

*Even after good rains, Afar Pastoralists remain vulnerable*

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“Since the 1970s international agencies have responded with humanitarian relief but with little or no assistance for economic development. Evidence at the end of more than a decade indicates that famine relief has contributed little, if any, to finding solutions to the root causes of the crisis in the pastoral production” (ERCS, 1988:1).

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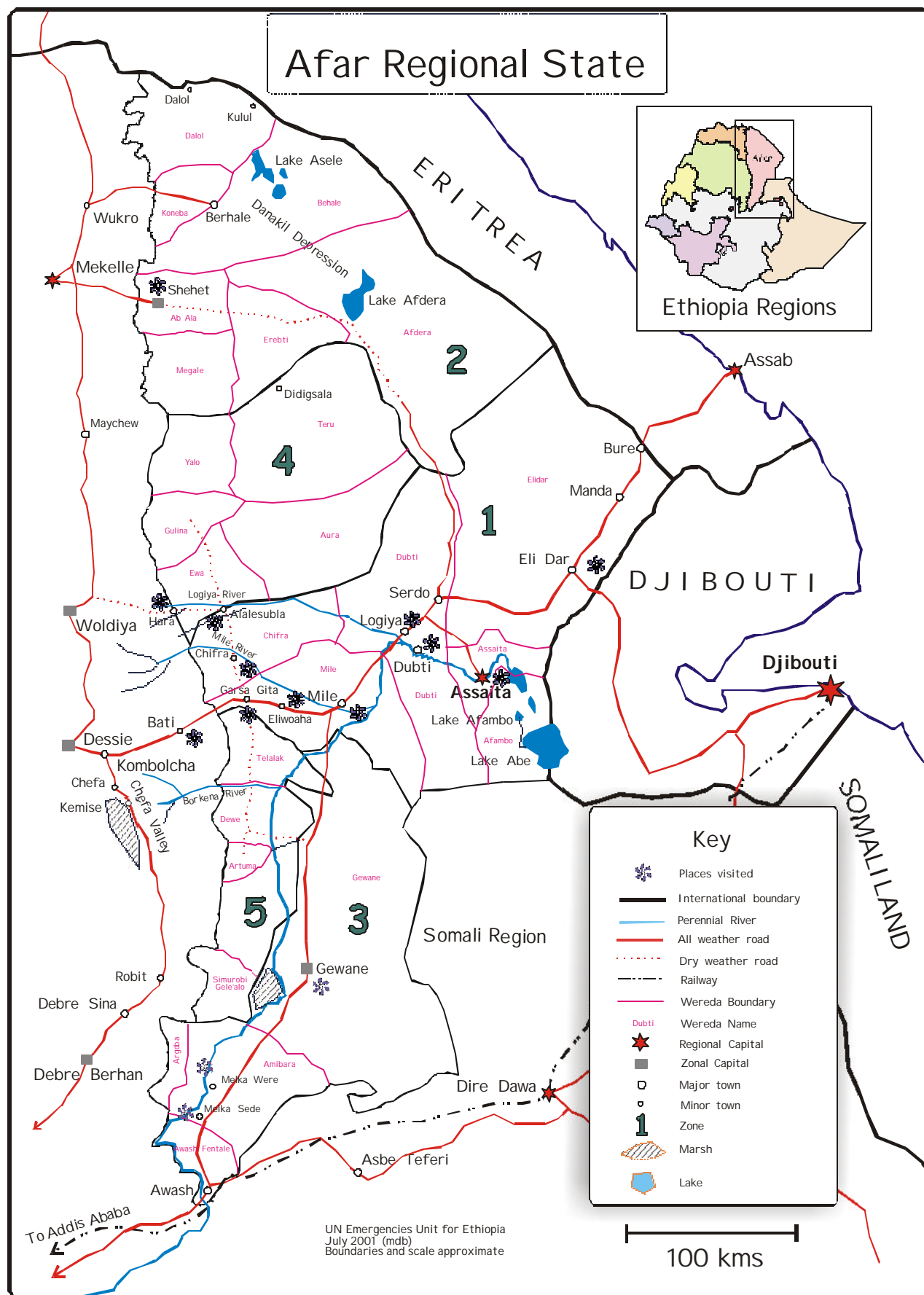
## **Introduction**

The objective of the United Nations Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UN-EUE) missions was to collect updated information on the general situation and the humanitarian issues prevailing in Afar Region, in order to balance recent focus exclusively related to the Somali Region, following 2000 drought and the international community response. As a number of roads have been under work since the last survey missions, the field trip also assessed the existing new roads in the Afar Region and their impact on the regional economy. Finally, the missions provided an opportunity to initiate follow up on various topics assessed during the previous field visits in the Region: pastoral socio-economic conditions in Region 1, 3 and 4, water shortages, mainly in Eli Daar woreda, marketing conditions in Assaita, Bati and Chifra, Awash flooding preparedness along middle and lower Awash river, as well as health and education issues in the Region. The missions were planned together with Afar Pastoral Development Association's HQ in Addis. Mr Hassan Mohamed Ahmed and Mr Mohamed Ismael, APDA members, came along with us as facilitators and translators. Our missions were also the opportunity to meet regional government representatives in Assaita, as well as woreda authorities in Ab'Ala, Ewa, Chifra and Melke Werer (Amibara Woreda).

## ***Reporting Topics***

- Security conditions, new roads and socio-economic impact
- Pastoral socio-economic condition (zones 1 – 2 – 4, where the survey took place)
- Livestock and staple food markets in Assaita, Bati and Chifra,
- Water shortages in Eli Daar woreda
- Marsh pastoralism and bush encroachment in Gewane area
- Irrigated agriculture and Awash river flooding (Assaita, Melka Werer, Melka Sede)
- Population needs and NGOs activities in the Afar Region
- Recommendations focused on Afar structural vulnerability

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## 1. Background

The Afar Region, structured into 5 zones and 29 woreda, is located in the Northeast of Ethiopia, sharing international borders with Eritrea and Djibouti. Afar land, about 150,000 km<sup>2</sup>, is stretching from the Allideghi plain of the Middle Valley in the south to the coastal depression of the Red Sea in the North (Woldemariam; 1993:1). The Afar people, circa one million<sup>1</sup>, originally Cushitic, like their Oromo and Somali neighbours, is predominantly nomadic of origin and the majority is still practicing “transhumant pastoralism” for subsistence. The Northern part of Afar Region around the lower Danakil Plain, is predominantly a semi-desert with thorny species of shrubs and acacias, further south in the Awash valley, steppic vegetation is dominant. Both ecological stages are facing bush encroachment with *prosopis juliflora* (*wayane*), which take over from more nutritive browsing varieties.

The Afar Region is one of the poorest and least developed Regions of Ethiopia, neglected by national development efforts. It is only in recent years that efforts have been undertaken to provide basic infrastructures such as road accessibility and administrative buildings as well as education and basic health services for each of the woreda. Some of this infrastructure, like the new regional capital Samara, a project initiated in 1996, remains empty. All the regional economy is polarised by the transit road to Djibouti port to import and export goods leading through the Afar Region. This road led to a typical ‘truck-stop economy’ with towns such as Decioto, Logiya, Mille, Adaitou, Gewane, Gadamaitou, where water facilities, commerce and services are quasi-exclusively related to truck drivers needs.

Presently, there are several factors, which negatively affect the livelihood of Afar people: Consecutively to the Ethiopian-Eritrean war, Afar are facing movement restrictions and the Assab region remains closed for cross-border animal trading. The heavy presence of the army has boosted the demand for shoats, compensating partly the effects of a landlocked economy along the border (zone 2 as well as Eli Daar woreda in zone 1). Meanwhile, Afar have to take into account the ecological effects of 350,000 trees cut down for firewood and shelter (APDA evaluation figure). Natural conditions characterised with persisting drought in parts of Afar Region, as well as seasonal uncontrolled floods along the Awash river, represent a major draw back for the Afar economy, which is based on pastoralists’ livestock sales and agriculture production in the Awsa and the Awash irrigated schemes.

Rainfall distribution is generally bimodal throughout the Region. The small rains *sugum* normally occur in March – April and the heavy rains *karma* take place in July – August. Some areas along the escarpment (Tigray – Wollo) as well as the southern part of Afar near Awash town additionally could benefit from a slight shower period in December, called *dadaa*. In all these seasons, the occurrence of rainfall is highly erratic. The total amount of rain varies greatly from year to year resulting in severe droughts in some years. Moreover, temperatures are high throughout the region and throughout the year. The hottest months are May to August coinciding with the rainy months, which entail a deterrent effect on the effectiveness of moisture.

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<sup>1</sup> The official figure used by DPPC from 2000 Afar Region census are the following: total Region 1,117,148 (zone 1: 326,146; zone 2: 234,645; zone 3: 129,464; zone 4: 142,352; zone 5: 343,541)

Up to mid-2001 rains have been rather good, but those rains have been mostly delayed and, nevertheless, in the northern zones 1, 2 and 4 water shortages have been reported. If the long rainy *karma* season (July – August) could not bring enough water, pastoralists in these areas might be in difficulty.

### **1.1. Rangelands in Awash valley and their importance to Afar region**

Rangelands are defined as areas with natural vegetation, which for some ecological reason (i. e. low rainfall, rocky, steep or intractable soils and/or severe climate) are unsuited to stable, rainfed cultivated agriculture. As far as Afar Region is concerned, there are three categories of rangelands within the area<sup>2</sup>:

- areas above 500 mm of isohyet line classified as semi arid
- areas between 300 – 500 mm of isohyet rainfall classified as upper arid
- areas below 300 mm of rainfall classified as lower arid.



Grazing area along the highway, north of Gewane (August 2001)

The main annual rainfall in the western edge of the Region is around 600 mm and the amount decreases as one moves away from the foot of the eastern escarpment of the central highland mass of the country towards the eastern corner of the Region. This is directly correlated to the decrease in altitude. In response to moisture stress, the vegetation decreases in abundance and species diversity from west to east with the exception of river valleys where moisture is not a limiting factor. Most of the area west of 650-meter contour line is covered with relatively dense vegetation consisting of grasses, shrubs and trees. Generally this is used as dry season grazing retreat. The vegetative cover between 500 and 300 meters contour lines is characterised by shrubs, trees and less perennial and more annual grasses. The area is preferred as a wet season grazing retreat. Areas below 300 meters are very sparsely covered with hardy brush and perennial grasses in inundated spots. Generally, the area is shown as void vegetation on land cover map of Ethiopia and its contribution to fodder production is insignificant.

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<sup>2</sup> ANRS, *Rangelands and water development study*, draft final report, Vol. III Rangelands/livestock and Fodder, Part I, Metaferia Consulting engineers, Addis Ababa, ANRS Ayissaita, December 2000, p. 3.

- Upper arid classification means that these areas serve as useful sources of forage for wet season grazing;
- Lower arid classification means that these lands are characterised by mostly bare grounds.



Awash River in Mille – low land dry area (August 2001)

Beside the traditional agriculture area in the Awsa, irrigated agriculture schemes set up first by the imperial government in the 60s together with the Awash Valley Authorities and the participation of private companies (e. g. Mitchell Cotts, Tendaho Plantations Share Company), before being transformed into State Farms like in Amibara in the Middle Awash, Dubti and Dit Bahri Plantations in the lower plain, contributed to settling Afar displaced from traditional grazing areas.

Many Afar claim that the introduction of irrigation, which has resulted in the formation of small towns with large numbers of highland migrant workers, has undermined their culture. Prostitution and thievery, which were unknown some years ago, are now widespread in the towns. Many young Afar, both men and women are absorbed into the urban-based irrigation scheme culture. Clan integrity is also beginning to suffer, as the clan is unable to maintain all its members in one place due to the changing nature of pastoral production. (...) While the role of demographic and environmental forces is recognised, political constraints have also contributed to the crisis of Afar pastoralism in the Awash valley... Afar have been excluded from the mainstream of Ethiopian development. (Ali Said, 1997:136, 137)

Seasonal herd mobility, changing herd composition and traditional institutions of mutual help used to maintain the sustainability of the system both ecologically and economically. However, over the last three decades this system has come under growing pressure and is increasingly vulnerable to environmental stress. Changing land use, politico-economic, demographic and institutional changes have all either singly or combined contributed to the growing crisis of Afar pastoralism (Bondestam, 1974; Gamaledin, 1987 / 1993).

In 1988 already, one report concluded that there was a cultural marginalisation of the Afar pastoral population: “The Afar feel that their way of life has failed in terms of the viability of their pastoral economy, politically in the maintenance of their regional autonomy and competition with their regional adversaries. The introduction of modern institutions, education and technology in the region on a limited scale and the awareness of their inferior position have further undermined the effectiveness of their culture. The traditionally self-reliant Afar that defied any external encroachment or subjugation now find themselves dependent and willing to receive any assistance and protection against stronger opponents and for this they are willing to accept a less loftier position” (ERCS, 1988:4)





Awash River at Adaitou bridge (August 2001)

### **1.2. Conflicts and social change in the Awash valley**

On the margins of the Region, Afar pastoralists are met by the Oromo of the southern escarpment, where the Kereyu and the Itu and the Arsi of the southern plain graze their animals in the wide-open Afar rangelands. Occasionally fighting breaks out, but on the average Afar interact amicably and may even inter-marry with the Kereyu and the Itu of western escarpment.

On the eastern side, Issa are the real enemies of the Afar. They challenge them more than any other surrounding ethnic group. The Issa are well armed and rarely hide their intention of eventually gaining access not only to the rangelands but also to the Awash riverbank and other tributary rivers crossing the rangelands. Since the Issa are known for their illicit trade (gun running and contraband merchandise) they consider the Addis Ababa highway as vital to their strategic interest.

Following development of the agriculture schemes, there are also a good number of non-Afar ethnic groups residing in labour village and towns located around the irrigated farms and along the Addis - Djibouti highway. These are people engaged in various from helping hands to retail businesses to professional fields. With increasing non-pastoral activities, Afar seem even to be marginalised in their own homeland.

Consequently, the conflict in the Awash Valley has its roots in processes of inequitable political and economic development, differential access to vital resources between groups in society, obstructions to seasonal migration and to the impact of large-scale development projects by the state and private interests. Violence has also occurred as a response to encroachment by highland cultivators on pastoral lands. (A. Nicol, Y. Arsano, J. Raisin: 2000:i)

There is little inter-clan warfare among the Afar. If warfare breaks out among them, it is not because of grazing ground or the act of unlawful wrestling of cattle. Mischief, such as an extra-marital affair or the slaughtering of an animal belonging to other clans may invite trouble. Conflicts also break out between different Afar clans in the Middle Awash. This kind of intra-ethnic conflict is often sparked when one clan moves into another clan's territory. In times of plenty, free use was generally permitted of all pastoral resources and only in the dry season or times of drought were ownership restrictions applied (Cossins, 1973:16). Clan consciousness of territory becomes more intense the closer to the Awash River bank; the further away from the river the less important become these exclusive territorial rights. As a result, the Allideghi plain in the eastern part of Awash River is considered as an

open grazing land for all Afar in the Middle Awash (Ali Said, 1997:135) and since has become one of the main conflict areas between Issa and Afar.

Moreover, changes in resource-use regimes and the consequent shrinking resource base of pastoralists has led to increasing conflicts between Afar and the government. One of the most serious manifestations of inter-sectoral resource use conflict in the Middle Awash is the serious crop damage caused to cotton fields by Afar herds in bad years. Desperate Afar pastoralists drive their animals into the mature cotton fields when available natural fodder is scarce. This sometimes leads to armed confrontation and loss of life... In the Awash National Park too, similar problems exist between the Afar and Kereyu pastoralists on the one hand and park authorities on the other hand (Ali Said, 1997:136).

### **1.3. Afar clans and sub-clans** (cf. Annex 1 & 2, pp. 32 - 35)

There are more than 100 clan families in the Afar region, where in principle, land is equally divided among them. Clan territories are centred along the main rivers with exclusive rights during the dry seasons. Between the various clans, the principal distinctions related to the type of statute law are the Assayamara (red / nobles) and the Adoyamara (white / commoners). Politically, as far as the Ethiopian side is concerned, Afar territory is divided into 7 chefferies for the north (Dankal), under the theoretical suzerainty of Biru (Dammohoyta clans group), other ruling clans are the Mogoro, linked to the Asabakari (Assayamara), the Dahimeela in the Danakil depression and the Balossuwa, both belonging to the Adoyamara group (Piguet, 1999:95). In the South, there are 12 chefferies. Half of the territory belongs to the sultanate of Awsa ruled by the Moodayto group, which constitute a federation of clans with the Aba Karoita or Asabakari and the Arapta on the western periphery, the Afke ek Maad as central occupants and the Adali Aeroita on the southern periphery (Cossins, 1973:17). Another important chefferie, the Badoytammela in the middle Awash (zone 5), regroups the Aghini the Dodah and the Abu Samara (Assayamara group). Furthermore, in the southern area, the Debne and the Weima linked to the Adali from Tadjourah (Djibouti) are bordering Issa territory<sup>3</sup>.

The head of the Afar clan families is called Mekaban, under him each clan is ruled by a Kedo Aba. These clans or tribes (kedo) leaders, as well as the Fimatabba (kindship leaders) and clans elders are prominent persons ruling the Afar society and particularly in charge to cool situations in case of inter-personal or inter-clanic conflicts.

## **PROBLEMS AND FINDINGS**

### **2. Security and Roads**

#### **2.1. Security Conditions**

With the exception of Gewane area, where our visit was shortened following three consecutive security incidents, no major security issues have been faced in the Afar Region:

- In mid-June, gunmen had an exchange of fire with Ethiopian soldiers and killed three of those. On the following days, a truck driver was shot dead along the road and simultaneously, Issa and Afar

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<sup>3</sup> Several Afar clans originally located near Djibouti have migrated south to the Awash valley but clans names are related to toponyms like the river Weima or Doda depression.

had an exchange of fire and the situation was unsafe at the time the mission attempted to visit the marsh land south of Gewane

## **2.2 Gewane Marsh pastoralists**

Conflict between Afar and Issa pastorals centred on grazing and water resources are quite frequent in the area around Mount Ayele. Displaced Issa are taking the land and all other area (medium Awash valley) land and water accesses are the bases of most of violent confrontations. The Issa pastoralists are commonly coming from Shinile area, along the railway. For many years, Issa have been grazing their animals up to the eastern side of the Djibouti Awash road provoking tensions with the Afar. Due to a dry neighbouring mountainous area, Issa are already pressing on the western side of the road and are regularly present in two pockets: between Adaitou and Gewane as well as 10 km south of Mataka up to Gadamaitou. That last location has become a trading centre where Issa are regularly bringing Djibouti illegal imports to be sold to Ethiopian traders.

Later in the year, *karma* rains have been beneficial with fully regenerated grazing land. On the other hand, wasted grazing resources on a short term can be expected due to insecurity. Very few livestock were observed along the road from south of Gewane down to Adaitou and the Awash bridge. Indeed, the presence of Issa pastoralists who are now reaching the riverbank motivates less intensive grazing for security reasons and all over the area pastoralists are currently armed.

## **2.3. New Roads construction** (on the north, particularly in zone 2 and 4):

- Road Mille - Chifra has been completed (105 km)
- Road Mekele down to Afar (completed up to Ab'Ala / Shehet)
- Branch Chifra to Ewa - Aura is actually under construction; this road planed to link Bati, Chifra, Kalouan and Yalo with a branch to Alamata - Woldiya

There are further roads projects: Ab'Ala – Afdera and Ab'Ala – Magaale (zone 2), then down to Chifra. Presently, only the southern length (Chifra – Aura) is under construction. The global project plans first to link Logiya to Kobo in the highlands, through Aura, Kalouan and Yalo. On another hand, the road section constructed between Chifra and Kasagita is not in use. Built through a governmental project allocated to Tigrayan companies, according to the custom in Ethiopia, only small tracks of 5 to 10 km have been allocated to the various companies and even the same company can get two distant track portions. With such a system, site co-ordination remains difficult. Presently, all the bridges between Chifra and Kasagita are still under construction and some road sections that are well built are already infested by bushes.

For the Afar, attitudes towards such road projects change according to the specialisation of the group and/or our interlocutors:

- Positively, the road will connect remote areas, bringing more facilities for health, education and veterinarian services; NGOs might be attracted to start projects in the area. The road will reactivate Yalo animal market and Kalouan local market might also be boosted.
- All the zone 4 will be directly connected to Tigray through Alamata, Kobo, Maychew and Mekele

On another hand, Afar attitudes could be more in expectancy, according to the example of Karawaju (toponym referring to Oromo), an Afar settlement for over 40 years situated along the new road under construction (south of Ewa). The negative aspects of the new road for the pastoralist settlement are the following:

- The track of the road put in danger the perimeter of the mosque, which is used by three settlements. If the mosque has to be displaced, rebuilding should be done by non-Afar Ethiopian workers as Afar do not have the know-how to erect such a kind of building and the community does not have the money to pay for it.
- Afar graves marked on the ground by a circle of stones surrounding the tumulus have been violated by the track of the road.
- An agriculture garden set up by our interlocutor disappeared and that point might produce a bitter land tenure conflict as Mr Hamadou Doulou, elder and acting imam of the community, has complained to the authorities without any consideration up to now.

Facing such negative consequences of the work-yard proximity, Hamadou Doulou said that he was first willing to take action in order to stop the road construction, but he was apprehensive about opposing his pastoralist group with the State. Then, Afar settlers were employed as workers on the road construction as most of the occasional workers are coming from Chifra. Eleven young pastoralists from the settlement are actually employed for a salary of 6 birr per day for six days per week. 2 watchmen, our interlocutor and another elder, guard the two inverts under construction nearby the settlement and are paid 5 birr per day. For other jobs, mainly highlander skilled workers are employed, i. e. masons paid 30 birr per day to break the stones and build the walls. Other workers mostly Afar are loading tracks and preparing cement.

For the time being road construction activities close to the settlement are not changing the pattern of the pastoral and semi-nomadic life. Like before, young men and boys customarily leave with the herds and women are responsible for water and household tasks. No animal or animal products are sold to the Ethiopians, but settlers expect future facilities to reach Chifra market. Such settlement situations need some follow up. Longer interviews with settlers might bring important information about social change and pastoralists' future.

### **3. Pastoral situation**

Some decades ago, the Afar economy based on pastoral movements, supplemented to a very limited extent by trade, was still a viable economy. Using the foot-hills for wet season grazing and the riverside of the Awash for the driest season, the Afar had managed to produce a viable economy. Viability was also maintained by the traditional production system, which had built-in survival strategies and supplementary and alternative production activities for the tiny minority sloughed off from the pastoral production system.

Afar people are considered as semi-nomadic people. During normal years, Afar move their herds from a home base generally within a radius of 20 km, but seldom more than 50 km from reasonably permanent dry season watering places. In times of severe stress, Afar are forced to move their herds for greater distances up to 150 km (Cossins 1972:55). Mainly in connection with market demand, cattle have increased within the total live stock currently held by the Afar and their pastoral economy

may be in a transitional stage, where the “camel complex” according to Herkovits’ concept is slowly giving way to a “cattle culture”.



Hand dug well in a riverbed near Chifra (June 2001)

Actually, human and livestock population increases beyond the carrying capacity of natural resources is evident in the Afar Region (ERCS, 1988: 18) and already the effects of overgrazing and desertification can be seen in the lowest areas, particularly between Mille and Assaita (lower aridity). On another hand, grazing areas along the highland escarpment and the southern part of the Afar region seem to be more suitable and already induce most of the livestock movements playing with the various vegetal stratification, according to the altitude. The midland situated along the escarpment in zone 4 constitutes the grazing heartland for a large number of Afar clans. During the rainy season, livestock are coming from the unhealthy Awash riverside to the east as well as the cold wet escarpment to the west. In return, grazing during the dry season is restricted to the home clans: Aranta Moqoro Adali Hasanto Hadermo and

Another important movement in the north of the Region should be mentioned: the salt cure, when animals are moving from zone 4 towards zone 1 and 2, where salty grazing is available in the Danakil and the Terru depressions.



Same location: cattle waiting for watering (June 2001)

As far as herding organisation is concerned, co-operation among Afar could take many forms. Two or more neighbouring households will combine herds and take turns in herding and also pen cattle together. When a member is engaged in other activities, brothers or neighbours tend his cattle. The herding of several species require co-operation among herding units and local communities.

Further, there are several types of traditional mutual aid with action and transfer of livestock and or products. It is stipulated that an Afar is socially obliged to help another Afar in time of need. Traditionally, failing to do so would result in severe punishment and up to now, social obligation of

sharing goods and services remains strong among the Afar and it extends to labour pooling in the local communities in terms of herding and watering (cf. Annex). Recent evolutions seem to be more negative: “The integrity of the clan is again beginning to loosen up, as the clan is unable to maintain all its members in one place as its members are in various degrees of dislocation from pastoral production. Most serious is the fact that the clan system can no longer maintain its system of redistribution (mutual aid)” (ERCS, 1988:23). This type of social organisation still present among most of the pastoral societies should be carefully examined as it could be an indicator of destructure or resistance and/or even a possible channel for assistance.

**Comparing to previous years, 2001 seems to be rather a good year for livestock, of course with regional variations and the usual uncertainties related to:**

- Regularity and intensity of the showers during rainy seasons (*sugum*, *karma* and *daada* in the concerned areas).
- Availability of grazing and water resources in the traditional grazing areas, livestock movement pattern and permanent or temporary restrictions.
- Endemic epizooties, their location and vastness (anthrax, black legs or black quarter, foot and mouth disease, internal and external parasites).
- Resource access competition in the driest areas and at the border of Afar grazing land, where they are confronted to other pastoralists (Issa, Oromo and Tigrayen).

**Special areas:**

- a) Eli Daar one of the hottest areas with poor grazing due to extensive hard volcanic soil. Furthermore, that region has been cut off from traditional grazing and trading movements to Assab and Tadjourah;
- Changes and difficulties in movement patterns: restrictions due to the war in Region 2 and Eli Daar woreda, which represent the main areas for salty pasture.
- b) Gewane and the marsh pastoralists with a bitter competition for resources between Afar and Issa due to drought conditions east of the Ayele Mount. On that point, is the traditional pastoral resources access confrontation the only reason? The location of trading centres along the highway: Mataka, Gadamaïtou and the Issa involvement in Djibouti goods distribution might be an additional reason for the conflict.

#### **4. Marketing aspects**

The Afar Region marketing system is tied between two regional markets; the first one in Bati is connected with the highlands and the second one, in Assaita, with Djibouti<sup>4</sup>. The rest of the territory is essentially covered with local markets, like in zone 4, Chifra, Kalouan, Yalo, where pastoralists are selling some livestock in order to purchase current staple foods to be brought back to the bush. Afar depend upon markets in their vicinity for selling small livestock and the purchase of essential items. Some middlemen traders are also buying animals to be sold later in Bati or Assaita.

Bati is probably the largest regional market, where Afar are exchanging their products and purchasing staple food and non food items. Pastoralists are coming from two or three days' walk up to a week.

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<sup>4</sup> NB. Livestock from the southern areas (zone 3 & 5) tend to be marketed in Metehara, from which they are eventually shipped towards Debre Zeit and Addis Ababa (Farm Africa in Gewane).

Darsa Gita / Kasagita down to Chifra constitute the nearest place from about one day's walk. Bati market has been particularly active during the Derg Regime when a large amount of goods from Djibouti used to be sold illegally. Bati town is inhabited by settled Afar from most of the clans, e. g. the Adali with their military tradition are particularly involved in inter-clans peace-building and the security in the grazing areas. Some other small clans settled in the area are involved in marketing activities and even if they do not speak any more Afar, they still lay claim to their Afar identity.

**Price samples (in birr / 1 us\$ = 8.5 birr)**

<b>Animal /goods</b>	<b>Assaita 19/6</b>	<b>Bati 18/6</b>	<b>Chifra 17/6</b>
<b>Young camel</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1000 - 1500</b>
<b>Male camel</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>1000 - 1700</b>	<b>1300 - 1500</b>
<b>Female camel</b>		<b>---</b>	<b>1000</b>
<b>Bull</b>	<b>700 / 500 - 200*</b>	<b>700 / 300*</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Cow</b>	<b>700 / 500 - 200*</b>	<b>300*</b>	<b>600 - 700</b>
<b>Calf</b>		<b>120 - 150</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Sheep</b>	<b>50*</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Goat (small)</b>	<b>70 30 – 50*</b>	<b>25 – 32* / 40 - 50</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Donkey</b>		<b>360</b>	
<b>Maize 100kg</b>	<b>60 – 45* (local)</b>	<b>68 - 70</b>	
<b>Retail 1 tin /kg</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.7 – 0.8</b>	
<b>Wheat 100kg</b>		<b>110 - 140</b>	
<b>Retail 1 tin /kg</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Sorghum 100 kg</b>		<b>75</b>	
<b>Rice 100 kg</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>400</b>	
<b>Rice(Bahar Dar)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>2.5 (per kg)</b>	
<b>Teff (black)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>2 (per kg)</b>	
<b>Teff (white)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>2.5 (per kg)</b>	
<b>Sugar 100 kg</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>450</b>	
<b>Retail 1 kg</b>	<b>5 – 5.5</b>	<b>---</b>	
<b>Date/harissa 1kg</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>---</b>	
<b>Salt bar 25 kg</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>70 (50 kg bag)</b>	
<b>Retail (tin)</b>	<b>1.25 (per kg)</b>	<b>1 (small) 3 (big)</b>	
<b>Polypropyl bag</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.75</b>	
<b>Jute bag</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	

Prices with \* are prices imposed and effectively paid by traders after waiting until the afternoon, just before the market closing time.



On Monday, market activities in Bati are located on a large ground, close to the town and the livestock market takes place on an adjacent fenced ground. The situation is similar on Tuesday in Assaita and Sunday in Chifra, with both places a distinct location for the livestock, which does not justify fences. In Assaita, the weekly market takes place right in the middle of the town, on a square surrounded with wholesalers' shops. In Chifra, an example of a small local market, except for a few shops, there are mainly some 70 staple food petty traders offering sorghum and maize, as well as food aid bags still sealed. Generally, in those markets, the traders are providing staple foods for the retailers and pastoralists buying bags. Compared to other market activities, those transactions are taking place as early as 6 o'clock and at that time, wholesalers are also buying food aid bags.

For the Afar, most of the transactions are done on a small scale, selling usually one or two sheep or goats in order to get cash to purchase staple foods and various commodities in small quantities to be brought back to the camp or the settlement. Purchases done are mainly cereals, sugar, salt and red pepper, tea or coffee as well as some goods like textiles. At the same time, Afar women are also selling butter (ghee), dum mats and ropes, which constitute for them petty trade income, beside bringing small livestock, a decision which also depends on the husband. The textile market is essentially controlled by highlander traders who also buy local cotton in the Awsa.

Afar are particularly involved in the salt market, which is rather important in Bati and Assaita. They are the main supplier with Ethiopian pink salt from Bahadle and Afdera in the Danakil depression conditioned in 50 kg bags (70 birr per bag in Bati) and Djiboutian white salt from Assal lake, the best quality, conditioned in 25 kg bar bag (25 birr per bag in Assaita). The difference of price has to take in account transport costs as well.

In Assaita market, cereal prices have been cut down from about 100% in three years and that movement is probably accentuated by the local production in the Awsa. Actually a 100 kg of local variety maize costs today 60 birr and 45 birr in direct purchase from the producer. In 1998, 50 kg of the same maize was sold at 70 birr. Even the wholesalers settled around Assaita market place used actually to sell to retailers a bag of maize of 50 kg at 25 birr.

In general prices are lower in Assaita compared to Chifra and Bati market as the first location benefits from the Djibouti economy as well as lower transportation costs. According to traders in Assaita, even if the market is presently less active due to the livestock ban, bringing from Djibouti staple foods like sugar and rice remains a good transaction as the price differential between Djibouti and the highland remains important. For example, sugar is less expensive in Djibouti, 420 birr than local sugar sent from the highlands, 450 birr. Ethiopian rice sent from Addis Ababa costs 400 birr (100 kg) with a similar price for imported rice sent through the free trading area in Djibouti harbour. This concerns the good quality one. On another hand, smuggled rice coming from Djibouti costs only 350 birr for 100 kg, but is usually of a lower quality. Due to the difference in prices, staple foods are mainly coming from Djibouti. At the end of the line, there are not many differences at retail level; rice and sugar prices in Assaita are similar to Addis Ababa and for all the other items, prices have to integrate transport and handling costs.

Sugar is also an important commodity and a place like Djibouti represents the turntable for this market. Where much of Ethiopian sugar imports as well as sugar coming from abroad cover a large part of the main Somali trader activities (tycoons). Smuggling channels well known in Djibouti and

tolerated by the authorities are even redistributing Ethiopian sugar, which might enter back into the country. On the other side, Ethiopian coffee has been regularly exported from Djibouti out of the control of the Ethiopian authorities.

#### **4.1. Livestock market**

Livestock trade is particularly active in all market places, where most transactions are run directly by the pastoralists who do not use the well-known system of middlemen (dillali) like Somali clans. As most of the animals are marketed for meat consumption, there are no significant price differences for packing animals. In Bati for example, there are a lot of traders from Mekele, Lalibella, Debre Zeit and Gondar coming to buy animals for the highland markets. As far as small livestock is concerned, Afar goats, which are particularly suitable for meat – a smaller species than the Oromo one - are sold to the butchers in the morning.

Bati Market like others is closely under police supervision in order to avoid transactions involving stolen animals. During our visit, police were precisely inquiring about camel thieves in Kasagita.



Bati livestock market (June 2001)

On the other side of the Afar Region, Assaita livestock market is mainly connected with Djibouti livestock export market to the Gulf States. Concerning that location, we had to notice that presently the market was not very active due to the effects of the Saudi livestock ban instituted in September 2000. In this commercial line organised across the border through Dikhil and Balbala (Djibouti town suburbs), Afar pastoralists and small traders are mainly involved in convoying animals to the Djiboutian markets. The rest of the commercial line and the most profitable one is entirely controlled by Djiboutian Issa and Yemeni middlemen and traders.

Actually, in Assaita, cattle offered for sale at 600 birr in the morning could be sold for 200 / 300 birr in the afternoon, after convincing the pastoralists not to return home with their animals. In Djibouti, cattle prices fluctuate according to the export market. With the best figure, if an animal could be sold at 20,000 FD (960 birr), profit might be quite high, about double the price in Ethiopia. In general, for such kind of cross-border marketing, prices struck would be situated between 12,000 FD (576 birr) and 15,000 FD (720 birr).



Afar black head sheep (August 2001)

Sheep are the most valuable animals for export at certain periods of the year, when the demand is particularly high before the two major muslim festivals: I'd el Fitr (end of Ramadan) and I'd Arafat (end of the pilgrimage) as well as in Bati market at the time of Easter for the Christian highlanders (Fasika) and the Ethiopian New Year. Again, due to the market depression, the current commercial value is about 50 birr for a sheen.

Afar marketing capacities are particularly questionable as far as price fixing is concerned. Their ability to bargain remains a problem and the Afar complain about the constant price erosion since two years ago, e. g. at that time, a shoat could be sold between 70 and 150 birr according to the period of the year. Today, traders are only proposing 30 to 50 birr for a small goat. The situation is rather similar for cattle with usually a starting price of 700 birr and tactically the traders prefer to wait until the afternoon, when they are often able to get cattle for 200 to 300 birr as the pastoralist should avoid having to drive them back to his settlement, as a double trek might weaken the animal.

Livestock sold on Assaita market are sometimes coming from long distance as far as five days walk like Saha in zone 1. In general, zone 1 is the area with the most stress on water and grazing. There are also some traders from Chifra coming to buy cattle in Assaita, who will return to Chifra by foot in about a week with a stop over in Mille, in order to sell these animals on Chifra market or Bati. This is one of the main connections between Afar (zone 1) and the highlander traders buying animals for meat consumption.

#### **4.2. Summary**

- Price seasonality particularly important for livestock market (high July and January; low December/Jan and May/June – the major Christian and Muslim festivals).
- Most of the pastoralists selling animals are not organised and stand individually in front of the middlemen and traders who are mainly buying meat supplies for the highland (Bati) With the receipts they purchase staple foods and other items necessary in the pastoral or agro-pastoral settlement (terms of trade usually not favourable to pastoralists).
- Women are allowed to sell small animals for the same purpose and sometimes complain about cattle or camels sold by the men, without any concertation (khat consumption?).
- Other sources of cash for the pastoralist / agro-pastoralists: ghee (generally women), dum ropes and mats, cereals production mainly in the Awsa or food aid rations.
- Assaita market boosted by the proximity of Djibouti and the possibilities of animal trekking across the border to Dikhil and Djibouti town where Yemeni traders export animals by dhow across the Red Sea.
- There are also regional animal trekking to Afar region local market (Yalo, Chifra, Bati) operated by small traders.
- In general we can observe among the Afar a lack of capacities for marketing or commercial negotiation. Their influence on the price fixing process is particularly low (e. g. Kalouan / zone 4, 20 traders active in the market and only three of them are Afar).
- Such situations refer essentially to a traditional “survival” economy... Only the household needs on a short-term basis induce marketing of animal and other products.

- Impact of the Saudi livestock ban instituted in September 2000 consequent to Rift Valley Fever.

Afar are facing problems as far as price quotations and bargaining are concerned, by lack of organisation and information about markets prices, singularly for livestock. In general:

- Most of the time, Afar are facing the logic of the market, more animals present means price decrease, even if they are bringing animals in good condition.
- In general, Afar do not know the price fixing mechanisms. Most of the markets are entirely controlled by highlanders or Issa and Yemeni as far as Djibouti is concerned.
- In case of stress or crisis, livestock in bad shape are driven to a deep price depression and at the same time the staple food prices rise versus too many animals on the market pushing the prices down.

Comments frequently made by the pastoralists complaining about the decreased value of animals:

- “before we used to sell animals for good prices”;
- “traders are the ones who are able to fix the prices”.



Camel transaction on process among pastoralists

#### **4.3 Salt Caravans**

Traditionally, there are still important salt caravans coming to Tigray - especially Mekele - from Barharle in the Danakil depression (Afdera - Dallol). These caravans, which can count over a hundred of camels and donkeys, are bringing salt in bags or in blocks (amole), a commodity essential to highland livestock as well as for human consumption. Actually the production is still under the control of the Afar Dahimeela, a strongly independent clan always suspicious towards state intervention down in their area. Frequent clashes between the Tigrayans and them are taking place, as the highlanders are accused of trying to control the salt production. Indeed, the production up to now remains traditional on a part time basis due to the extreme heat during the summer when the production has to be stopped in Barharle. There are only episodic caravans during the hot season from May to September as most of the activity is concentrated during the rest of the year. Of course, any industrial process might allow a non-stop production process but it will also exclude the Afar

from the exploitation. Beside salt caravans, Afar are also bringing to the highlands mats and ropes as dum palm trees are particularly prolific in salty areas like Afdera and Barharle.

## 5. Economic diversification

All activities situated outside of livestock herding are generally related to settlers, migrants and for the poorest to destitute pastoralists. As far as the Afar are concerned, even most of the traditional activities and those developed recently are not integrated in commercial lines controlled by Afar. Consequently, very little is known about settled Afar and the two groups commonly mentioned are:

- petty traders in various markets as well as those settled in towns along the main road but even in Afar villages, most of the shops are controlled by highlanders and particularly Tigrayans, which is a source of tension between those “migrants” and the Afar.
- farm workers and casual workers involved in agriculture production in the Awash valley.



Charcoal bags on sale along the road (August 2001)

For the destitute pastoralists, charcoal production and marketing are new phenomena largely induced by the highlanders and the demand coming from the urban population. This is one of the main part-time activities for destitute who are elsewhere developing strategies of multi-activities. About 80% of those getting food relief in Doda supplement their income by selling firewood. (ERCS, 1988:31).

Another alternative and probably the one actually increasing is related to migration as casual workers. As well, there is various street selling and petty trade and finally begging starts to become more frequent, particularly in the urban centres at the periphery of the Afar region: Awash and Bati.

Progressively dropped out from pastoralism, income diversification usually generates only small incomes (petty trade, low-paid casual work usually linked with seasonal migration) and results in more and more people being assisted by their own social network and/or becoming dependant on food aid. Such a situation might tend to increase the vulnerability of a greater number of people. In good years, they are able to survive on their own but they are more and more unable to accumulate any kind of reserve in order to cope with future climatic or economic difficulties.

There are also some strong cultural restrictions related to the traditional stratification of the society in particular with the artisan casts, like blacksmiths, those involved in leather process, as well as any kind of craftwork. Artisans are considered as members of lower social categories and as such cultural constraints keep away destitute pastoralists from engaging in such types of activities.

In Bati market, highlander blacksmiths also belong to lower casts of society and nobody would agree to get marriage ties with them. However, Afar are regular clients for them, purchasing various items.

Type of products and prices:

- butcher knife 3 birr

- bill-hook	3 birr
- needle	1 birr
- spade	5 birr
- axe imported	25 birr
- iron stick	50 birr
- plough axe	20 birr

Such a pessimistic view of the Afar dwellers situation should not mask the fact that a minority do succeed in town, where they are involved in various activities and most of the time are the main representatives of the Afar population towards the external world (Ethiopia, Horn of Africa and the rest of the world) and particularly institutions involved in one sense or another with the Afar.

*“The Afar are engaged in trade, shop keeping in Assaita, selling livestock not only in towns like Eli Wuha but also selling them to merchants at the Red Sea Ports while buying their fire arms and clothes. The Afar also travel to towns like Dire Dawa, Awash, Nazareth and Djibouti. They frequent the towns for consumption of tea, soft drinks and buying other necessary items. This, both in terms of the life of the individuals and structurally the urban and modern life national politics is part and parcel of their lives. It is safe to generalise that the Afar operate within the clan, ethnic, national and international political arena but their cohesion at the clan and ethnic level is still much greater than their relation to the national and international systems. Similarly the Afar, while basing their economy on pastoral production, utilise the cash economy of the urban, national and international market systems. The Afar way of urbanisation and engagement in cash economy is selective. There is no trend among the Afar in adopting the urban ways of life in toto. The development of the Awash valley and thereby the political and economic integration of the Afar is of considerable importance in Ethiopia’s regional geo-political strategy. Yet complete assimilation of urban live and cash economy is shunned by the Afar against considerable odds. Thus engagement in wage labour in the national and international economy is again occasional. The successful Afar are engaged in civil services as local administrators and party representatives. This kind of assignment could only bring esteem for the leaders who act as protectors of the interest of the Afar” (ERCS; 1988: 47).*

## **6. Water shortage in Eli Daar (Woreda Eli Daar 18 kebele)**

Eli Daar woreda (zone 1) composed of 18 kebele is situated south of the Danakil Depression (zone 2) along Assab road. At the present time, it is probably the most remote area of the Afar Region since transit traffic out of Assab port has been stopped by the conflict with Eritrea.

There are little grazing possibilities in the area along the Assab road where the soil is volcanic and rocky. Nevertheless, camels are present in Doda area (crossroad where to branch to Galafi and Djibouti) where they can take advantage of salty grazing. Essentially, local flocks are formed with camels and shoats and only the better off are able to keep cattle and buy fodder to complement grazing resources. Livestock is moving as far as Aura and Kaluan (Region 4). Within the dry season conditions and drought of the previous years, there are bad grazing conditions and no caravans in Afdera (zone 2).



For marketing, since Assab is unreachable, livestock are brought as far as Assaita and Imino<sup>5</sup> for marketing. All our interlocutors in Eli Daar pointed to the fact that both the recent war with Eritrea and the civil war which has affected Afar region in the Republic of Djibouti have considerably restrained livestock movements. Back to the situation 10 or 15 years ago, from Doda area, Dora, Randa and down to Tadjourah in Djibouti used to be a traditional grazing area for the Eli Daar pastoralists. As well, Assab and Tadjourah used to be export and market places. In the 90's, after Eritrean independence and during the civil war in Djibouti, an informal alternative was set up near Raheita, where dhows embark livestock by night for Yemen, a silent agreement of both Eritrean and Djiboutian military officials.

Water facilities in Eli Daar: There are several shallow wells equipped with Indian pumps within the wadi bed close to the village. Five of the seven wells are actually working, but the pumps are closed during a large part of the day in order to save water and give wells time for recharging. During the dry season, pastoralists are using shallow wells in the same riverbed to water their animals. As the last rain in Eli Daar took place in March and the location does not get an additional water supply, restrictions are the main policy to save water resources.



Dam project built by APDA near Doda (Assab road)

Underneath, *berka* built for safe water storage (June 2001)

In other locations of the area, only a few water facilities are available, like in Bure and Mande. The army is using a borehole in Sulula, promptly rehabilitated at the beginning of the war. Beside these facilities, there is water trucking to some of the kebele to bring additional water.

<sup>5</sup> Imino like Doda, two depressions collecting rainfall in Eli Daar woreda, are considered as reserved grazing areas.

Due to the strong military presence along the border, additional water has been provided to the population, but on an irregular basis. In 1998, at the beginning of the war, Afar regional authorities provided water by tanker. Following a breakdown in June 1999, APDA rented two water tankers to continue bringing water to the population and for about a year, the Association provided water. Since then, water has been provided by private tankers (Price: 10 birr for a drum / 200 l). Water supply is coming from Logiya, supplying particularly the two places of Bure and Mande. Globally, the capacity of water transported to Eli Daar woreda is of two tankers carrying 40 to 50.000 litres.

The area can offer some alternatives with steam wells all over the area according to Afar traditional techniques using water steam condensation. About 400/500 steam wells set in this highly volcanic region are currently producing an average of 75 - 80 litres per day. Without bringing enough water, such wells constitute however an important complementary water resource. Temperatures, as well as persistent uncertainties about the chemical composition, constitute other limitations.



Doda salty depression near the Djibouti – Galafi crossroad (June 2001)

- In any case, water management and water sanitation linked with poor health status are key questions within Afar region and such a situation is particularly accurate in Eli Daar woreda.
- As far as Eli Daar woreda and the constant need for water within the area are concerned, only a specific hydro-geological cartography and mapping of the area should determinate any drilling campaign (cf. Ministry of Water Resources, Ethiopian Mapping Authorities).

## **7. Awsa agriculture**

Since the 60s and the creation of irrigated schemes in the Awash valley (Amibara / Melka Werer, Tendaho / Dubti, Dit Bahir and Assaita), cohabitation between pastoralists and farmers has always presented difficulties. At the time of the Empire, all the riverbank was prioritarly reserved for agriculture; with the Derg regime, agriculture schemes were nationalised and managed in state farms. Moreover, the administrative reform with the communities represented by the kebele administrators has always been seen as a constraint by the Afar. Since 1995, under EPRDF instigation, over 16,000 hectares of former state farms were released for the communities – one farm in Mille, one in Dit Bahir and two in Assaita have been returned to the Region by the Tendaho Agriculture Development



Enterprise<sup>6</sup> - but Afar do not have traditional know-how for cultivation and presently in Assaita, historical and social contexts contribute to the disorganisation of the agriculture schemes.

In the past, Afar used to rule the Awsa sultanate and sedentary people working in the farms<sup>7</sup>. Since the recent political change, Afar clan leaders representing the communities are mostly allocating land to non-Afar farmers who have to pay back half of the harvest. Already, emphasis given to livestock, lower prices and the tenant system has motivated the abandonment of a large part of the agriculture plots. Such a situation can easily be observed along Afambo road where plots are infested with bushes and most of the bunds have collapsed.

Facing disorganisation and tension between those in favour of a step back to the sultanate's organisation and those willing to offer the communities an alternative, the Agriculture Bureau has started a pilot project with six development centres in Assaita. They are trying to promote a holistic approach based on patterns of mobility in order to minimise opposition between pastoralists and farmers. Regrouped in associations, farmers and pastoralists might be able to discuss water resource sharing as well as common interest questions like dyke and riverbed maintenance. Only such kinds of association could get technical expertise for optimum irrigation.

Actually, there are two types of farming production with irrigated garden along the Awash and beyond rainfed agriculture. Big scheme developed with irrigation canals concentrate cash crop production, mainly cotton (e. g. Tendaho Agriculture Development Enterprise in Dubti and Dit Bahri).

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<sup>6</sup> The Tendaho Agriculture Development Enterprise (TADE), a State company linked to the Federal government, is still in charge of two farms in Dubti and Dit Bahir. Cotton production is TADE main target, producing an average of 20 quintal per ha over the 7,400 ha cultivated. TADE is actually paying for the Awash water consumed as well as for the dykes and canal works done by the Awash Basin Water Resource Administration.

<sup>7</sup> Awsa Sultanate on the lower Awash constitutes the only area there Afar have developed agriculture since centuries. Awsa people have Arab and Oromo or Somali origins, previous to be dominated by Afar with the introduction of the Sultanate.



Agriculture landscape at Assaita (June 2001)

**a) *Irrigated gardens close to the riverbank***

The main production items are banana, dates, papaya, mango, citrus, guava, henna, as well as melons and vegetables like tomatoes, green and red pepper, onions, and garlic. Prices are actually low, affecting most of the farmers, particularly since Al Hamoudi Enterprise, which used to commercialise red and white onions, has been closed, and in the absence of any alternative it contributes to decreasing the demand for such production.

Despite good potential, irrigation canals observed in most of the farms close to Assaita town are not well maintained. The old traditional maintenance system has been abandoned for about 30 years and the lack of maintenance has increased floods phenomena. Pumps that are being used appear to be small to do the job but mobile pumps are necessary in order to remove the material during the flooding period. Only the big schemes are still using heavy irrigation material initiated in the 60's and 70's. In all other places most of those equipments provided by the Russian are in disrepair and abandoned. The continuation of the large irrigation system without any precaution could result in an increase of the soil salinisation. On another hand, Dit Bahri plain, which is composed of a fairly deep alluvium, is actually suffering from frequent over floods as well as salinisation and alkalinisation, consequences of irrigation mismanagement.

**b) *Surrounding rain fed agriculture***

Rainfed agriculture concentrated on maize production is also facing market price depression. In 1998 - 99, maize production sold to Ethiopian merchants used to bring back between 2000 - 3000 birr per hectare. In 2001, payment dropped down to 1000 birr per hectare. Such market evolution combined with the lack of maintenance of the plots has led to decreased agriculture activity in the Awsa. Due to cultivation variations as well as the impact of the floods in 1999 and 2000, the number of exploitations vary as well as farms can suddenly lose a large part of their arable land, due to erosion and a hazardous course of water flow. Such a situation has a big impact on labour markets as far as farmers and farm workers are concerned. Part of those are now working full time as shepherds, up to now an activity which was only common during inter-cropping seasons.

Previous reports mentioned that Melke Sede workers had been promptly dismissed after the flooding in 1999 and besides the humanitarian concern, it let appear a "hit and run" management conception, which might be incompatible with agriculture development on a long term.

For the Awsa rain fed agriculture, the most common type of contract between Afar landlords or clan representatives and the Oromo or highlander farmers are the following:

- The farmer is cultivating the land and shares the harvest (mainly maize) 50 % for the landlord and 50 % for the producer. They are sharing physically the grain instead of cash payment.
- Further, it is also common that landlord and farmer are sharing house or compound in town as a part of the contract.

Preparation of the land:

- In order to fertilise the soil, haulm is commonly burned as well as animal excrement or manure contributes to improve the soil fertility.
- Seeds either are kept over the farm crop or commonly purchased in the villages but a proper seed selection remains a challenge.
- Ploughing is done either by mechanisation (tractors) or with oxen; both systems request to rent tractors (1 ha = 200 birr per hour) or ploughing oxen (30 birr per day), such additional production costs related to the recent market depression have contributed to the agriculture activities decrease.

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**Box 1. Organisation of Awsa Sultanate Agriculture**

A particular focus on agriculture since 1966, livestock affairs have been neglected and traditional business matters have been handled by the Deputy Sultan (Hadji Hanfere) and some elders. During this period also the sultan's family has become major farmers themselves with about 20,000 ha under cultivation although having operational managers. (Cossins, 1973:34). The malak were responsible for all aspects of land and water management and disputes involving land tenure or resources sharing. Their activities were co-ordinated by the Office of the Sultan. In this semi-autonomous region, Awsa Sultan has been always in a position to compete with the central state as well as agencies like Awash Valley Authorities (AVA).

During that time the Office of the Sultan was almost an agro-business operation providing:

- Co-ordination of insecticide deliveries, machinery and equipment purchases and cotton harvest commercialisation.
- Arrangement of credit backing and other services for Awsa farmers.
- Provision of direct aid, management advice and credit backing for the settlement activities at Dubti.

The office was also responsible for the digging and maintenance of the main canal system in the area and for an assessment of about 2 birr (2 Eth \$ NB worth of a quintal 62 \$) per cotton quintal paid by all farmers. As something like 140,000 quintals was the listed Awsa Farmers' production for 1971-72, assessment revenue accrued by the Sultan's Office should have been near E\$ 280,000. However one of the assessment dollars was funnelled off for education and hospitals from every landowner or Afar farmer, but apparently not from non-Afar non-landowner farmers (Cossins, 1973:42-43).

***Multiple Land Ownership system under the Sultanate***

Malak are essentially bailifa (Land holder's steward) land and water managers, and the system is a societal response to the demands of irrigated farming. Perhaps prompted by the Sultan of old as a means of controlling farming, which traditional Afar social organisation lacked, or a result of the farmers' need for practical as well as social order in their lives, the system developed at least one hundred and fifty years ago. Unique in the Afar society, it was confined to the Awash delta as regulation that occurred in tribal Afar society.

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Since that period, farming had become an element in the life of the Afar and has given them the opportunity of observing the possibility of different land use methods. (ERCS 1988:45), and at the same time, it contributes to an increasing dependence of the semi-nomadic Afar on the economy and culture of the country as a whole (ERCS 1988:47). Partly to blame for the disaster that has overtaken livestock Afar outside the delta, both by negligence and by farming or encouraging farming in Dubti, Dit Bahari and the southern delta area (Cossins, 1973:36), during harsh time, farm invasion and particularly cotton plantations by cattle keepers is one of the answers of Afar pastoralists under stress.

Moreover, the current situation within the Assaita irrigated agriculture scheme has already induced bad effects. For two years now the main road-dyke crossing the agriculture scheme has been cut off by a major crack about nine kilometres beyond Assaita. Actually, people and animals are crossing the ford by walking in the water stream. This damage to the dyke system is related to the topographic level differences creating water accumulation by gravitation in water flow, which can damage further the dyke. Repair and reinforcement works have been planned with the support of a food-for-work programme, which have not started yet.



Assaita – Afambo road-dyke crack (June 2001)

Elsewhere, untimely irrigation canals have been dug during the dry season by the people and consequently have considerably weakened the dykes in several points. Already the dyke crack, which took place in Assaita on August 13 and led to fertiliser pollution, is assumed to be a consequence. By lack of clear land use rules - up to now, no precise directive has been issued by the Regional government - no maintenance work has been conducted, particularly canals or river bed desilting. Related to that issue, the current lack of consensus among communities is illustrated by the non-organisation of maintenance and the possibility for anyone to dig along the Awash without strong reaction from the authorities. As far as Assaita area is concerned, clear land and water use rights should be urgently implemented in order to avoid greater abandonment of agriculture in an area devoted to food crops for more than two hundred years.

## **8. Needs expressed by local authorities, pastoralists and various agencies representatives**

All interlocutors within the regional and local administration, as well as NGOs representatives or clans leaders and pastoralists in the settlements are expressing similar needs, putting on priority the necessity of more water facilities as well as development of health and education services.

Beside these priorities, various problems related to specific areas have been pointed, mainly the question of security for “border areas” all around Afar Region with neighbouring population Issa,

Tigrayen and potentially with the Oromo. Recurrent seasonal floods along Awash valley as well as frequent river bed diversion are a major concern for both farmers and pastoralists. More specifically related to livestock economy, poor animal marketing by Afar in Assaita, Bati, and for the southern part in Metehara cut down pastoralists benefits. Furthermore, *prosopis juliflora* (wayane) proliferation all over the Afar region is requesting grazing land rehabilitation measures.

## **9. NGOs intervention and programmes**

### **9.1. Action contre la Faim (ACF)**

ACF currently based in Dubti has focused activities on animal health and water supply for both human consumption and animal watering. Hand pumps for bore holes and shallow wells have been installed in order to secure human water consumption. On another hand, ACF has developed para-vet training and sensitisation within the communities through kebele leaders and elders as facilitators. In Dubti woreda 10,000 cattle have been vaccinated against Contagious Bovine Pleural Pneumonia (CBPP) and in Ewa, 17,000 against anthrax. All vaccination campaign took place on cost recovery base.

Meanwhile, ACF has initiated market assessments and researches supervised by ILRI. Assaita, Bati and Yalo markets are regularly visited and radio broadcasting sessions in Afar relay livestock market and veterinarian information. As a key actor in the Afar Region, ACF has been one of the initiator of networking with NGOs present in the region, but such projects monitoring is facing difficulties due to the distance, as well as NGOs specific approaches and co-operation conception.

ACF got funds essentially through the French co-operation for a three years project up to March 2002. Following a study about animal and animal product marketing, ACF is also planning to initiate marketing associations at sub-clan or woreda level with two aims: to set up a buffer stock in order to supply some grain during the dry season, when the terms of trade (grain / animal) are particularly unfavourable for the pastoralists and to regulate vet and para-vet drugs market.

On the veterinarian side, ACF is willing to strength training and the set up of Animal Health Care Workers (AHCW) structures for epizootic outbreak early warning, as well as cost recovery distribution of vaccines and medicines. At this stage, ACF encounters difficulties and has to face local traders competition providing vet and para-vet medicines at a third of their prices. Part of those stocks are out of date medicines or discount over consignments coming from the government stores.

### **9.2. Farm Africa activities**

Farm Africa's programme has initiated a Pastoral Resources Management Project in Gewane and Alalac (zone 3 & 5), and animal health activities, based on mobile teams in charge of initiating a community approach focused on training for resource management and early warning, health status and primary care for both human and animal as well as improvement in animal marketing.

Meanwhile, poverty among the afar-pastoral communities represents one of the main blockages to any development. At this stage, sensitisation and training workshop are usually combined with communities meetings. Animal products marketing focused on local market has been initiated with the establishment of milk marketing shop in Gewane. Despite the fact that milk is not on sale among the

Afar and culturally should be offer, Cattle milk is available as well as a pilot project with 20 camels within a demonstration milk farm. Another sale experiment ongoing in Dubti<sup>8</sup> is trying to address camel milk technical issues and to contribute to cultural attitude change.

In Gewane, Farm Africa has also initiated a fodder production but this experimental farm project supported by the World Bank has been recently frozen. Beside activities focused on pastoral immediate needs, the problem of bush encroachment with *prosopis juliflora* (*wayane*) constitutes another priority. Since 1985 drought, Awash valley has been affected by *wayane* proliferation and the phenomena is accelerated by shoat stools. In absence of proper technical solution, Farm Africa and ACF have doubts that *wayane* roots could be useful for charcoal processing, furthermore acacia tortilis (*kasalto*), one of the most common species, widely used for fuel wood or charcoal, are precisely stifled by *wayane* proliferation.

### **9.3. Médecins sans Frontières (MSF - France)**

Médecins sans Frontières, a well known NGOs specialised in medical emergency actions, is supporting Dubti hospital as well as they are operating mobile clinics in zone 1. Addressing to one of the main health problem, MSF has initiated a large TB treatment programme, which is presently facing difficulties related to a non appropriate drugs distribution and the difficulty to set up therapeutic structure taking in account the mobility of the patients.

### **9.4. Afar Pastoral Development Association (APDA)**

Activities initiated by local NGO Afar Pastoral Development Association (APDA) try to set up health and education structures taking in account the pastoralists mobility as well as to bring solutions to water supply for both human and animal.

With financial support from GAA, APDA has already implemented water points, respectively 14 *hafir* or *balli* (water pans) and *berka* mainly in zone 1, as well as contribution to steam wells rehabilitation in Eli Daar woreda. On another hand, APDA is particularly active within training and information campaign. ToT has been conducted for health workers and women extension workers focused on literacy courses targeted to women. An efficient HIV/AIDS warning campaign with cartoon's advertisements has disseminated information in an area where HIV pandemic is essentially spread by increasing road traffic between Djibouti and Addis Ababa.

Further, APDA is willing to set up an Afar Language Development Centre in order to support training and information campaign activities. Finally, ADPA action together with other NGOs currently working in the region should lead to Afar pastoralists' advocacy and such permanent concern has to be addressed to regional authorities and other agencies to reach consensus on a similar attitude.

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<sup>8</sup> In Dubti, camel milk is sold at 5 birr per litre; cow milk at 3.5 birr.

## **10. Recommendation about Afar vulnerability**

**Although 2001 seems to be a good year so far, Afar pastoralists and agro-pastoralists remain vulnerable.**

All the socio-economic information gathered confirm the following that Afar people are demographically less dynamic than their neighbours due to the poor health status (up to 35% mortality rate under 5 years) and endogamic customary<sup>9</sup>. On another hand, since a long time, Afar have to resist territorial pressures from Djibouti up to Awash station, from the Issa in the east and from the highlanders and Oromo pastoralists from the west.

Furthermore, livestock diseases are endemic and can easily crack down any successful season by killing animals in good condition or blocking the market for sanitary reasons. Afar pastoralists are essentially trekkers, bringing animals and caravans to traders or middlemen, but all the benefit from trading activities are in the hands of Non-Afars. Even with the Awsa maize production, situation is similar. Hence commercial trade and the price mechanisms are not in the hand of the afar, except ghee, dum palm and salt trade. Afar also lack of income generating alternatives that are related their rigid social system and market experience conditions. Afar face a limited retail market profit that usually does not exceed 10 – 25%, whereas non-afar traders usually benefit a 100% gain that is common with the informal sector.

### **Recommendations:**

- Peace building between Issa and Afar communities along the main road around Gewane in the middle Awash basin should be one of the long term intervention priorities together with water intervention in Shinile in order to decrease competition for resources. Since the Eritrean-Ethiopian war, the road Djibouti – Addis Ababa concentrates most of the Ethiopian importation and instability wouldn't be tolerated along.
- Sectoral water interventions particularly in Eli Daar should be based on a precise hydro-geological map in order to avoid wrong drilling decisions. On another hand Awash River diversions as well as flooding control up stream constitute the second priority with technical improvement and legal solution as non-resolved water rights issues are representing a potential of insecurity in the entire region.
- Advocacy for a holistic approach of the Afar region development and agencies activities co-ordination should be promoted in order to address Afar pastoral society issues.
- Agencies should promote the use of media, particularly radio broadcasting in Afar, with a provision of early warning information related to human and animal health, weather situation as well as marketing information.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. S. Barkat Daoud, *Etude du mariage Absuma afar, les enjeux pratiques de l'institution*, Maitrise d'Ethnologie, Université Lyon II, 1998.



- Market Associations promoted by NGOs should adopt a broader approach based on the Kenyan model of Pastoral Associations taking into account water and grazing management as well as animal marketing. Any future autonomy and sustainability of the pastoralists will rely on it.
- Ecological question of grazing rehabilitation with measures to control *prosopis juliflora* (*wayane*) proliferation should contribute to increase pasture availability with benefit to both livestock condition and security in the region.
- Combined with measures against *wayane* proliferation, fodder production should be encouraged by provision of pasture on the less productive crop areas. Fodder export could open up new market particularly in Djibouti, where already some exports by train are taking place.
- Destocking before drought and supporting traditional means of restocking through afar mutual aid system might be the most appropriate way of livestock intervention. This means that offtake for meat production should happen when livestock is in excess beyond subsistence needs and any post drought recovery might be more successful by involving strong community structure.
- Training and capacity building in term of marketing through pastoral associations should contribute to strength afar marketing capacities with rather good chance to influence positively pastoralists' income.
- Introduction of local grain reserves or improvement of Kambolcha's one in order to initiate a better reply to market shortage and prices instability.
- As numerous Afar are forced to leave pastoral economy or to survive with small size herds, there is an urgent need to explore all possibilities for activities diversification.
- Introduction of cash reserve (credit schemes) particularly in connection with income generating activities might also contribute to economic diversification.

#### DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever of the UN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

23 October 2001

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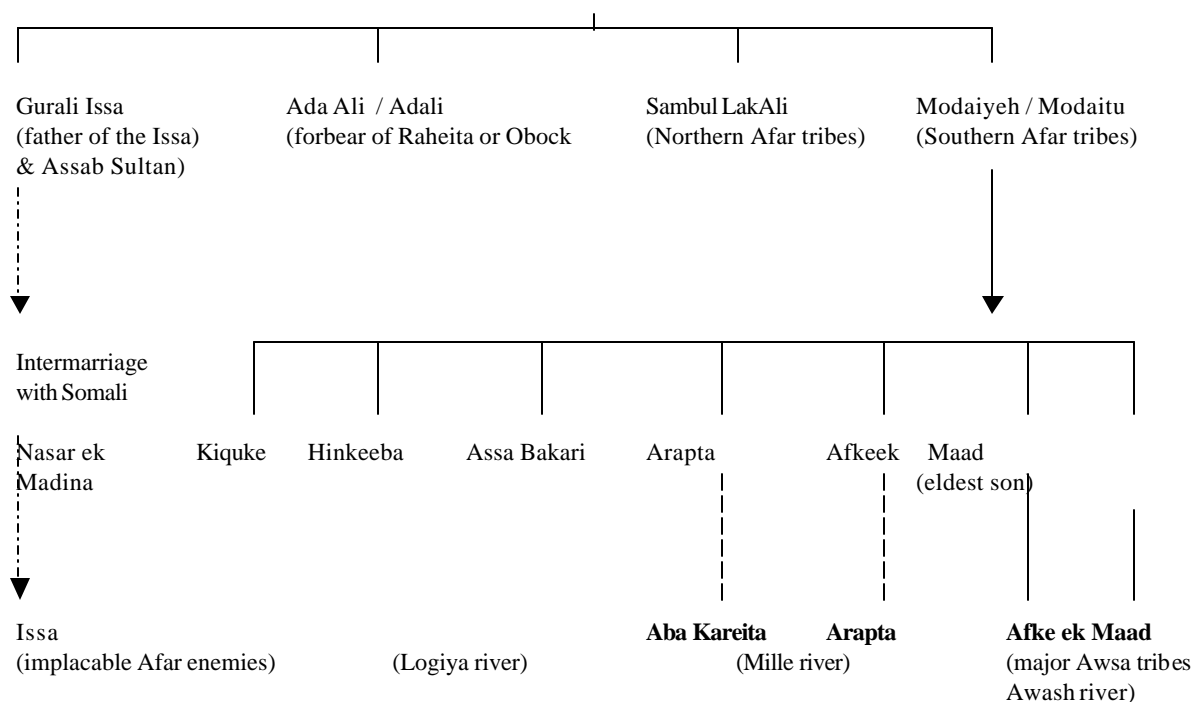
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## Annex 1 Afar clans and sub-clans

### A/ Assayamara eponymic genealogy

Har el Mahis (Afar ancestor)



**Source:** N. J. Cossins, *Green Heart of a Dying Land, A study of the new cotton wealth of the old Afar sultanate of Aussa*, 1973, p. 10.

Class distinction between the Assayamara (nobles or red men) and the Adoyamara (commoners or white men). The tribes do have various positions like the Afke ek Maad mainly Assayamara and the Abu Samara (west along the Awash) Adoyamara as well as Arapta and Aba Kareita tribes stand on an intermediate position.

### B/ Tentative of a comprehensive Afar clans list (ethnonyms transcription remains problematic)

Clans families	Kedo Aba Group (clans number)	(listed from South to North)
Weima	16 kedo aba (sub-clans)	
Debne	4 kedo aba (sub-clans)	
Aghinni	14 kedo aba	
Abu Samara	35 (estimation 40 – 45 families per kedo aba)	
Dodha	11 / 12 kedo aba	
Arapta	20 (the second largest clan in size)	
Aba Kareita /Asa Bakari	10 kedo aba	
Haishantu	5 kedo aba within 3 Chikas, 2 Balats	
Mogoro	6 kedo aba within 7 Chikas, one of whom is Terrimara	
Ahapto	7 kedo aba	
Terrimara	--	
Dahimeela	--	

**C/ The main Afar clans and sub-clans along the escarpment (South to North)**

Amibara - Awash:	Harkamela Fedihite, Sidihabura (Aiorosso) – <b>Debine</b> ; Ablek Haisomale, Ad'ali, Rakbak Dermela - <b>Weima</b>
Gewane – Mateka:	Beguleit, Datelayito, Herto, Mahissera, Sheka, Yambered ( <b>Moodayito</b> );
Escarpment (zone 5)	Aghini, Dodah, Abu Samara (chefferie Badoytammela)
Bati:	Hassoba, Sheka, Adali (amhara speaking clans)
Chifra / Eli Wiha	Arapta, Dodah, Abu Samara
Mille	Arapta, Aba Kareita /Asa Bakari
Uwa / Ewa	Haishentu, Mogoro, Kuik Henkeba/ Kiuk Honkeaba
Aura	Adali Hasanto, Hadermo
Kalouan / Gulina	Mogoro
Yalo	Hibat Sarele
Ab'Ala / Shehet	Terrimara
Berahale	Dahimeela

**D/ Clans and sub-clans locations according to the grazing zones (South to North)**

- 1) Allideghi plain: Debine and Weima as well as the Issa, Itu and Kereyu (zone 3)
- 2) Sheleka river: Aghini along the escarpment (zone 5)
- 3) Jeldi: Abu Samara grazing area but also Dodha, Aba Kareita/Asa Bakari and Arapta (zone 5)
- 4) Waama river, near west foothills: Arapta, Dodha, and the Abu Samara (zone 1)
- 5) Mille area: Arapta, Aba Kareita /Asa Bakari grazing area (a vital dry season grazing reserve / zone 4)
- 6) Between Yalo river and Gulina river: Mogoro clans and Oromo (zone 4)
- 7) Barantu and Geisha, a swamp area drains by Yalo and Gulina rivers motivating a retreat to the hills during floods season; clans presents: Dahimeela, Ahapto, Adali and Terrimara (zone 4 / 2)

**E/ Pastoralists clans and sub-clans displaced by agriculture schemes in the Awsa**

- 1) Dubti: Arapta, Asa Bakari, Kuik Hunkeeba (a few of Afke ek Maad clans)
- 2) Dit Bahari: Afke ek Maad, Asa Bakari, Arapta Ad Ali Aeroita / Aloma, Afkaama

**Sources:**

Alula Abate, Fecadu Gedamu, *The Afar in Transition: some critical issues in pastoral rehabilitation and development*, Disaster Prevention Programme, Ethiopian Red Cross Society, Addis Ababa, August 1988.  
N. J. Cossins, *Green heart of Dying Land. A study of the new cotton wealth of the old Afar Sultanate of Aussa*, Addis Ababa, April 1973.  
N.J. Cossins, *Now way to live: a Study of Afar clans of North-East Rangelands*, Addis Ababa, 1972.  
Ibrahim Dini, AICF, interviews 19/6 et 15/8 2001.  
MacDonald Report, *Amibara Irrigation Project II*, Pastoralist & Forestry Development Studies, Final Report, Addis Ababa, December 1991.  
F. Piguet, *Des nomades entre la ville et les sables, La sédentarisation dans la Corne de l'Afrique*, Karthala, Paris, 1999.

## **Annex 2. Solidarity network or internal aid system**

There are a number of ways that are used as mechanisms of stock redistribution and levelling off in order to take care of those households that fall below the threshold of minimum herd requirement. Ayele Gebre Mariam (1986) lists ten different ways of mutual aid<sup>10</sup>:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1) Hanfilla    | Lactating animals are distributed to needy Afar. Offsprings are returned to the owner, if many, the user may keep one or more. |
| 2) Irbu        | Households who have lost animals go from door to door asking for a gift of animals.  |
| 3) Ees         | Stealing from a rich local community member.   |
| 4) Gera hara   | Ask local community for livestock in order to raise cash to buy a gun.   |
| 5) Hula hara   | An individual asks his local community to give him animals for slaughtering when his wife gives birth to a child.              |
| 6) Digibi hara | Animals are begged to feed a sick man  |
| 7) Verbe hara  | Animals are begged for slaughtering at a dead man's burial ceremony.   |
| 8) Ahiwo       | A system whereby a animal is given to a poor Afar by his local community.  |
| 9) Seka        | An animal is given to the sheika as a compulsory devotional act of tax, which is then distributed to the poor (zakat?).        |
| 10) Crop       | Ten percents of the crop production is distributed to the poor.  |

There are also a host of other basis of sharing goods and services among the Afar. Sharing is an Afar ideal. If any animal is slaughtered, uninvited persons are all welcomed to eat. If a stranger drops in a meal time, he is given food without any hesitation. The poor are always fed during normal meal times everywhere. It is stipulated that an Afar is socially obliged to help another Afar in time of need. Failing to do so would result in severe punishment, i. e. six times as much as an ordinary offence. Social obligation of sharing extends to labour pooling in the local communities, in terms of herding and watering. Refusal to co-operate in this respect is also punishable. Cross-cousin, parilineal extended family, most agnatic kinship affinal and matrilineal kin provide a more widespread network of assistance

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<sup>10</sup> Ayele Gebre Mariam, *Economic Adaptation and competition for Scarce Resources: the Afar in Northeast Ethiopia*, MA-thesis, unpublished, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen.

#### **A/ Fima**

Specific institution in Afar, the Fima constitutes a social frame system capable of legislating peacefully justice without referring to legal governmental authorities. Institution pillar of the solidarity within the afar society, the power of decision of its leader, the fimataba can thwart that of the clan elders.

The solidarity of the Fima towards its members exercises both at the time of the physical failings and following events causing strong expenditures (marriage, burial), similar to the tontine system or *ekoub*. The Fima can also intervene when the herd of a member is decimated by drought, it answers needs of protection of the individuals against disasters and adventures of live and so plays a role of social welfare.

The Fima knows regional variants. In Tadjourah (Djibouti), the system is based on classes of age, in the Awsa, basis is related to land propriety, other varieties are related tribal membership or geographical localisation. At first, the Fima represents a shape of group of protection and defence, it also plays a role of mutual help and constitutes a strong social frame.

#### **B/ Tasiga / Dhasiga**

Social event where a group of men gather together and feast upon a slaughtered steer, which they buy usually on an exchange basis for heifers. The feast takes place in *gilel* or *hagai* when the Afar are gathered at the wells and sharing the hard work of watering. The word describes the occasion rather than the group, which is not a formally intact entity and those participants will vary. The chief idea is to relax and enjoy oneself after hard work and eat especially fatty and strength giving food to be able to go on with the work.

#### **Sources:**

Ayele Gebre Mariam, *Economic Adaptation and competition for Scarce Resources: the Afar in Northeast Ethiopia*, unpublished MA-thesis, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, 1986.

N. J. Cossins, *Now way to live: a Study of Afar clans of North-East Rangelands* carried out for the Livestock and Meat Board of the Imperial Ethiopian Government, North-East Rangelands Development Project, Addis Ababa, 1972.

F. Piguet, *Des nomades entre la ville et les sables, La sédentarisation dans la Corne de l'Afrique*, Karthala, Paris, 1999.

### **Annex 3. Situation reported and needs in visited Woreda**

#### ***A/ Shekhet / Ab'Ala***

Shekhet, situated down Tigray highland is included in zone 2. Up to June, over seven woreda, only Shekhet has had good rain. In some areas, people have to move for about 6 hours to get water and for all the surrounding area, Shekhet constitute an important water resource due to the system of tankers and gravity water pipes collecting water from the foothills.

- Magaale no water / no drilling bore hole
- Erebtu no drilling bore hole
- Bahadle relies on shallow wells
- Afdera, Kanabe and Dallol are facing seasonal water problems

#### **Health**

- in general, lack of infrastructure and transfer to Mekele for the serious cases
- main diseases: malaria, TB (connected with HIV?), diarrhoea.

Health education mainly related to HIV as well as waterborne diseases: health workers are coming time to time in the villages but not in the bush.

Some information has also be relayed by mosques and churches

There are cases of malnutrition (health education?)

No agriculture in the area, except Ab'Ala experimental garden run by the administration and producing some fruits and vegetables.

Livestock is coming for the market day in Ab'Ala

- Distance Ab'Ala – Afdera 10 days for the caravans and 6 days by foot
- Polarisation east – west: Dubti market at 15 days
- Livestock movement up to the zone 3 and more commonly to zone 4 Erebtu, Teru Yalo, Magaale (zone 2).
- Short distance is mainly related to vertical movements, where livestock takes the opportunity to graze and browse at different vegetation stages, but this system is not suitable for all type of livestock, mainly cattle coming from the lowest part of the Afar (Awsa). Such livestock movements along escarpments are bringing tension between Afar and Tigrayen pastoralists.
- Difficult negotiations over water are taking place in zone 2, due to clans tensions and water scarcity.
- Conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea has motivated changes in livestock movements patterns and pressure due to the number of animals has decreased.
- Conflict has motivated livestock losses and since then additional losses due to land mines, mainly in Bure area (zone 1).

#### ***B/ Sidi Adaba settlement (South Ewa woreda)***

Sidi Adaba, (Kebele with about 1500 people) is a permanent settlement since about 30 years. There are three camps with about 100 families still living within traditional housing made by daboita covered with grass (mats are more extensively used by the nomads).

- Settlement is out of the caravans traditional line which linked Aura and Chifra to the Highlands (Bati and Kombolcha).
- Activities: livestock (sheep, cattle and camels), downwards gardens with rain fed agriculture (mainly sorghum and wheat).
- Commercialisation: livestock sold only in case of necessity. Pastoralists are marketing animal directly without any middleman or dillal. Beside the livestock, the main product regularly marketed is butter (ghee).
- Children scolarisation through koranic schools established in the settlements. No children attending the school in Bilou, the nearest village distant of about 5 km.
- NGOs presence is requested and ACF livestock vaccination hasn't been mentioned.
- According to the community leaders, the settlement is in need for more water supplies.
- The community and women in particular are in need for grinding mills.

#### ***C/ Ewa / Halale Subla***

- Ewa woreda includes 10 kabele with a total population of 36,000.
- Woreda population, except about 400 people fixed near the new built administrative centre, is mainly moving with livestock.
- There is surface water running in the wadi, despite the fact that the hottest dry season will be over within next month.
- Water supply is assured by running water and people are reporting being affected by waterborne diseases (diarrhoeas). Other locations in the woreda do not have permanent water due to the proximity of perennial river (Awash tributaries) and water supply depend on shallow wells, e. g. Radgen kebele has about 30 wells up to 16 meters deep.
- Primary Schools for 5 degrees: Ewa (100 pupils 50 girls), Bilou (87 pupils, 30 girls) Ragden (100 pupils, 40 girls).
- Health: at woreda level, one clinic with 1 nurse but since April that health centre has been closed as the roof has been damaged. Before, people from the 10 kebele used to come here, For serious cases, like tuberculosis and malaria, people are currently getting treatment in Woldiya.
- NB all locations situated at the foot of the Afar escarpment are commonly attached to highland health infrastructures (Shekhet – Mekele; Ewa – Woldiya).

In Ewa town, Administrators are complaining about ACF working mainly in the two neighbouring woreda (Kaluan and Aura). They are in need for animal check and are worried about the price of the veterinarian medicines, 2/3 higher than some medicines provided by traders. ACF para-vet network is selling medicines at 1,5 birr and traders 0.5 birr only, but most of these medicines are out of date or came from governmental services. Those trading networks have organised an unfair competition by providing out of date medicines as well as selling stocks from the government. Such system hampers the sustainability of veterinarian programme set up by ACF.

#### ***Epizootic issues:***

- In the area, pastoralists are facing black leg or black quarter (Haraitou), a lethal disease for animals affecting muscles.
- Anthrax: ACF has vaccinated 17.000 cattle within the area (main activity in Owa Woreda)



- FMD disease has been detected in Dubti as well as some cases in Ewa area.

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**Box 2 Administrative reform at zone 4 level**

In the past, up to 1995, Ewa woreda used to count 18 kebele and the administration was run on a more traditional way together with traditional leaders, the okal, appointed according to the local sub-clan representation. At that time, four okal were in charge of the administration. Beside the local administration, livestock movement and grazing continued to be ruled by the *kedo aba* and the elders.

Since administrative building has been set up and within the reform, such “modern” organisation needs to collect funds in order to cover running costs and maintenance. With the reduction of the number of kebele from 18 to 10, woreda young administrators are now in charge instead of the 4 traditional okal. The reduction of the number of kebele means that the grazing areas situated along the escarpment are not anymore representing distinct kebele, but these territories constitute pockets depending of the villages or settlements erected as kebele.

However, the administrative reform marks also a turning point comparing to clans and sub-clans divisions. e. g. grazing land from Ewa and Bouti used to be kebele Agen according to a sub-clan’s name.

A similar administrative reform has reduced Kalouan number of kebele from 16 to 8. That situation which is similar to Ewa woreda is also related to the political situation, by reducing the number of circumscriptions in areas opposed to the regime. This reform has also something to do with imposing young administrators appointed outside the traditional clan leaders and the disappearance of kebele related to clanic division and grazing locations.

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**D/ Kalouan / Gullina**

Kalouan woreda includes eight kebele. The main village is actually enclaved along the foothill and should benefit from the new road under construction which should link Aura and Kalouan to the highland (Kobo). There are administrative building and a school providing education, up to the primary cycle, further students of the area have to go to Woldiya or Dessie.

Up to now, local market suffered from goods shortage (staple food and manufactured products) due to the difficulties of transport and often long delays. All the goods sold in the area are coming from Woldiya. In Kalouan with about 20 shops, only two or three are run by Afar. Shopkeepers are highlanders, like in most of the afar locations, most of the traders are highlanders.

In Kalouan, we have had the opportunity to meet people coming from Teru woreda where, according to them, water is the main issue and the edification of a school still under project. Teru is situated on the eastern side of Kalouan, in the direction of Logiya, at about 3 days walk. Caravans are coming from Teru and people used to bring animals to get cash and purchase grain. On another hand, Afdera salt caravans are not reaching Kalouan, usually stopping at Yalo.

**E/ Problems and needs faced in Zone 1**

Zone 1 covers 7 woreda (Assaita, Afambo, Chiffra, Dubti, Eli Daar, Ewa, Mille), Eli Daar is facing the most difficult situation, mainly water (currently sold by private transporters bringing it in 200 litres drums or by tankers), health and education.

***Awash floods regional problem***

- flooding preparedness: no particular measures taken at regional level as that question is considered under the responsibility of “Awash Basin Water Resources Administration Agency” and concerned the Room Region as well.
- Koa dam built in the late fifties by the Italians under a World Bank project with a barrage and a flood gate suffers from silting coming down the mountains. As less maintenance has been done since a couple of years with no regular de-silting, the dam has perverse effects<sup>11</sup>:
- electricity cut off in Addis
- water release and flooding downstream in Awash valley sometimes reinforce by the water brought by tributaries. Consequently, increasing floods are taking place along the Awash valley from Melka Sede down to Assaita, Afambo and the lake Babe.
- Dubti - Afambo irrigation schemes have been damaged and soil washed (agriculture soils) and progression of waterborne diseases (diarrhoea, malaria and other parasites) has been noticed.
- Each year, the Awash is facing hazard water stream, riverbed erosion with the destruction of several farms and gardens. This problem is accurate since the middle Awash valley.

Request for embankment works as 30 years ago, a traditional system of maintenance and riverbed de-silting was able to cope with such problem. Since that time, a priority has been given to large farms with cash crops like cotton (currently 70,000 MT). Consequently, Afar agriculture has been marginalised.

***F/ Eli Daar***

Eli Daar woreda (zone 1) includes 18 kebele  
(Other needs then water described above)

**Health:**

There is one clinic in Eli Daar without medical equipment; since the beginning of the war, the nurse and the assistant-nurse left. The army doesn't have the means to assist the population and the nearest medical facilities are in Dubti hospital but MSF is covering the area with a mobile clinic.

**Education:**

Primary school curriculum as well as secondary one and two in Eli Daar; there are also schools in Mande and Bure. In order to attend further training, students have to go to Assaita or Dubti. Since the Djiboutian refugee repatriation, the French school run by ZOA has been stopped.

Most of the problems faced by Eli Daar are related to the actual geo-politic. Since 1997 they have been cut off from Assab, which was the main commercial road down to the Red Sea. On another hand, the difficulties related to the climate and the geology, as well as the Ethiopian-Eritrean war have turned back that area as the most remote woreda within the Afar Region.

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<sup>11</sup> In the coming week, a rehabilitation project funded by the EC might improve significantly the dam regulation by reopening the outlet gate, which hasn't worked since the 60s, at the time the barrage has been constructed.



## **UN-EUE mission itineraries**

### ***Afar Region Field Trip (15 – 23 June 2001)***

Composition of the team: Walter Eggenberger, UN -EUE Field Officer  
François Piguet, UN -EUE Field Officer  
Hassan Mohamed Ahmed, Translator, APDA Addis Ababa  
Tsegaye Zelleke, UN-EUE Driver

13/6/2001 Addis Ababa - Mekele  
14/6/2001 Mekele – Adigrat (FAO seed distribution programme for Tigray IDP's)  
15/6/2001 Sheket (zone 2)  
16/6/2001 Maychew – Woldiya (fuel shortage)  
17/6/2001 Ewa - Chifra (pastoral settlement and woreda authorities Ewa / zone 4)  
18/6/2001 Bati (market assessment)  
19/6/2001 Assayta (zone 1 authorities; market assessment; agriculture conditions)  
20/6/2001 Eli Daar (water assessment together with APDA)  
21/6/2001 Ewa – Kalouan – Aura (road impact, AICF programme / zone 4)  
22/6/2001 Gewane (marsh pastoralists and *wayane* infestation / *prosopis juliflora* /zone 3);  
Awash (irrigated agriculture and flooding mitigation in Melka Were – Melka Sede /  
zone 3) Awash  
23/6/2001 Back to Addis Ababa

### ***Afar Region Floods Assessment (19 – 23 August 2001)***

Composition of the team: Thomas Schacher, SDR/SDC Representative, Swiss Embassy  
François Piguet, UN -EUE Field Officer  
Mohamed Ismael, Translator, APDA Addis Ababa  
Belhu Endale, UN-EUE Driver

19/8/2001 Driving to Mille (overnight)  
20/8/2001 Assaita: meeting with regional and local authorities; particularly bureau of Agriculture  
and DPPB, farms visits along the Awash canal and drive along the road dyke  
direction of Afambo up to the ford  
(field movement will depend of the water level / Awash level: Dubti 8 - 8.5 m.)  
21/8/2001 Dubti: contact with woreda authorities and AICF, visit to irrigated scheme (TADE ),  
back to Assaita to overnight  
22/8/2001 Driving through Loyada and Mille to Gewane  
Gewane: contact with Farm Africa; visit to the marsh near Mataka has been  
cancelled and the mission proceeded up to Awash (overnight)  
23/8/2001 Malka Werer (Amibara woreda): contact with Awash Basin Water Resources  
Administration direction and visit to the agricultural scheme.  
- return to Addis Ababa

## List of Interlocutors

### **NGOs and International Agencies**

Ismael Ali Garde	Director	APDA	Addis
Musa Mohamed Aboubaker	programme administrator	APDA	Assaita
Valerie Browing	Senior health trainer	APDA	Addis
Hassan Mohamed Ahmed	translator	APDA	Addis
Mohamed Ismael	translator	APDA	Addis
Katharina Hackstein	Programme Co-ordinator	GAA	Addis
Jerome Combe	Chef de mission	ACF	Addis
Julien Chalimbaud	agro-vet	ACF	Dubti
Emmanuel Chaponnière	WatSan		ACF Dubti
Ibrahim Dini	Field Officer	ACF	Dubti
Marlene Gau	stagiaire CIRAD	ACF	Dubti
Dr Pascal Bonnet	CIRAD researcher	ILRI	Addis
Dawit Abebe	National Consultant /Livestock	FAO	Addis
Assamino Getu	Finance Administrator	Farm Africa	Gewane
Irgalen Assaged	specialist of <i>wayane</i>		SOS Sahel Addis
Mohamed Haydar Ali Yosse	Liaison Officer	MSF	Dubti
Sisay Takele	health and education evaluator	Oxfam GB	Addis

### **Regional and local administration**

Awal Abra	Economic and Development Officer	Assaita
	Acting head of the local government	
Mohamed Laleh	Regional Council Secretary	Assaita
Mohamed Abubakar Hayou	Deputy Regional Council Secretary	Assaita
Sisay Tinase	Office of the Regional Council	Assaita
Gado Hamadou	Administrator zone 1	Assaita
Mrs Meyrem Hussein	ANRS Social Sector Head	Assaita
Dr Tewedros	ANRS Health Bureau	Assaita
Elias Hassan	ANRS Head Bureau of Agriculture	Assaita
Dr Firehiwot	ANRS Bureau of Agriculture	Assaita
Mr Halawis	Plan and programmes	
	ANRS Bureau of Agriculture	Assaita

### **Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC /DPPB)**

Ato Zodoh	DPPCF EWS head	Addis
Getu Gebre Jesus	DPPC Assessment team leader	Assaita
Aboubakar Ali Mirrah	head of DPPB	Assaita
Belete Assefa	DPPB	Assaita
Mohamed Ahmed	DPPB (EWS)	Assaita
Mohamed Hussein	DPPB	Assaita

### ***Awash Basin Water Resources Administration Authorities (ABWRAA)***

Yohanes Zarivu	General Manager, ABWRAA	Melka Werer
Asafa Hirepsa	ABWRAA	Melka Werer
Samuel Safinab	Lower Awash Base Adm. Centre (ABWRA)	Dubti
Mamo Teferi	Manager, Tendaho Agriculture Development Enterprise (TADE)	Dubti

### ***Woredas administration***

Abdou Asseyitou	Woreda administrator	Dubti
Billaleh Mohamed	Acting Woreda Administrator	Eli Daar
Yayo Omar	Administrator Security dep.	Eli Daar
Ibrahim M'hמוד	Administrator Social dep.	Eli Daar
Ali Doge	Woreda administrator	Ewa
Mohamed Humed,	Woreda general secretary	Ewa
Hussein Luba,	Woreda deputy administrator	Ewa

### ***Various interviewees***

Ali Issé	pastoralist	Samara
Awal Laleh	agro-pastoralist	Sidi Adaba
Hamadou Doulou	agro-pastoralist	Karawanju
Mr. Gushush,	general goods wholesaler	Assaita
Mariam Hussein	overflow district resident	Assaita
Mohamed Abdulkader	driver and petty trader	Kalouan

### ***Active NGOs in the Afar Region:***

- APDA Assaita, Dallol (zone 1, 2, 3 and 5)
- GAA (zone 2 and 5 / needs) animal health and funding APDA
- MSF medical services Dubti + mobile clinic (zone 1)
- Farm Africa Gewane (zone 3)
- Care in Awash (zone 3)
- WVI should come in the area
- Oxfam GB / Community Aid Abroad
- Dutch Interchurch Aid
- Austrian Development
- Action Aid
- Bread for the Hungry

## Acronyms

ABWRAA	Aash basin water Resources Administration Authorities
ACF	Action Contre la Faim
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APDA	Afar Pastoral Development Association
ANRS	Afar National Region State
AVA	Awash Valley Authorities
CBPP	Contagious Bovin Pleural Pneumonia
CIRAD	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
DPPB	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (mostly at Regional level)
DPPC	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (Federal Government level)
ERCS	Ethiopian Red Cross Society
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
GAA	German Agro Action (Deutsche Welthungerhilfe)
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation)
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières (International NGO)
NGO	Non-Governmental-Organisation
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDR	Swiss Disaster Relief
TADE	Tendaho Agriculture Development Enterprise
TB	Tuberculosis
ToT	Training of trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-EUE	United Nations Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WVI	World Vision International
ZOA	Refugee Care Netherlands

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