

Implication of Land use Land Cover Change for Resource Conflicts and the Role of Community Leaders in Conflict Transformation: The Case at the Adjacent Districts of Amhara and Afar (*Dewe*) National Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating LULC detection and the role of community leader in the conflict transformation among the adjacent Afar and Oromo ethnic groups in Afar and Amhara National Regional States. Supervised classification with maximum likelihood techniques were used for image classification and Multi-stage purposive sampling procedure was used for the selection of both study district and kebeles. Both primary and secondary data were used. The primary data was gathered through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, case studies and personal observations. A total of 12 focus group discussions and 42 key informant interviews were held in six adjacent kebeles of the two districts. The period of 2009 to 2018 bare land is increased by 161.21 km² where as bushed grass land is decreased by 160.15 km². This may be resulted from population and livestock pressure on land. The major causes of conflict identified were attached resource competition on farm land, grazing land and theft. Institutions applied in conflict transformation in the study area are mostly by customary institutions with some degree of cooperation with the formal one. The result also shows some challenges attached to the law and local judges' viz. limited legal permissive stance, urbanization, community trust issue against clan elders in the process of integrating the two law sources. This paper recommends full recognition of the joint roles of Makaabon's and Aba Gada's through creating reporting systems of local tribunal activities for the state and capacity building for them by the state and NGOs. In order to legitimize the role of the leader and incorporate customary laws into the formal system, the customary law laws of both ethnic groups should be studied and written further, potential points of adjustment and cooperation must be identified, broader policy and legislative options has to be set, and laws contradict the country's constitution.

Keywords: Aba Gada's; Customary institutions; Imageclassification community leaders; Conflicttransformation; Makaabon's.

1. Introduction

Conflict is a worldwide reality that knocks at the door of developed and developing nations (Jalali and Lipset, 1992). There is no single definition for the term conflict (Coser, 1968) defines conflict as a struggle over values or claims to status and scarce resources, in which the aim of the conflicting parties is not only the desired values but also neutralizes, injures or eliminate their rivals. Social anthropologists have intensively debated on theories of (agro) pastoral conflicts particularly in cases where people of different economic orientations coexist (Braukämper, 2000). Demographic change, natural resources competition, developmental pressures, and structural injustices are the common sources of conflict (Lobell and Mauceri, 2004; Warner, 2000). Local conflicts in pastoral areas are often characterized by competition over grazing land, water resources, social values, economic issues (livestock raiding and looting), and some others like the need for local autonomy was prevailed in the past decades. Such kinds of conflicts were further intensified with the declining nature of the (agro) pastoral mode of life and the type of state responses (Buli, 2001; Kandagor, 2005).

Conflict resolution is a more comprehensive approach based on mutual problem-sharing between the conflict parties to address deep-rooted sources/causes of conflict (Burton, 1990). Aware a conflict, diagnose its nature and apply appropriate methods are the main process of conflict resolution. Sometimes *conflict transformation*, *conflict resolution* and *conflict management* are used interchangeably. But those phrases have a rooted difference in meaning and entire aims.

According to Lederach (2003), "conflict resolution" assumes conflict as bad and is therefore something that should be ended. It also assumes that conflict is a short-term phenomenon that can be "resolved" permanently through mediation or other intervention processes. However, "conflict management" correctly assumes that conflicts are long-term processes that often cannot be quickly resolved. The problem with the notion of "management,"

however, is that it suggests that people can be directed or controlled as if they were physical objects. Whereas conflict transformation does not simply suggest about eliminating or controlling conflict but rather recognizing and working with its "dialectic nature."

Thus, conflict transformation includes the processes, actions and approaches which seek to constructively address conflict, dealing with the attitudes and behaviors of the parties, as well as the contradictions of the conflict. Most importantly, even though it is quite possible to make formal peace without including women and looking at gender relations, the transformation of violent conflict is impossible without using gendered lenses (Harders, 2011).

In Ethiopia, the (agro) pastoral population is heterogeneous in composition and social structure, having diverse ethnic groups. The (agro) pastoral areas contain cultural heritages and have ancient traditional governance systems which have been passed down from one generation to the other. Especially, in the lowlands of the country where the state has not managed to fully control and impose its norms on mobile livestock keepers (Alemmaya and Hagmann, 2008) customary institutions used as socio-political governance system that governs both people and how they use and manage their rangeland ecosystem but presently the institute is endangered and weakened over time. In areas where state has relatively full control, both customary and state institutions are tried to resolute, manage, and transform conflicts.

Ethiopia is a country in which various ethnic groups live together for long period of time. As conflict is inevitable, these ethnic groups have experienced conflicts of various types at different times. Each ethnic group has its own mechanisms for solving conflicts (Mengesha *et al.*, 2015). Every Ethiopian ethnic groups have traditionally age-old and time-tested administrative and conflict resolution institutions at the grass root levels (Mengesha *et al.*, 2015). For example, Oromo *Gada System* for Oromo's, *Makaabon* for Afar, *Yajoka* for Gurage, *Shimigilina* for Amhara, *Seera* for Kambata (Berhane, 2016; Mengesha *et al.*, 2015; Mohammed, 2010; Muchie and Bayeh, 2015) are a principal example of an indigenous democratic socio-political system in some ethnic groups of Ethiopia. As a governance system, those institution guides the life course of individuals and regulates political, economic, social and religious activities of the community. *Gada System* is also serves as a mechanism of socialization, education, religious expression, peace maintenance and social cohesion and promotes the principles of equality and freedom (Berhane, 2016).

Dewe-Harewa district communities are Oromo peoples live in Amhara National Regional state (ANRS) as Oromia special zone and Dewe district communities live adjacently in Afar NRS. In these districts, in addition to governance structures of the modern state, the social life and relations of the Oromo people are regulated by a traditional authority and customary laws known as the *Gada system*. While the Afar's Dewe has regulated by a strong customary clan leaders known as *Makaabon*. Those institutions are responsible for traditional governance, access and management of natural resources such as water, grazing land and, managing and transforming conflict, and relations with other institutions with in and around there.

Dewe-Harewa district is one of the adjacent administrative units of Amhara national regional state (NRS) at westward of Dewe district in Afar NRS. Dewe-Harewa district peoples are agro-pastoral communities those shares grazing lands and watering points with the pastoral neighbors, Dewe district, Afar (Productive Safety Net Programme Pastoral Areas Pilot PSNPPAP, 2010). Frequently there happens a conflict (Mohammed, 2010) due to grazing land grabbing, undefined administrative border, and releasing livestock's of the pastoral over crops of the cultivators in different seasons. Sometimes this conflict aggravated up to fighting and loss of life and resources. In order to transform such conflicts towards peaceful and constructive outcomes, transformative leadership must evolve at both state and community levels through processes based on indigenous knowledge and practices to achieve the greater good of reconciliation.

In due of such dilemmas, customary institutions (community leaders) from Oromo *Gada system* and adjacent Afar elders (*Makaabon* meaning Clan Judges) have a greater role to settle and transform disputes, conflicts and higher level feuds through their cultural/traditional mechanisms. As an overview, Mohammed (2010) has narrated an old-aged conflict between Amhara and Afar NRS around the Dewe-Harewa and adjacent Afar districts. He justified that, the conflict between was due to the west-ward displacement and resident establishment of the Afar community those was pushed from the eastern part (Hararghe & Dire-Dawa). For further diagnosis, there is no study which explores the causes of the conflict between (agro) pastoral communities and the role of customary institutions in settling the conflict in the study area.

This study, therefore, will try to fill the gap by identifying and document the major roles of community leaders in conflict transformation and analyze challenges and opportunities of customary institutions in conflict transformation in the study area.

2. Materials and Methods

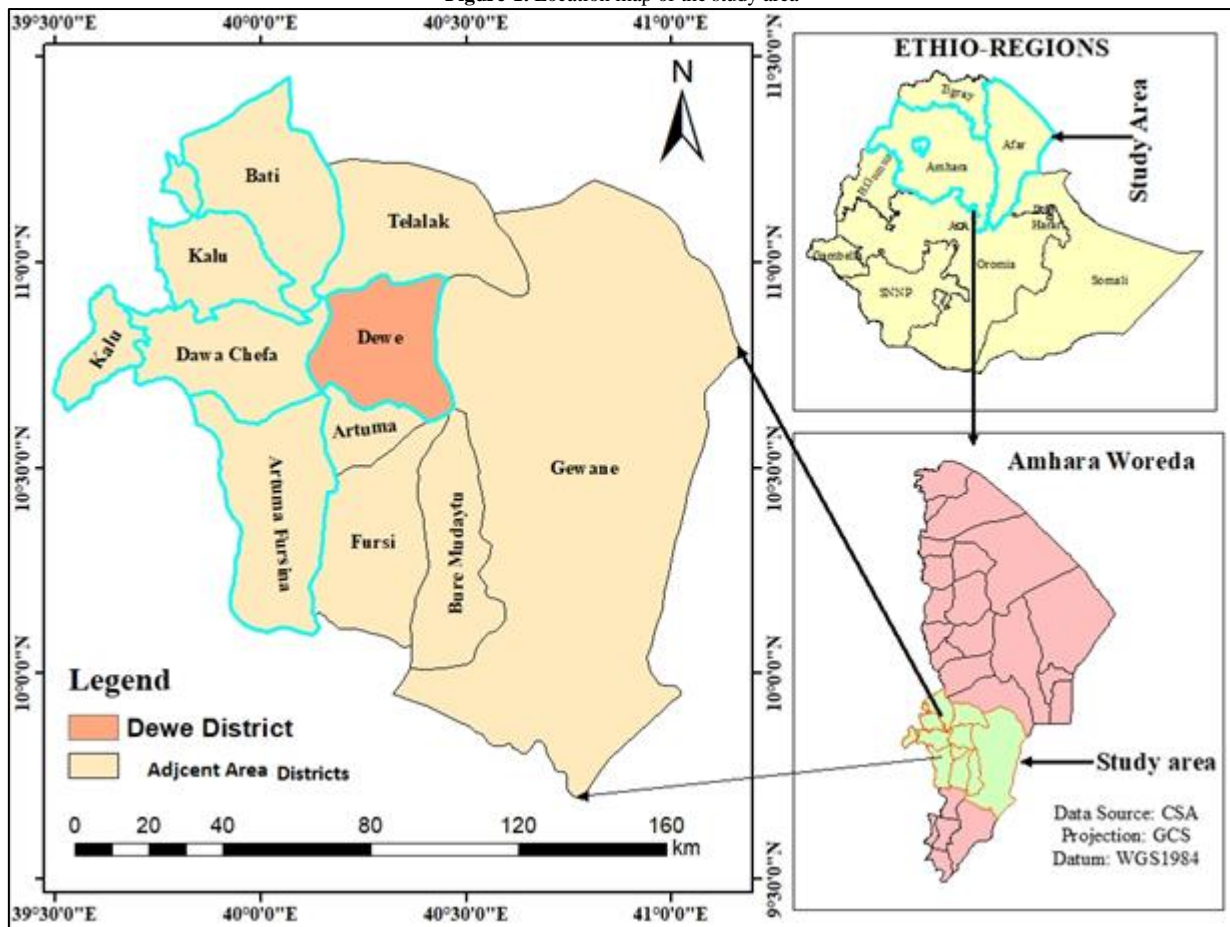
2.1. Description of Study areas

The study was conducted at Dewe district which is bordered by Talalak district (North), Gewane district (East), Artuma district (South), and Amhara NRS in the West direction (Figure 1). Dewe is situated 60 Kilometers off the Bati-Mille all-weather road on the way to the zone capital town of Dalifagae. Geographically, it is located between 10° 49' - 11° 00' N Latitudes and 040° 00' - 040° 26' E Longitudes with the average altitude and slope are 802 m. a. s. l. and its slope ranges between 2.5%, respectively (Productive Safety Net Programme Pastoral Areas Pilot PSNPPAP, 2010).

Administratively, Dewe is divided into ten Kebeles (Productive Safety Net Programme Pastoral Areas Pilot PSNPPAP, 2010). The four Kebeles found bordering the highlands of the Amhara region have hilly topography with a semi-arid ecological characteristic dominated by bush and shrub vegetation. In general, acacia trees and

various short shrubs cover large proportion of Dewe's landscape. The low laying areas of the district that are located along the Awash river bordering Gewane Woreda, Dalifage woreda and Issa areas/Endufo that are predominantly with arid agroecology located on average around 800 meters above sea level. Dewe is endowed with one perennial river named *Dewe River* and other seasonal rivers that are small flood streams. In addition, four of the ten Kebeles of Dewe are established along the Awash River basin (Productive Safety Net Programme Pastoral Areas Pilot PSNPPAP, 2010).

Figure-1. Location map of the study area



2.1.1. Sampling Technique

Multi-stage purposive sampling procedure was employed to draw the required number of sample units for the study. First, Dewe district from Afar NRS and Dewe-Harewa district from Oromia special zones of Amhara NRS are purposively selected. The reasons for selecting those district is: First, because of their adjacency from different national regional states (Afar and Amhara) representing the agro-pastoral (Dewe-Harewa district) and pastoral (Dewe district) communities. Secondly, the districts have an experience in seasonal conflicting interest on utilization of grazing lands, watering points and uncertain regional boundary. Thirdly, the presence of an old aged conflict transforming indigenous/customary institutions, i.e. *Gada System* acting in Dewe-Harewa district and the *Makaaban* (clan leaders) acting in Dewe district.

Furthermore, there are eight Kebeles in Dewe-Harewa district with four Kebeles adjacent with Dewe district which have ten Kebeles with three neighbor with Dewe-Harewa. To make the work complete through analyzing the role of community leaders in conflict transformation, a representative three Kebeles namely Wehilo-gidale, kelenti, and Eyaled-gendawara kebeles from Dewe district and Harewa (Dire), Alige, and Kechiwechak (Dire) kebeles from Dewe-Harewa districts were selected purposively based on the better existence of adjacency, competition on resources use, experience of conflict incidence, existence of customary institution those engaged in conflict transformation. The key informants (KIs) were also selected with the help of *Snow-Ball* method. Thereafter, a total of 42 (seven in each Kebele) informative persons were selected for the key informant interviews. Finally, participants of the focus group discussion (FGDs) which includes 6 up to 8 persons per FGD were identified and a total of 12 FGDs (two FGD in each Kebele) were conducted. For the LULC classification about 50 ground truth points were taken with the help of GPS. These training sites were used to check whether the LULC classification are correct or not (See in Appendix).

2.1.2. Sources of Data

In order to obtain the necessary data from concerned parties, both primary and secondary data sources will be employed. The primary sources was include informants such elders, disputes, court officials (judges), youth, and local authorities (local administrators) those are recent or former members of *Makaaban's* and *Aba Gada's*. With

regards to the secondary sources was includes both published and un-published materials such as books, magazines, journals articles and unpublished reports from government and nongovernmental organizations. In addition to these, Land sat satellite images of the study area were acquired for two years; 2009 and 2018. These images were obtained from Ethiopian Mapping Agency (EMA). The images was acquired from the period January–February, as this is a clear sky season in the region, reducing atmospheric , radiometric and penology effects .

2.2. Method of Data Collection

To get the required data for successful completion of this study the following methods of data collection were used.

2.2.1. Key Informant Interview

in order to get data on past events and scenarios and even on the current reality, it will be better to conduct key informant interview with few knowledgeable individuals those have an advanced information about the conflict arising and the *Makaaban's and Aba Gada's*. This will be collected mainly through semi-structured interviews (guided by check lists) by taking into consideration criteria such as age, sex, occupation and residence. In such procedure, at least two case studies (actual conflict cases) will be interviewed to document the causes of disputes, illustrate the types of conflict cases handled via local conflict resolving and transformative institutions.

2.2.2. Observation

To get authentic data, observation will also be another major method of data gathering valuable information. Because what peoples say and do may sometimes contradict with each other. Thus, direct observation will be the best solution. Through this, the researcher will try to observe the role, the processes and procedures of conflict settling among the target society.

2.2.3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

On basic issues different people may have different concerns. Thus, to look at concerns of different individuals and even to assess their level of understanding on some issue the researcher will use FGD as one method of collecting qualitative data. This will be done through a group of experienced *Aba Gada's and Makaaban's* those who have participated at least in two conflict transformation events. Additionally, clan judges, sub-clan leaders (youths), clan elders, as well as Kebele chairman who are considered as rich in experience and information on the indigenous dispute/conflict resolving and conflict transformation mechanisms.

2.3. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected through literature review, observations and focus group discussion and case study have a qualitative nature. Those data's were carefully checked for completeness and consistency before analyzing. Then finally, to answer the research questions and to achieve the stated objectives, exploratory and explanatory data analysis approach were employed through narrating (concept and opinion interpretations by sorting out, ranking, grouping and triangulation) and verbatim quoting (presenting the respondents' actual wording).

2.3.1. Pre-Processing of Images

Raw satellite image is full of errors and cannot be directly utilized for features identification and any applications. It needs some correction. Pre-processing is done before the main data analysis and extraction of information. Pre-processing involves two major processes: geometric correction and radiometric correction. Remote sensing imageries are inherently subjected to geometric distortions. These distortions may be due to the perspective of the sensor optics, the motion of the scanning system, the motion of the platform (the platform altitude, attitude and velocity), the terrain relief, or the curvature and rotation of the earth (Lillesand and Kiefer, 2000). Pre-processing aims to correct distorted data in order to create more faithful representation of the original scene, this typically involves the initial processing of raw image data to correct for geometric distortions, to calibrate the data radio metrically, and to eliminate noise present in the data

2.3.2. Supervised Classification

Supervised classification can be used to cluster pixels in a datasets in to classes corresponding to user defined training classes or the process of using samples of known identity (i.e., pixels already assigned to informational classes) to classify pixels of unknown identity. This classification type requires that researcher select training areas for use as the bases for classification .Various comparison are then used to determine if specific pixel qualifies as a class members .Types of supervised classification includes Paralleloped ,Minimum distance, Mahalanobis distance, Maximum likelihood, spectral angle mapper etc.

2.3.3. Software and Platforms

Preparation of thematic maps from the digital satellite data was instigated by using ERDAS IMAGINE 2014, and ARC GIS ver. 10.2.1 Standard methods, which included use of image elements like tone, texture, shape, location, association, pattern, etc., of digital image

2.3.4. Accuracy Assessment of the Classifications

Users Accuracy is when the total number of correct pixels in a category divided by the total number of pixels that were actually classified in that category (row total), the result is a measure of Commission error. The user's accuracy or reliability is the probability that a pixel classified on the map actually represent that category on the ground (Jensen 2003). The overall accuracy is calculated by summing the number of pixels classified correctly dividing by the total number of pixels. The enough number of samples that represent the thematic classes and ensure good distribution across the map is important to test the attribute accuracy. Rule of thumb is 50 samples per map class or can be derived using the formula devised by Grenier *et al.* (2008), For this research project minimum sample size used was 50.

2.3.5. Kappa Coefficient

Kappa is used to measure the agreement or accuracy between the remote sensing derived Classification map and the reference data as indicated by the major diagonals and the chance Agreement, which is indicated by the row and column, totals (Jensen 2003). The Kappa coefficient represents the proportion of agreement obtained after removing the proportion of agreement that could be expected to occur by chance (Foody, 1992). According to (Anderson, 2003), a value >0.80 (80%) is strong agreement, a value b/n 0.40 and 0.80 (40 to 80%) represents moderate agreement, and a value < 0.40 (40%) represents poor agreement. In this classification the Kappa value is 0.8454. It represents a probable 84.54% is better accuracy classification resulted from a random, supervised, assignment instead of the employed maximum likelihood classification .

3. Chapter Four:-Results and Discussions

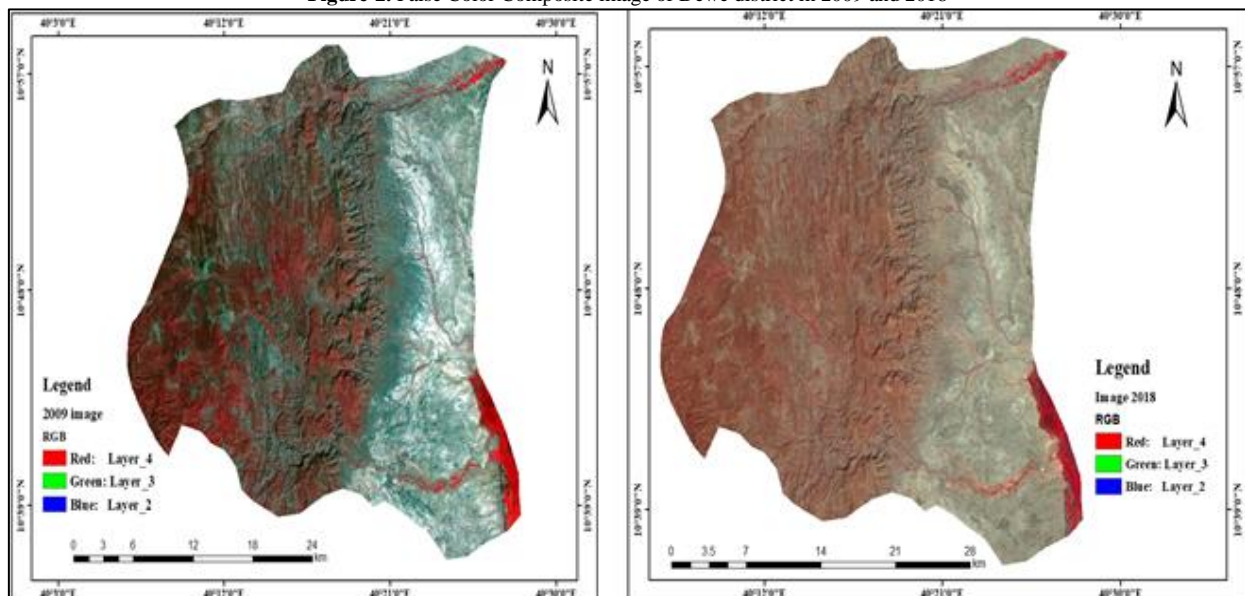
3.1. Land Use/Land Cover Change

The LULC classes used in this study are based on Anderson Classification System (USGS Schema) which is designed for remote sensing data. Accordingly, the image of 2009 and 2018 were used to distinguish and introduce the most accurate classes, and as a result six LULC categories were identified. These categories include forest, bare land, built up, water, bushed grassland and rocky, (Figures 2 and 3).

3.1.1. False Color Composite Images of Dewe District

Different color composite images were prepared, in order to select the best band combination, that enhance the raw satellite images for the identification of the different land cover classes in the study area. In this research project the false color composite image made using Land sat 8 bands ETM+ 4-3-2 (R-G-B) were found to be best for the identification of major land cover classes in the study area.

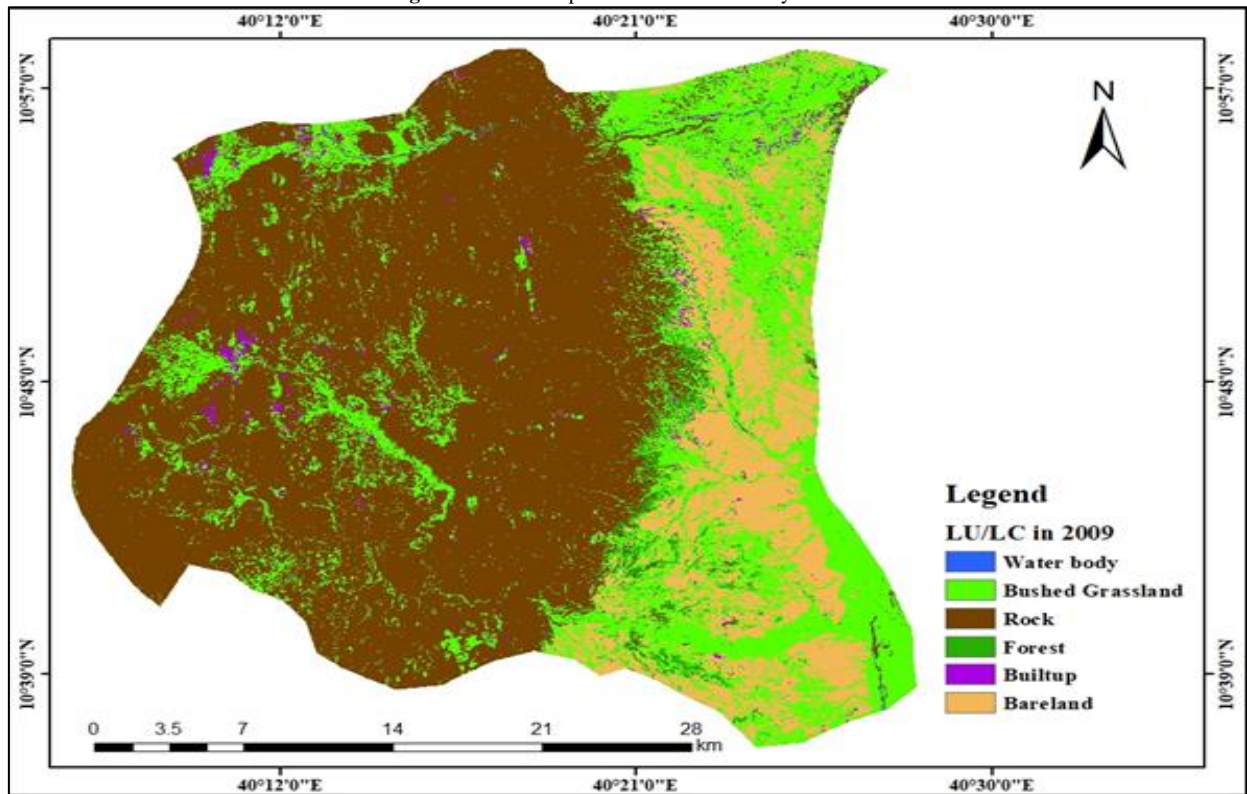
Figure-2. False Color Composite image of Dewe district in 2009 and 2018



3.1.2. LULC Classification of Dewe in 2009

According to the 2009 LULC classification, the rocky area is the main class in the study district which extends over 620.62 km², and the second class is bushed grass land land which extends 268.16 km², and the list is water body which only cover 1.31 km² (Figure 3 and Table 1)

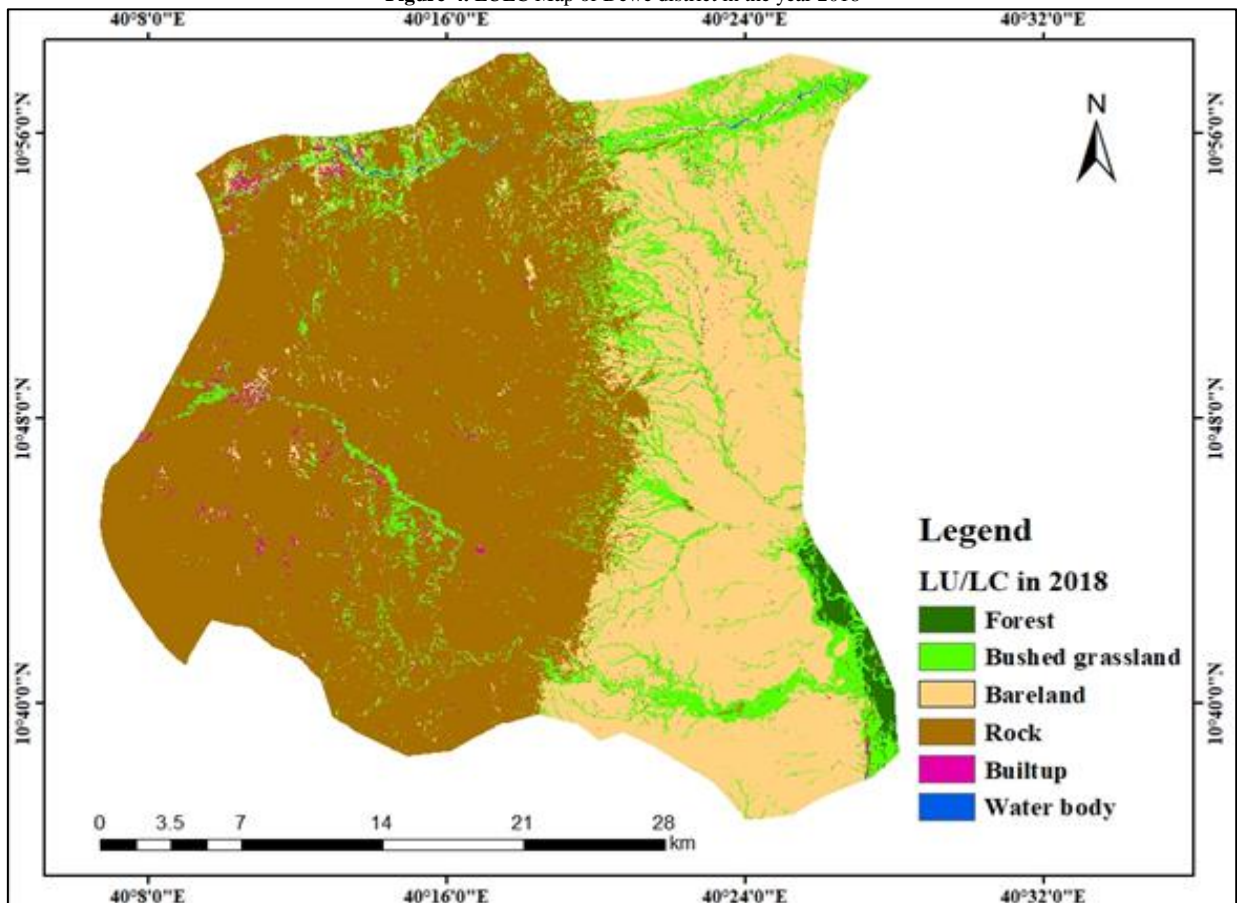
Figure-3. LULC Map of Dewe district in the year 2009



3.1.3. LULC Classification of Dewe in 2018

Based on the 2018 LULC classification, similarly rocky area dominated in the study district which extends over 625.31 km², but unlikely the 2009 distribution, here the second class is bare land which extends 300.52 km², and the list is water body which only cover 1.32 km² (Figure 4 and Table 1)

Figure-4. LULC Map of Dewe district in the year 2018



From the period of 2009 to 2018 there is a substantial change in several LULC categories of bare land and bushed grass land i.e, bare land is increased by 161.21 km² where as bushed grass land is decreased by 160.15 km² within nine years period (Table 1). This may be due to the negative impact of climate change in addition to the inappropriate/ mismanagement of natural resources

Table-1. LULC Conversion matrix for the year 2009 - 2018

No	Land use/Land cover Type	Area in km ²		Area in %		LULC Change from 2009 to 2018 in km ²
		2009	2018	2009	2018	
1	Bare land	139.31	300.52	13.09	28.24	161.21
2	Built-up	10.98	15.55	1.03	1.46	4.56
3	Forest	14.24	9.60	1.84	0.90	10.02
4	Rock	620.62	625.31	58.31	58.75	4.68
5	Bushed grassland	268.16	112	25.57	10.52	160.15
6	Water body	1.31	1.32	0.15	0.12	0.29
Total		1064.31	1064.31	100	100	

Source: Figure 3 and 4

As it is seen from the above Table, forest land also becoming decreasing with time. These data expressly stated that increase in bare land decreased in bushed grass land and forest land and resulted population and livestock pressure on land at the period from 2009 to 2018.

3.2. Causes of (Agro) Pastoralists Conflict in the Study Area

Non-violent conflict resolution and transformation is possible when individuals and groups trust their governing structures to manage incompatible interests. Conflict becomes problematic and may lead to violence when managing and transforming mechanisms break down. Weak institutions and divisive social relations can perpetuate vicious cycle of violent conflict. Preventing this spiral and ensuring the peaceful resolution and transformation of disputes are the main interest of both individual states and international community.

Conflict in the study areas is found to be complex in its history, causes, degrees and dynamics so that it needs analysis that is more extensive. Types of conflict differ spatially and temporally and they could take place at different levels within a very different conflict system for the same case. The perennial cause of conflict among (agro) pastoralists is the struggle for resources essential for their mode of production: farm land, grazing land, water sources, and the routes that lead to them. Among domestic matters such as rape, divorce, civil disputes involving individuals and households, and crimes of violence involving theft, injury and death are causes of strife within a community.

3.2.1. Traditionally Induced Type of Conflicts in the Study Area

As per the focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews (KII), during the researcher's field work, the respondents from the adjacent kebeles such as Wehilo-gidale, kelenti, and Eyaled-gendawara kebeles from Dewe district and Harewa (Dire), Alige, and Kechiwechak (Dire) kebeles from Dewe-Harewa districts were discussed as pastoral (Dewe) and agro-pastoral (Dewe-Harewa) communities. The prominent causes of conflict in those adjacent kebeles in particular and the districts in general study

3.2.2. Seasonal Competition on Grazing and Crop Land

The decline in carrying capacity of the ecosystem and shrinkage of previously accessible pastoral communal grazing land due to various natural and manmade reasons, the livestock based pastoralists' economy obliged to depend on limited and degraded grazing areas. This phenomenon forces pastoralists to migrate beyond their territory even if each territory is separated from its neighbors by natural boundary marks such as trees and water points. Meanwhile blocking and refusal by the owners may not stop the migrants from entering the grazing lands and causing conflicts.

"In the summer season we grow crops important for our livelihood demands. In most cases, our crop lands are found at the flat fields which are neighbor to the Afar district (Dewe). When our crops grow well and appeared to be harvested, the Afar's pastoral release their livestock's into our crop land for seeking fresh grasses and wet shrubs. This is due to that, there is no exact clear cut border between the two regions. For this matter, in order to safeguard our crop lands, we start protecting and beat off their animals far away from our fields. Sometimes, the livestock's may totally destroy the crop while the herdsman is watching the destruction.

In a usual manner, the Afar's communities are come to our lands and fence a larger space of fertile land for grazing purpose. In these moments we may start to fight with the herder and the fencing group then this conflict may expand into group fight which leads to massive losses of human and/or livestock."

The above narratives was obtained from the FGDs made at the agro-pastoral community (Dewe-Harewa district) which is a conflict initiated by the pastoralists. The study also investigated the causes of conflict around the pastoral community which was initiated by the agro-pastoral community. This is narrated as follows:

During the early summer season when our grazing lands are vegetated well by the spring rainfall distribution. At this time, the adjacent district agro-pastoral communities are under preparation of their crop land for sowing. However, those agro-pastoral communities have no more free and productive space to handle and feed their

livestock's. As a result, they relinquish the livestock's into our grazing lands to share the grazing and browsing resources. This situation arises and conflict between us in case of rejecting their livestock's."

3.2.3. Conflict by Livestock Theft

Livestock theft was a common cause of intra/inter-ethnic conflict. Its goal might be economic and/or social; i.e. to restock livestock lost by disease or enemy raids; to have some feast on meat; to fulfill social obligations such as dowry; and to assert manhood (by young men). Nowadays in the study area, livestock are mainly raided for commercial purposes and sold in open markets or exported through illegal routes as a consequence raiding often results in violence and blood feud. The important driving force to involve in such crime is due to natural resource degradation.

According to the KIIs and FGDs, livestock thefts were the prominent causes of conflict in the study districts. This may be happened when a person or a group of Afar route stealing a livestock from the agro-pastorals and sold them in a faraway market would initiated a great revenge by the agro-pastoral community. In response to the theft livestock, the agro-pastorals also invade the thief's homestead and take off any livestock's found around there. Unless this momentous revenge is mediated, it will continue up to rape and losses of excessive human life.

3.2.4. Conflict Stimulator Groups

Conflict is not always occurring due to primary conflicting parties rather there are secondary parties and conflict stimulator groups. Because of their significant influential role within the Afar society, Afar elder's and clan leaders are important actors during conflict and peace-making process. Nevertheless, interviewed clan leaders indicated that few elder's council organized at zonal and in some areas at district level considered as another potential cause of conflict. The council has considerable share from any restitution when they mediate a conflict so they prolong the conflict resolving process and push the victim family to bring the case to the council to facilitate their big share even if the two parties involved in the conflict agreed to resolve the dispute peacefully without any restitution.

3.3. Institutions of Conflict Resolution and Transformation

In the context of the study area, conflicts are usually found to be resolved and transformed using a customary procedures. In some cases, conflict resolution and transformation becomes more difficult especially when it is with neighboring regions. The major bounding factor of the society is peace and harmony in their cultural and ritual unity. The base for this social organization is the existence of strong and immemorial customary institutions.

The founding principle of justice or retribution among pastoralists is restoration of peace through compensation for lost lives, restitution of stolen goods, prevention of crime and rehabilitation of criminals (transforming conflict), not in essence of retributive justice as the objective of punishment in The Fetha Negest (the Law of the Kings) and The Ethiopian Penal Code of 1930. This principle of punishment in Afar customary justice system conform with the Western legal philosophy on which the modern Ethiopian legal system is modeled. But the practice of compensation through blood payment is the usual practice in customary institutions; even though, it was sanctioned in the 1930 Penal Code (Art. 404) and outlawed by the 1957 (Art. 521). The Criminal Code of the FDRE 2004 (Art. 538, sub art. 3) also appeals with the same notion, which ruled that '*any person who committed homicide, whether intentionally or negligently, shall be punished by lawful judicial process and in accordance with decisions rendered thereby*'.

The *Gada System and Makaabon* are the two giant customary institution led by elders in Dewe-Harewa and Dewe districts, respectively. At the arrival of conflicts between the Afar (Dewe district) and Oromo (Dewe-Harewa district) ethnic groups, those customary institutions are selectively joined together to handle and transform the enacted conflicts.

According to the focus group discussants, in the process of conflict transformation, the joint act of the institution's set a compensation payment for a loss of life and other resources to the victim families. Anyone who had involved in the death or theft of life and livestock and rape, the following compensation were articulated in the customary conflict resolution procedure. These rules are applied when conflicting parties become conciliated well.

- Camel = 20, 000 Birr
- Cow = 15, 000 Birr
- Goat = 2, 000 Birr
- Donkey = 3, 000 Birr
- Human life = 40, 000 Birr
- Rape for a married women whose husband is alive = 30, 000 Birr with two years of jail
- Rape of damsel = 15 years of jail
- Injury by bullets = 15, 000 Birr
- Or the compensation can be also undergoes by number of cattle's
- Human life = 75 cattle
- Rape of damsel = 12 cattle
- Abduction = 12 cattle

From the above premises, it can be noticed that even though the joint act of *Gada System and Makaabon* laws have similar compositions and penalties regardless of location of where conflicts arise between the two communities.

3.4. Role of community Leaders in Conflict Transformation

The community chiefs/leaders compose all subordinate community chiefs/leaders and elders at all levels who work in councils (*Gada System and Makaabon*). These are decision-making bodies in matters of social control, resource allocation, defense, and conflict resolution and transformation. All their actions are guided by the customary law and traditional authority that has ruled Afar and Oromo society for centuries.

As per the discussion made with elders and clan leaders, the *Makaaban's* and *Gada System's* are entrusted with the responsibility of regulating the behaviors of clan members such as avoiding conflict, repentance for wrongdoing and forgiveness from bereaved party. They are also expected to mobilize clan members for some positive pursuits, including co-operation in certain domestic activities and raising money for compensation for any physical or psychological damage caused upon others during violent conflict. Those institution's makes sure that every clan member is socially, economically and politically secure. Because of this work burden, it is not uncommon for people to reject proposals for heading a clan. This also signifies that loyalty to clan leaders should be maintained at all cost. One of the interlocutors expresses this through a proverb: "A forest whose river has ceased to run and a clan even slightly unfaithful to its leader; both dwindled gradually".

3.5. Co-existence between Customary and State Institutions

As most key informants and formal institution judges indicated decisions by state courts were not generally successful or effective in resolving conflicts or restoring peace as the traditional system except in some minor cases. Occasionally, the two institutions work together for example clan leader apprehend a suspect or the culprit in custody in police station for his own protection. Then, subsequent negotiations take place between state administrative bodies and clan leaders to be handed over the case to the clan judges/leaders' council. This is an indication that all affected groups acknowledge the problem and committed to work together to deal with the conflict. Previously, clan leader track down culprits and put them in custody temporarily at a camp. The family of the malefactor's clan hide themselves under the protection of neutral clan elders until arbitration started.

The major factors that make the customary institutions more effective in resolution and transformation are: they do not seek mere restitution and lifting injustice but also simultaneously strive to avert ruptures in social relations and to create conditions conducive to peace in future post-conflict reconstruction operation; persons intercede in conflict transformation are generally well known and respected by the conflicting parties. Another factor is the transparency of the judiciary procedure to local's and a reasonable degree of local participation, which contribute to the consolidation of confidence and trust in conflict resolution and transformation process. The last but not the least, ostracization of individuals rejecting the indigenous system verdict also play key role to transform the conflict. In recognition of these facts, the state seems to adopt a *de facto* policy of encouraging the customary institutions to settle disputes on their own.

However, it has to be noticed that the indigenous institutions acquire this status of authority and power not in a context of competition with state courts. As it is tried to explain, they are complimentary and often symbiotic. In other words, the indigenous system avails an effective mechanism for the peaceful resolution of serious inter-clan conflicts. The state, on its turn, supports the indigenous system in addressing serious conflicts by creating conducive environment to local mediation.

3.6. Challenges and Prospect

The major challenges and prospects of the customary institution mentioned here below have a direct and indirect impact on community leaders' role in conflict transformation. Customary institutions are facing various challenges most of them arise from the uncollected and unwritten nature of the customary laws. Most of *customary laws* are unwritten just passed to generation through memorization. They, therefore, are in the verge of extinction.

In addition to the feebleness of the recent Sultan administration system, some observed shortcomings of the local judges/leaders impede the vitality of customary institutions. Political interest beyond the actual resolution and transformation; presence of conflict stimulator groups who wish to prolong conflicts; and double punishment of the wrongdoer once he was punished by the state institutions are among the major shortcomings of the community leaders in the study area. Unfairness with minority clan members and some decisions like payment of compensation for a goat, counting up to the seven generation for killing a single mother goat lead some part of the community not to trust customary institutions and force them to adhere their interest not to the law. When they found the possibility of securing their interest through formal courts they do it that way. Additional potential obstacle that can easily frustrate the natural effectiveness of local institutions is efforts for formal integration of customary institutions to the state structure. This in fact end up in making the local elders „agent of the government“ and makes the community to loss trust on them by accusing as neglectors of the Afar and Oromo tradition.

In the study area, any reconciliation made between the disputing parties with the help of the clan judges/leaders council is supposed to end all court or police proceedings. After reconciliation, clan judges/leaders council expects the offender's integration into the community. Traditional approaches are not state-bounded because of that they are credited whereas state organs accused for bribes and biasness. More importantly, Afar customary institution has a very effective system of learning and disseminating information (Xaagu) especially the importance of updating those customary laws which contradict basic human right and international conventions and promoting conflict transformation.

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