposit, business etc.
- 6 Voluntary effort value (commitment, creative power independence, and pluralism) and altruistic value.
- 7 Universal values (global perspectives, openness, and humanistic value) of Awra-Amba Community human beings are the highest treasures of every thing and have the same root of origin so that love, respect and peace for all people of the world with out any artificial discrimination.
- 8 Educational value (self educating .knowledge, experience, understanding, insight, others visitors pinion etc).
- 9 Purposeful values (benefit to members), caring (for members of the family, cooperative, community at large)

Cooperation has been the very bases of human civilization. The inter-dependence and the mutual help among human beings have been the basis of social life. The visionary, the founder of Awra-Amba community has realized that all human beings have the same origin regardless of their color, religion, sex etc. i.e. Adam and hewan. This is a natural difference why we could create a heaven on earth through peaceful life, love and respect of each others. But, I always observed

otherwise and it becomes a life time assignment of the founder. The founder/ Zumra- visionary, started to realize heaven on earth through creating peace, love and respect among/between human being (Men, Women, children and old aged). The Awra-Amba realization of heaven on earth, and socio-economic equality principle for all human being would be due attentions as a new principle of this thesis.

The principles and values of cooperatives are more than tenth commandment and guidelines, what we have recognized till now. What would be the motive to apply the tenth commandment of all world religions? Definitely, there might not be doubt that everybody might to say for realization of heaven when we die. As a logical thinker, good deeds and appropriate words on earth for mankind of the world could/would be considered as a perquisite course of heaven on earth. It may be difficult if not impossible, to have heaven when we die without having minimum points on earth. Generally, this principle contributes for all human being in two ways. 1) For better achievement life in all forms including parent –child relationships and extended family and others human being of the world. 2) It motivates human being for the realization of heaven on earth. There are new cultures, practices, values and principle that contribute a lot to the rest of the world mankind. We all us are human being and our origin is one and the same. Why not we create heaven on earth through love and respect of each /among others?

### ***a) The Realization of heaven on Earth Principle of Awra-Amba***

The earth (land), the universe (Sky), air, water, all natural resources are a creation of God (creator) of everything has given to human being to use property. Human beings are equal by nature on earth by principle. It is the right of all human beings to live freely on earth for a specific period of life. But our generation goes and comes in a continuous ways of process of life



on earth and heaven .It is a generation life cycle of human being into earth and heaven. Heaven is nothing but, it is a matter of good deed to human being on earth with voluntarily, love, respect and peace heartily. It is a matter of economic, political and social justices with a distribution of burden and benefits of all human being.

*Love, respect, Justices and peace etc....*  
**Earthly Kingdom** \_\_\_\_\_ **heavenly kingdom**

**Human being**

The earthly kingdom is exactly the photocopy of the heavenly kingdom. Heaven is in our hand, if you are trying to do good thing through practically implemented actions and reflections. The Awra-Amba community, is respecting and loving (mothers, Women, girls), sharing of burden and benefits in absolute equality and participation of political, social and economical rights of gender empowerment as equal as men are considered to be as a good of it . As many of the religious books explained specifically holly-quran, good deed on the land is the pre-conditions for heaven. Heaven is a under the foot of women (mothers, sisters and wives) and man (father, brother and husband) and interrelate each others in socio-economic interactions of human social life. It is the world phenomenon today's reality. It is to say a matter of social and economic justices among human beings. So heaven can be considered as justices on earth as a distribution of burden and benefits among human beings. Is it not possible to create heaven on earth? It is a state of mind to think critically about it. Who is the ultimate beneficiary of development on earth? Every body sacrifices and committed his life for the development of earth.

The ultimate beneficial of these global developments are human beings. Zumra Nuru Mohammed, who is now 61 years of age and the founder of Awra-Amba, and others members of the community who have no time for religious dogma and procedures except to work hard for

what he calls the realization of heaven on earth by giving love, respect and peace for all mankind without disregarding ones religion, color, sex, language and others. “Every body he asked tells me that mankind has one root, some say that it started from Adam and Eve and others prefers to say it was Adem and Hawan” says Zumra, who establishes and leads. Awra-Amba community” has decided to ignore which create difference among human beings, and to establish a heaven that has a place for all human being by giving love, peace and respect to each other and avoid all causes of conflict among ourselves? “In addition to the above, points that cause differences, the community always dreamed to see the day and a place on earth where every women will be relieved form taking most of the work burden of a family.

The vision of the founder is to see a society that doesn't exploit children labour and take care of the old that are unable to work due to various reasons. And that has been realized today in Awra-Amba” Zumra tried to search of answer to his complex social, political economic issues and more sociological questions. Zumra had also realized that injustices that had been practiced at his home were the replica of the society. Like his mother did, everyone he approached told him to stop bothering about these issues or he would go mad. “Zumra Says. Even after getting married, Zumra didn't stop this thing about those burning life issues. After farming, he spent most of his time sharing his harvest with the old people who had been forgotten by the society and preaching his idea or creating a community founded on love and compassion for each other and that avoids all factors that can cause conflict. He found that inappropriate words and deeds are the two major causes of conflict among human being.

According to the theory and philosophy of Zumra, don't do any thing for people (others) that they can do for themselves or don't do to others what you don't want done to you is the bottom legal

of his memory a passage from the bible /Quran/. However, he has never read or heard it from church (mosque or school), as he is illiterate (Golden rule). It is simply from the realizations of the existing social problem by using his indigenous environmental knowledge. My mother and the rest of our family kept on criticizing me as a person who spends his time and money for "BAED" (people who have no blood ties with our families). But for Zura human being has blood relationship directly or indirectly because of the same origin for all mankind.

### ***b) Socio - economic-equality principle of Awra-Amba Community***

The ultimate and real economic democracy is based on universal consciousness, not on race or class consciousness. It is made up of all the people regardless of race, creed, colour or economic status. Awra-Amba community is promoting fraternity and solidarity of members. They advocate economic equality - opportunity and control principle. The goal of Awra-Amba community is to make every man and woman with a sense of both individual and joint responsibility. Man/women, then, remains his own master in the prominent community.

Awra-Amba cooperation movement is a conscious and a deliberate or a silent evolutionary /revitalization/ method of social change/transformation/ by good means and consent in order to make the change would be permanent sustainable. Individual/group/country domination which is one among such means subordinates human beings to the super lord or capital, increases the socio- economic inequality and insecurity, and widens imbalances between men and women among human being. The long walk of Awra-Amba Community cooperation movement is the best exemplifies of all cooperative in the world. The newly emerging economic and social transformations are not by voting, by sabotage, by the general strike, by through revolution or the class struggle, but by cooperation through revitalized ways of values and principle concerned for

all humanbeing.

The Awra-Amba Cooperation movement aims at the promotion of individual (man-women) welfare through mutual help, equality of control and distributive justice in order to realize peace and love for human being. Thus, cooperation's help in achieving economic, social political growth with equality and justice that is realization of heaven on earth principle of the community might be recognized as a binding one or/an the new beginning and dead ends human civilization./global approach. Awra-Amba Community serves as a school of democracy and humanity to people. The knowledge and experience in socio-economic democracy gained by members in managing their community jointly has a tremendous educational impact on them.

The community eliminated conflict in society created by the force, competition, the class struggle, inappropriate words and deeds. The others cause of conflict is unequal distributions of economy. According to the principle and values of Awra-Amba community every members of the community are equally important and fit for the work given by development planner committee. There is closely related supervision by the committee. The value of the community like honesty, respects the rights of others are binding rule of values. Due to the above facts every member of the community works together and shares equally without sex discriminations.

Thus, the socio- economic equality principle of Awra-Amba Community contributed to created /promoted social harmony /bondage/solidarity or social capital among/between members of the community. They are totally opposed to the devilish doctrine of "every man for himself" rather based on brotherhood/sisterhood through love, respect, peace, unselfish spirit and good virtues to

all human being. For these, values, commitment and true practical results of Awra-Amba cooperation in the community perceived, as unique system to combat socio-economic problems and as an effective instrument for uplifting the weak and vulnerable people through their own solidarity and collective action.

They have improved the socio-economic conditions of weaker sections. There is strong evidence that have delivered a number of economic benefits to people like increased /generated savings, augmented investments, increased productivity, increased income and employment, promoted literacy through education programmed on economic matters such as those pertaining to members livelihood and improvement there of, and on social matters such as those relating to health, awareness, social security, civics etc, helped to gain access to modern technology for members and to human development

Humanistic value of Awra-Amba love ,peace and respect, therefore are needed in all countries in the world nowadays, in every type of economy ,social ,political and culture responds to human needs every where and, wherever there is human settlement,. Awra-Amba Community with their goodwill, member commitment, devotions and innovation could play a crucial role in concomitant development. The Awra-Amba “NEGAT CHORA YEBAHRI LEWTH ENA LEMAT HBRRET” is established with an aim of serving the common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations of members from the grass root level of the community.

Accordingly, the Federal government of Ethiopia has identified cooperative form of business organizations as an instrument of socio-economic change. The development of cooperatives is

closely associated with the vitalization of factor of production like land, labour, capital and organization. In cooperatives, due importance is given to capital but at the same time capital is not allowed to dominate other factors of production. Awra-Amba community have been giving due importance to human resources management and human capital. Social capital has greater ethical and human values than others values in Awra-Amba community. Social capital is mutual trust and how effectively people work together, like informal self-enforcement of contracts would be take place without third party enforcement and regarded as a new production factor in Awra-Amba community. Primary resources of Awra-Amba is social capital because it involves people and social interactions

According to the philosophy of Awra-Amba human being is the measurement of everything .Social, capital also refers to intangible assets that count for most of the daily live of people such as good will, sympathy, love, peace, respect, honesty, hard work etc. without social capital there can not be perfect economic growth or human well being. Countries without natural resource have developed their societies only with human capital like Japan. The social capital of the community which is created by their values might have played a great role to improved operational efficiency of Awra-Amba multidimensional developmental movement in order to be competitor in the global market. This is possible by means of consolidating their human resource.

These two resources could be mobilized and utilized properly by means of social capital. Social capital will create a bond of unity among diversity and can be channelled for the promotion of the cooperatives and the welfare of competition. Social capital is a process of mobilizing members' unity (*Professor, Dr. S. Nakkiran, 2006 P.38*) Jimma University as agreed with my research site,

both quantitatively and qualitatively its performance has increased and it helps for future survival, continuity and sustainability of the community. The revitalization processes of Awra-Amba principle and values have a significant role to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the indigenous cooperatives in the global market environment. It is unnatural to say in history of rural people as if they have significant principle and value that helps for social and economic transformations. Thus, the Awra-Amba community values, principles, corporate culture, social capital and ethical climate bringing cooperatives into strongly built real ***economic and social enterprise/institutions***.

The success of the ***cooperative movement in Awra-Amba Community*** would depend up on the ***attitude, mindset*** and ***dedication*** or commitment of the community ***leaders, members*** and ***work force*** engaged in them and thus with its proper corporate culture and ethical climate in cooperative governance and much needs to be done at ***the grass-root level to bring*** about ***qualitative improvement*** in cooperatives for ***quality-oriented good governance***.. As the best exemplary cooperative movement and a new shift for development from rural people is the Awra-Amba community.

#### **4.7. Future Prospects of the Community**

As vividly explained in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, Awra-Amba emerged as a solid social identity since 1964 E.C (1972 G.C). This is realized through concerted efforts and going through ups and downs of its members. Taking in to account the hardships and different complex problems that the community passed through one can possibly argue the ‘would be’ status and prospects of the Awra-Amba because of the following fundamental issues to be mentioned:

It is highly cultivated, strongly built and deep seated thorough principles and values of the community that made it every thing realized. These principles, values and ethics are ever increasing in their depth, and systematically structured as the number of the community get further education. As these principles, values and ethics are the prominent cohesive element that binds the society together, they would continue playing the same role for the sustainability and continuity of the Awra-Amba community;

The solidarity among members of the community and the social capital established to which the Awra-Amba thoughts are induced not only by their firm stand to their values, principles and philosophy of life but also by the external alienation and fear of attack by the surrounding conservative Muslim and Christian society. Fear of attack and alienation by the surrounding society which bitterly dislikes the thoughts and philosophy of life of Awra-Amba further enhances the social capital, the solidarity and understanding among members of the community. This, therefore, is considered to be a pivotal and fundamental issue for the continuity and sustainability of the community concomitantly with other supporting factors;

The consistent and persistent education and indoctrination of children by elders about the basic thoughts, principles, values and philosophy of life in Awra-Amba is of a paramount importance for the continuity and bright prospects of the community. One very important issue that gives ever lasting happiness to the leader of the community (Zumra Nuru) is the successful and proper cascading of the principles, philosophy of life, and thoughts of the community to the emerging generations. Zumra considers himself and the community members of his age as a mountain (a



base of all thoughts and philosophy of life) and the generation after him as trees above the mountain which could favourably grow without substantial problems;

Economic power as a means of survival though not highly exaggerated, the Awra-Ambas are relatively better in their economic status and 100 percent of them are food secured. This food security status of household members of Awra-Amba is realized through diversified source of income (off-farm, non farm, agricultural activities), proper management of resources i.e. radically changing the expenditure pattern hitherto experienced in their surrounding, and the working culture that they have developed. Hence, the economic power they have now would inevitably serve to sustain them and continue as solidified identity in the years to come.

The noble nature of the guiding principles, values, ethics, and philosophies of life of the community has its own trickle down effect on other communities surrounding the Awra-Amba. The bitter resentment of the community surrounding Awra-Amba is ever eroding and unfreezing through time and people are increasingly joining the community with fully accepting their thoughts and philosophy of life.

Individuals started treating their families and their communities to join Awra-Amba whenever they are deprived of expressing their views slightly deviated from the community. For fear of the fact that people could join Awra-Amba, the community surrounding Awra-Amba relatively unfreeze to accommodate individual views unlike in the previous years.

The Awra-Amba community takes the lion share of mass media coverage in national and international wave length for different purposes through TV, Radio, and different printing presses including books.

The Awra-Amba community played a great role as an instrument of social mobilization for government and non government organizations that contribute a lot for rural development. On the other hand such experience sharing helps for Awra Amba themselves for re-applicability and sustainability.

Awra-Amba community is established based on the principles and value of peace, love, respect, self help each other in every walk of life. Thus, it is possible to say that the community can contribute for peace building through cooperation for all human being. Cooperation is as old as human civilization and man can't live in isolation. The Awra-Amba Community historical ethos and philosophies have got its legal organizational personality as cooperative Therefore; Cooperation creates strength, unity, integrity, pluralism, synergy for a Community.

Gender equality and women empowerment played a pivotal element for growth of the community. And Children are a hope of a country. Awra-Amba community has given priority to children's right and socialization and there are vary strong parent-child relationship. Avoidance of dependency syndrome helps for creating self-reliance /self -confidence for Awra-Amba community and is an allergic community for HIV/AIDS.

Awra-Amba community has got legal registration licenses as an island unique communing by the regional bureau of justices on the date oct.1/2/1999 and the community has given priority for education is an instrument for smart sustainable development. Awra-Amba are also increasingly becoming centre or nucleus of attention for visitors and people who need to share experiences of working cultures, way of life, philosophy of life and diversified ways thinking .

From 1996 E.C. onwards about 3000 visitors of insiders and outsiders of whom higher government officials, higher educational institutions, like South University, Addis Ababa University-post graduate studies...etc famous and distinguished individuals, religious leaders, civic associations have visited Awra-Amba (see annex 1).

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Conclusion

This study was an attempt to describe a society which was founded by people whose level of aspiration involved the creation of a structure instrumental for societal transformation on a large scale. The Awra Amba community along with its founder have long standing tradition of cooperative work, self help, equality among men and women, and equitable distribution of public resources as part of their value system. The presence of such an ideal social structure amidst a largely conservative culture has captured the interest not only of researchers but also of development planners. The collective solidarity built on conviction, dedication and purpose led to the development of social capital necessary to stir up local development in the area. Where others were content to perpetuate the cultural heritage of the past, the people of Awra Amba were motivated and committed to find a new work culture responsive to extra local and global processes.

In this study an attempt is made to reveal the existing working traditions of the Awra-Amba community and with particular emphasis on their contribution to rural development. The study argues that changes in the working cultures and value systems have taken place in the community as a result of the process of high motivation, practices and commitment of the founder and his followers to build a new society. Hence Awra-Amba has carried out a significant transformation of social, economic and political culture, and has changed most of the traditional Amhara culture; the common property system, common work culture, the status of women, the socialization

process- education and health etc...all have changed in their fundamentals and are in the process of a permanent change.

Their reaction against socio-political and 'patriarchal' authority led them to a radical transformation of the marriage relationship, parent-child relationship and the backwardness of traditional family. In the researcher's view the most important influence for this reaction, came from the ideal principles of Muslim religion, as the background of Awra-Amba communities signifies that they were Muslims (Solomon, 2005). It is indicated in this thesis that the teachings of Islam are based essentially on the Quran (God's revelation) and it stresses on the restoration of women's dignity and rights, Awra-Amba's reaction against 'patriarchal' authority of the male therefore, is in agreement with the teachings of Muslim background and origin (Ibid, 2005). This might be golden opportunity for the community to create social capital. This is in line with the arguments of some scholars (eg. Nakiran, 2006) in which it is stated that social capital is the by – product of religion, tradition and shared historical experiences.

This is a revitalization or a new paradigm shifts for social background by the people to the people in its belief system, marriage systems, gender dimensions, attitudes towards religious holidays, feasts and festivals, changes in the days of work and days of rest, their belief about the after death and changes in the practices of funeral ceremony all are expressions of their indifferences to the Amhara traditional culture

The study shows when the Awra-Amba is experiencing a profound challenge and experiencing a problem in their relationship with the neighbouring groups it is their values and ideal principles which have helped them to maintain their integration and sustain their social life. Among their values the moral value of labour is the most important value upon which the entire Awra-Amba

culture is based. Other values like the value of public ownership of property, the value of the group and the ideal principles of the community constitute the social effects of Awra-Amba and represent, for them, the basic tents of social cooperation for the attainment of their vision. Awra-Amba is trying to establish a democratic leadership and social control system in conformity with their ideal values. The social, economic and political transformation of Awra-Amba particularly of changes in their values and gender roles must be perceived, therefore, within their most important moral values and principles upon which the entire Awra-Amba cultures are based on and practiced due high commitment of the founder.

Although this seems in agreement with the "time conscious thesis" in the Awra-Amba context this is not because of intention of an individual to monopolize the activity (both farming and home) only because their ability and capacity to do the work by the available labour force timely to achieved greatly, but because it would be economical for the community, members to do the clearing, sowing activities, spinning and weaving requires a relative reasonable time and labour forces and it is because of their moral principle to share the problem of women as mothers, wives and sisters. The study also indicates that child care may not constrain Awra-amba women from engaging in agricultural work. In the peak seasons of agricultural work women often ask other members of the family (mostly young children) to watch their infants and feed them while they are in agricultural fields.

The study shows, therefore, in Awra-Amba women spend a good deal of time in agricultural work outside the home. On the other hand, adopting the interpretation of the economy of effort in the context of Awra-Amba, it would be advantageous for the weaker due to health problem and

old age to perform tasks that are located in their home or in the weaving houses of the community so as to get the care of others who are responsible to help them. Such kinds of tasks arrangement are found to be economically and socially viable to the community.

The study shows, in Awra-Amba a women satisfies her economic needs, not as a dependent of her husband whose labour provides for her, but as independent worker in her own right whose contribution to the economic welfare of the community almost equal that of her husband. As a result, the deliberate move of the founder to ensure gender equality i.e. the common kitchen and common community child care in Awra-Amba Community to relive women's burden and enhances and their participations in public life.

In Awra-Amba, as it has been said previously, sexual division of labour is minimal. Both men and women shared the work in the kitchen and other traditional "female" occupations and they both shared the community work, and in other traditional "male" occupations.

The social, economic and political transformation process which is working upon it is multilateral; it has affected different parts of culture in different ways and it has a significant contribution to rural development in social mobilizations in particular for the implementation of (ADLI). Zumra's vision for ideal society is probably as old as himself. In fact the most important influence came from the major commandments or responsibilities of Muslim, as Zumra was once a member of Muslim religion family and as we can see the major commandments of Muslim religion are reflected in the moral values and ideal principles of Awra-Amba Community. Hence Awra-amba is changing the traditional Amhara culture in its fundamentals. It is not difficult for the researcher to indicate what an encouraging and promising ways life is nowadays in Awra-

Amba community. They are food secured by diversified sources of income. The land on which the Awra-Amba is given to settle is very small for village life even to sleep or let alone to till for agricultural activities. The hardships involved in making this land both habitable and economically profitable have asked them a great sacrifice.

They still suffer from unsolved land shortage, transports, malaria, and market centres problem. The psychological tensions of the community which are stem from their loose of interaction with their neighboring groups who are unhappy because of their value changes and other practices, of course, could have been an obstacle for their values to be internalized by others societies for many years. The values and principles are based on indigenous ground on the grassroots level of community.

An alternative ways of best thought of the founder played a significant role to influence and for revitalization process. For all the reactions of Awra-Amba to the traditional Amhara culture, they are associated with suspicious and pagan deviant groups by the perception of some the neighbouring group and they are also characterized as hard workers by some others. . But now change of mind is talking place significantly for their might be a model community. The Awra-Amba community maintained positive winning model image of the others society by this time, due to their ideal values and principle for human being .The practices and commitment the community to their shared values divert the attentions of different institutions. Both government and non –government organizations have played a significant role for awareness creations.



## **5.2. Recommendations**

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic country. Each ethnic group contains sub-groups with diversified rich cultures worth appreciating respecting. A culture of dialogue between indigenous knowledge and the more formal, scientific approaches need to be firmly established in order to envisage development from within the grassroots. The principles of cooperation and self help are already entrenched in the norms and value systems of some cultures and all efforts towards cooperative based rural development should take this reality into consideration.

The implications of the research finding indicate that there is dead end and new beginning ways of transformations in social, cultural, economical and political dimension which might have significant contributions to sustainable rural development of a country.

Government and non-government agencies that promote cooperative movements should closely understand the socio-cultural fabric of beneficiary of communities or societies in the process of project planning, implementations, evaluations and monitoring. Participatory bottom-up approaches are instrumental for sustained socio-economic growth and development. The researcher hopes that the values and principle of indigenous communities provide the solution for common economic and social problems in mankind. When certain groups, no matter how small, take initiatives, others are expected to follow suit and adopt new styles and progressively change their own orientations, as a result of which large scale national development can be achieved. However, given the present pressures on the Awra Amba community; and unless efforts are made by all concerned to preserve and promote such a pronounced socio-economic justice, work-ethics, spirit and philosophy of cooperation, love, respect and the spirit of peaceful coexistence,

the continuity of the philosophy a unified functional whole may be at stake , and the present actual norms may simply become part of the an ideal law of society.

The exact values, roles, philosophies and contributions of the small occupational social group from rural community still remains vague, unusual and the questions of the extent to which they may be considered to be” revitalizers” for realization of heaven on earth can only be resolved by further comparative research. Therefore, the researcher recommends further detailed studies in the foreseeable future.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix I

Appreciations endowed to the community by foreign visitors recorded in their registration book:

*‘This village is an amazing display of what can be achieved when a group of people work together. These accomplishments should be shown to the entire world and I feel very much to be seen first hand. If the people of this village continue to work together and come back after going to universities there is no telling how much you will accomplish. Good luck and thank you very much for the experience, it is very inspirational.’*

*Daniel Mebetyels (U.S.A)*

*‘Dear friends, I feel a lot of love and admiration for you. This is one of the most impressive things we saw in Ethiopia. We wish you to have a lot of success.’*

*ORA, Gershon and Cehen (Israel)*

*‘I feel honored to be received by people who believe in democracy, humanity and dignity. I wished there was more of these ideas in the world. It is not money that changes the world but ideas and the people behind.’*

*Martin (Germany) 11/11/99*

*‘It is amazing to see a community living the way we all should be. The value expressed in your way of life renews people’s faith in the beauty and simplicity of living in harmony with people and the environment.’*

*Sodie Ellener (Canada)*

*'Dear community of Awra-Amba, we are very impressed by their islands of bue and labour in Ethiopia. We will tell every one about this in the hope that your ideas will spread, not only in Ethiopia but through out the world. Well done. Suggest that you try to get world book finance to help you get off your feel. We will wish you all best in the future.'*

*Deieve Donaine Kag (South Africa)*

*'A wonderful idea, Let us hope it spreads to the rest of Ethiopia.'*

*E.Hower (England) 20/1/97.*

*'A great oasis, not only of peace but also of taking good care of oneself as individuals and as a community. I was really immersed and happy. Thank you.'*

*Busn Lavoos (Georgia)*

*'The pioneering work of this community on gender issues and development is truly inspiration and deserves wide dissemination thorough out Ethiopia and Africa. I will do my best, as a messenger of your efforts and principles, to ensure others can benefit from your work. A truly mind-changing experience with very best wishes for future.'*

*Ambassador Tim Clarke European Commission 29/9/99 V.P.201*

*'I am very happy to discover this place; I would like to thank you for your hospitality. I will return soon.'*

*Eva Capa MSF (Spain) 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006*

*'I am favorably impressed by the activities and sprits of this community. I hope that they can became a model for other communities in Ethiopia particularly in effort of love for all*

*members of the community from children to adults, schools (kindergartens) to senior. We may call on you in the future. Keep up the good work.'*

*SWHISA Project, Oct. 14, 2005.*

The following records are also appreciations, supports and motivations directed to the community by different higher institutions through out the country. Non governmental organizations, higher government officials, civic associations of women and youth and the like, that put considerable courage and strength in the mind of every member of the community:‘

/

*' (literal meaning- Zumra and the community are the ones that aspire and successfully create insightful positive thinking and peaceful community. It surprises me very much when I find this community in a very rigid and conservative (Amhara) part of Ethiopia. Action Aid Ethiopia showed its sympathy and will continue in the same fashion. Your symbolism proud generations. I wish you all the best.)*

Bisrat Alemu, Action Aid Ethiopia Northern Region Coordinator.

,

*' (literal meaningt I didn't believe what heared from TV about Awra-Amba. I had also difficulty of expecting this people in Ethiopia. But now I have assured*

*every thing I heard with my colleagues and postgraduate students. A culture with good bright prospects has laid its base in this mountain of Awra-Amba)*

*Doctor Gebre Yintiso (from Addis Ababa University).*

From what I observed and through discussion with the community I found them to be flexible, visionary, and ready for change. Keep it up the government is on your side.

Addisu Legesse (Amhara National Regional State, Head)

It is today that I come to know that, education is not only counting of alphabets/ this event reminds me of the fact that education not merely only formal.

Zewdineh Mahtemeselassie (Lecturer, Gondar University)

Many elementary schools, high schools, Kindergartens, Universities, Civic associations are visiting Awra-Amba community institutionally besides the organized visits made by individuals from in and out of the country. Some schools after they visit Awra-Amba are inculcating the idea in the mind of their students that they should be disciplined and thoughtful as the children of Awra-Amba.

The children of schools who visited Awra-Amba is promising the following word as ‘---  
- we students will never need  
others money like the children of Awra-Amba.’

On the other hand, place names like recreational areas, cooperatives and others are using the name Awra-Amba which strongly implicates that to what extent the idea is penetrating towards the daily life of the society. Awra-Amba is also confident that their working cultures, philosophies of life and their noble principles are capable of influencing people. They hope that they will be many in number and will have considerable influence in all matters of life.

By the fact that the idea is of indigenous, developed from practical social, political, economic, and philosophical problems of the community with out any influences from external superficial and theoretical jargons.

The bright prospects of Awra-amba are thus unquestionable. The above mentioned fundamental issues serve the community as stimuli to its sustainability.



## Appendix II – Interview Schedule

1. Name of the interviewee HHH \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex of the interviewee HHH 1. Male \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. No. of family members by sex 1. Male \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Female \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Total \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age of HH members by age category  
0-4 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 5-9 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 10-14 years \_\_\_\_\_ 15-64 years \_\_\_\_\_  
above 64 years \_\_\_\_\_
8. What religion your HH members are following? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you believe that individual rights are respected in the community? 1. Yes 2. No
11. What are the reasons for respecting individual rights?
12. Do women have empowerment in HH resources/ 1. Yes 2. No
13. If the response for Q. No. 12 is No why? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Do women have participation in decision making community? 1. Yes 2. No
15. If the response to Q. No. 14 is yes, list the types of participation? \_\_\_\_\_
16. If the response to Q. No. 14 is No why? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do married women dependent on their husbands in Awra-Amba Community?  
1. Yes 2. No
18. What do women do if they feel discomfort in their marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
19. What are causes resulting for divorce? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Do women have their own right of using birth control? 1. Yes 2. No
22. If the response to Q. No. 21 is No, why? \_\_\_\_\_
23. Do children have right to learn regardless of sex discrimination? 1. Yes 2. No
24. If the response to Q. No. 23 is No, why? \_\_\_\_\_

25. Do you have children at and/or not in school? 1. Yes 2. No
26. How many children do you have who are at and/or not in school?
27. Who are at school? \_\_\_\_\_ Who are not in school? \_\_\_\_\_
28. How many children do you have who have dropped out from school? \_\_\_\_\_
29. What are the reasons for school drop out? \_\_\_\_\_
30. Are there harmful traditions on children in the community? 1. Yes 2. No
31. If the response to Q.No. 30 is Yes What are the types of harmfulness on children?
32. Do children used to work balanced to their age? 1. Yes 2. No
33. If the response to Q. No. 32 is yes? What are the types of children work?
34. Are there any types of crime to be made on women in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
35. If the response to of Q. No. 34 is yes, what are the causes of crimes on women?
36. If the response to of Q. No. 34 is No, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
37. Had ever been any type of crime committed to members? 1. Yes 2. No
38. If the response to Q. No. 37 is yes, what are the causes? \_\_\_\_\_
39. If the response to Q. No. 37 is No, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
40. How justice is practiced in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
41. What are the life philosophy and principles in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
42. What are the existing working cultures in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
43. How the existing working cultures are recognized in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
44. Are there any negative effect of the working culture? 1. Yes 2.No
45. If the response to Q. No. 45 is yes, what are the negative effects? \_\_\_\_\_
46. What are the unwanted types of norms in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
47. Do you use domestic products and materials? \_\_\_\_\_

48. If the response to Q. No. 47 is yes, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
49. If the response to Q.No. 47 is No, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
50. How do you express the parent-child relationship you have? \_\_\_\_\_
51. What seems the division of labor in your home? (Children, wife, husband) \_\_\_\_\_
52. What are your neighbors' relationships in sharing problems & events? \_\_\_\_\_
53. What are the traditional institutions you are participating? \_\_\_\_\_
54. How marriage is established in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
55. Does a member of the community establish marriage with outside the community?
56. If the response to Q. No. 55 is No, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
57. If the response to Q. No 55 is yes? How do you familiarize the new comer? \_\_\_\_\_
58. How unmarried or divorced women are perceived in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
59. How would be the level of expenditure for weeding ceremony in the community?
60. How do you express the participation on funeral ceremony in the community?
61. How do old aged and disabled people treated in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
62. What are the reasons for treating old aged and disabled people in the community?
63. How many number of holidays exist in a month to be celebrated? \_\_\_\_\_
64. Do the community have any type of interactions with surrounding societies? \_\_\_\_\_
65. If the response to Q. No. 64 is yes describe the types of interrelations.
66. If the response to Q. No. 64 is No, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
67. Are there any educational institutions in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
68. Are there health institution in the community? \_\_\_\_\_
- 69.1. If there is no educational institution, then where do children get the service? \_\_\_\_\_
- 69.2. If there-no health institution, then where do the community get the service? \_\_\_\_\_

70. Do the community participate in funeral and weeding ceremony of other societies?
71. What are the market transactions of the community?
72. Do you know about HIV/AIDS? 1. Yes 2. No
73. If the response to Q. No. 72 is yes, what are the types of cares against it? \_\_\_\_\_
74. Do you think that the community is vulnerable to HIV/AIDS? 1. Yes 2. No
75. If the response to Q. No 74 is yes, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
76. If the response to of No 80 is no, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
77. What are the major diseases that attack your family member? \_\_\_\_\_
78. What are the information exchange mechanisms in your family? \_\_\_\_\_
79. Do you use services of mass medias or press products? 1. Yes 2. No
80. What are the types of mass medias or press products you are using? \_\_\_\_\_
81. Are you benefited from using mass medias or press products? 1. Yes 2. No
82. If the response to Q. No. 81 is yes, describe the benefits. \_\_\_\_\_
83. What are your occupations? By rank? \_\_\_\_\_
84. How many quintals of crop production do you get annually? \_\_\_\_\_
85. Have ever been a decrease in crop production for the past 3 years. 1. Yes 2. No
86. Was there an increase in crop production in 1998/99 as compared to 1997/98?  
1. Yes 2. No
87. If the response to Q. No. 86 is yes, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
88. Do you participate in non farm income generating activities? 1. Yes 2. No
89. If the response to Q. No. 88 is yes what are the types of the activities? \_\_\_\_\_
90. If the response to Q. No. 88 is yes, do you face shortage of money for non-farm?
91. Did you get credit for non-farm activities? 1. Yes 2. No

92. If the response to Q. No. 91 is yes, what were the sources of the credit facility?
93. If the response to Q. No. 91 is yes? From whom you get the labour forces
94. Do you need skill training on non-farm activities? 1. Yes 2.No
95. If the response to Q. No. 94 is yes, what types of training you need? \_\_\_\_\_
96. Do you face problems of market for non-farm products? 1. Yes 2.No
97. If the response to Q. No. 96 is yes, why for? \_\_\_\_\_
98. From where do you get raw materials for non-farm activities? \_\_\_\_\_
99. Who are the potential customers for the non farm products of the community?
100. How do you describe the status of market for non farm products in 1998 to 1999?
101. What are your annual types and amount of expenditure by items? \_\_\_\_\_
102. What are the types and amount of your annual expenditures? \_\_\_\_\_
103. Do you face shortage of food in your household? 1. Yes 2. No
104. Do you face self insufficiency from your own income? 1. Yes 2. No
105. What is the status of your annual income situation of 1999 to 1998, to 1997?
106. What is the status of living standard of the community? \_\_\_\_\_
107. What is the status of food availability situation in your household in 1999-1998?
108. How many times do you buy clothes for your family in a year? \_\_\_\_\_
109. What is the status your shelter situation in 1999 compared to 1998, to 1997?
110. What is the status of your access to social services in 1999 to 1998, to 1997?
111. What are the major internal problems of the community? \_\_\_\_\_
112. What are the major external problems of the community? \_\_\_\_\_
113. What are your opinions on the research study? \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix III - Experience Sharing with Bichena Woreda



Plate 4. Experience sharing with East Gojjam







Discussion with different stakeholders and other society







Plate 5. Teaching and learning process of Awra-Amba children by themselves











Plate 6. The founder and the researcher are discussing major issue of the community







Plate 7. Dr. G. Veraakumaran with his Post Graduate students visits the community (2008)

