

Jeldu (Ethiopia) Field Report

Defining, targeting and reaching the very poor

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The research project 'Defining, targeting and reaching the very poor' has resulted in 5 Working Papers. These volumes are field reports on Bangladesh (Working Paper 126), Benin (Working Paper 127), Jeldu, Ethiopia (Working Paper 128), Addis Ababa (Working Paper 129) and finally a Synthesis (Working Paper 130). Please note that Working Paper 126 on Bangladesh is a co-production with the International Institute of Asian Studies IIAS in Leiden.

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Introduction

In 2007 three Dutch NGOs decided to support research into the development of a new methodology for monitoring and evaluation called PADev (Participatory Assessment of Development).¹ One of the NGOs participating in this research was Woord&Daad. When the first major findings of this research were presented a couple of years later, Woord&Daad was particularly struck by one of them; namely, that the poorest of the poor were not being reached by the bulk of the development initiatives.

A follow-up study was conducted in 2010,² which confirmed these conclusions; namely, that the poorest were unable to evaluate development interventions carried out in their region, since these interventions did not manage to reach them directly. The main reason given for this failure was the fact that the very poor are 'invisible' and extremely difficult to target.

The obvious question that follows from these findings is how, then, to target the very poor? And can they be targeted at all? To answer this question, it is essential to first define and find the very poor and look at the struggles they face. Moreover, it is important to shed light on the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of development interventions regarding the very poor and the reasons behind it.

Thus, when the proposal to carry out further research on this was presented, Woord&Daad decided to come on board and fund part of the research. In return they asked that the research be carried out in locations where their partners were based. This led to three case studies in three countries and four field locations, the first one being Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is the only Asian country included in this research and not without good reason.

Firstly, Bangladesh is still amongst the poorest countries of the world. With an HDI of 0.515, it ranks 146 out of 187. And even though Bangladesh ranks above average in terms of countries in the low human development group, it ranks lower on average when comparing the HDI to other South Asian countries (0.558).³ Looking at the HDI from 1980 to 2012, it must be noted that the HDI has increased from 0.312 in 1980 to 0.515 in 2012. This is interesting when looking at the enormous NGO presence in the country and, in particular, the many initiatives addressing the very poor; also in terms of how successful or not these initiatives are.

The absolute leader in this regard is the NGO BRAC. With 41 years of history in development work, this NGO has a lot of experience doing development work and experimenting with targeting the very poor. The latter is of great interest for this research. Over the years, BRAC has developed a method to target the very poor, called the 'Targeting the Ultra Poor (TUP)' programme.

It is worthwhile looking at whether these attempts have been successful and, more importantly, whether it is possible to reproduce this success in a different context, particularly in an African context. For obvious reasons the research cannot include all

¹ www.padev.nl

² Kazimierczuk, A. (2010), http://www.padev.nl/infosheets/infosheet_agnieszka_followup.pdf

³ UNDP, <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BGD.html>.

NGOs in Bangladesh, but it takes the ‘potential influence’ of BRAC into account in the research areas and especially in Woord&Daad’s partners’⁴ approach to targeting the very poor.

The second location that was selected as a case study was Benin. Like Bangladesh, it is a comparatively poor country. Despite an increase in Benin’s HDI due to education and health improvement, the HDI is 0.436 in 2011, which ranks 166th out of 187.⁵ The other argument for selecting Benin is Woord&Daad’s partner. This organization is implementing different types of initiatives in, for example, the education sector, microcredit and agribusiness. This provides an opportunity to compare different programmes and examine whether certain programmes have greater potential to reach the poorest.

Lastly, Ethiopia was included due to the increased insecurity and income differences in the country. The top layer of elite-related business people, officials and civil servants are safe in their jobs and income while the large mass of peasants and workers are struggling to make ends meet and retain their dignity.⁶ The HDI for 2012 is 0.396, which positions Ethiopia 172nd out of 187 countries.⁷ Ethiopia is also an interesting case study because Woord&Daad’s partner has some experience in targeting the very poor and, in addition, they are very active in an urban context. Given that the other two case studies are in a rural context, it was important to include an urban environment, because poverty is increasingly urbanised. However, a Woord&Daad partner working in a rural area of the country (in Jeldu District) was also added. Thus, two case studies were conducted in Ethiopia.

The partner in the rural area is active in different parts of Ethiopia, but the advice was to study their activities in Jeldu District for this research. The NGO has worked in this area for the last five to six years undertaking various initiatives.

Jeldu lies in the West Shewa zone of Ethiopia and its main town, Gojo, is located at about 125 kilometres south west of Addis Ababa.⁸ The area is predominantly inhabited by Oromo people, which is the largest of the many ethnic groups in Ethiopia. The area is also marked by its altitude, ranging from 500 up to 2900 metres above sea level. The total population of the District is 202,716.⁹ The people are predominantly Orthodox Christians, followed by Protestants. Many people are both Christians and Waaqeffanna.¹⁰

The NGO works in different areas of Jeldu District. In order to select one location for the field study, different areas were visited, both highland and lowland areas. After discussing which location would be most suitable to study the very poor and initiatives of the NGO to reach them, a village called Taatessa was selected. This village is located about 25 kilometres from Gojo town. To get an idea of the wealth categories in the areas, a workshop was conducted with officials, who were primarily representatives of different government bodies as there are hardly any NGOs active in and around Gojo.

⁴ The names of the partner organizations will not be mentioned for reasons of confidentiality.

⁵ UNDP, <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BEN.html>

⁶ Mehler, A., Melber, H. & van Walraven, K. (2011) *Africa Yearbook 2010: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara*. Leiden: Brill. p. 327

⁷ UNDP, <http://hdrstats.undp.org/images/explanations/ETH.pdf>

⁸ See annex 4 for map.

⁹ Central Statistical Agency Ethiopia, http://www.csa.gov.et/newcsaweb/images/documents/pdf_files/regional/Oromya1.pdf

¹⁰ Animists.

Taatessa lies in a valley, which means that going to the village means climbing down about 500 metres. Taatessa is the collective term for a few small villages. In consultation with local staff, four of these villages that represent the NGO's involvement were selected for the field study; namely, Taatessa, Laafa, Luthu and Nyare.¹¹ The majority of people here are Orthodox Christians, followed by Protestants and Waqeffaannaa. The village is marked by the only primary school in the proximity, situated in the (main) village Taatessa. In total there are 295 households in the four villages. 'Taatessa' is used in the subsequent sections to indicate the area comprising all four villages.

The NGO invited people from these four villages to the workshops. Four rounds of workshops were conducted.¹² According to the NGO, it was not possible to conduct a separate workshop with their beneficiaries, as all villagers were in some way beneficiaries of the NGO, either through the primary school or through the church.

After conducting these workshops, life histories were done with the people who were locally defined as very poor. In total 21 life histories¹³ were produced. Because the studied NGO is the only NGO that is active in Taatessa, and there are very few organisations active in Jeldu as a whole and particularly in Gojo town, only a few interviews with other organisations and government bodies were conducted.



Jeldu¹⁴

¹¹ Because no map was available of this area, a very schematic map was drawn in collaboration with the community members of these four villages. See annex 4 for the map.

¹² Workshops were conducted with older men (above forty), younger men, older women and younger women.

¹³ The life histories can be requested from the author.

¹⁴ All photos in this report were taken during fieldwork by Anika Altaf

Workshop officials Jeldu Town

A workshop was conducted with a group of people in Jeldu town, who are referred to as the ‘officials’. These are people who are in some way linked to very poor people in their work and represent different sectors of the society, i.e. teachers, NGO representatives, government representatives and religious leaders. Eleven officials participated in the workshop. The majority of participants were government representatives present from different departments: small and micro enterprise, TVET (technical vocational education and training), finance, livestock production agency, agricultural office, women and children’s affairs, education and town administration. Apart from the studied NGO, there was no other NGO present. There are four other NGOs active in this region, but one of them had no office in Jeldu, one was too far away to join the workshop and the other two were unable to attend. There was also a church representative who joined. Together they came up with the wealth ranking showed in table 1.

Table 1 Perceptions of wealth and poverty by officials in Jeldu Town

<p>Very rich (<i>baye soressa</i>)</p>
<p>The very rich are farmers and merchants. Those who are farmers own 10 pairs of oxen, 100-150 quintals of crops per year, a car and farm land of about 10 ha. Sometimes they contract the land, for example one ha for 2000 birr per year. They do not share crops. Their total capital (car, house, land, animals, etc.) is about 20 million Birr or more.</p> <p>The merchants own five cars, twenty American cows, a house built with stone and cement. Those who live in the town own big houses for trading crops, alcohol and soft drinks. They have nice beds and good furniture. Their children are well educated, they can send them to Addis to learn. They have good and balanced meals. Their wives have good clothes and a good appearance. The merchants in the rural area own better houses according to the standards of the area in which they live. Their children are well educated, but they cannot send them to Addis. Both the children and wives are well dressed.</p> <p>The very rich will not help the poor for free, they always need something in return. They use the poor, but they do not pay them a lot. In fact, they pay them very little for their effort.</p>
<p>Rich (<i>soressa</i>)</p>
<p>The rich in town have good houses. They own hotels, 1 to 2 cars. Their total capital is approximately 1-5 million Birr. They can educate their family in other towns like Addis. They are well dressed and also eat well. They can feed their family three times per day.</p> <p>The rich in the rural areas own 2 or more pairs of oxen, 2 ha of land and they have excess crops, both to feed themselves and to sell. They can construct a house for themselves and the animals. They have savings. They can educate their children in a town (within Jeldu District usually). Their total capital is 500,000 to 1 million. They have an additional house in town and own grinding mills in town.</p>
<p>Average (<i>giddu galesa</i>)</p>
<p>The average in town have a house with furniture and 2 to 3 cows. They provide their children a balanced diet and educate them in the town where they live. Their total capital is around 500,000.</p> <p>In the rural areas, they own 2 pairs of oxen, 20-40 quintals of crops per year and 5-10 cows. They have a house in the village and in town. They educate their children in town. They have excess crops and a total capital of 200,000.</p>

Poor (*iyesa*)

The poor in town are those who do manual labour and cannot feed their family adequately. They have no access to health facilities. Some of them can educate their children and some cannot. Some own houses and some do not. Their clothes are old and used. They have no capital. They live hand to mouth.

The rural poor are those who have no access to health, no excess crops for their family and who cannot educate and clothe their family. They feed their family once or twice per day. They are day labourers. They may have some land, but it is not enough for their family. They have a house, but no capital.

Very poor (*baye iyesa*)

Both in town and the rural areas, the very poor can sometimes feed their family only once per day and sometimes not even once. The very poor have to beg for food. They have no chance of finding work and having an income. They lack clothing, food and shelter. Their children work at other people's houses. They cannot take them to health centres when they are ill. They have no plan and vision and their children have no access to education. The difference between the very poor in rural areas and the town is that in town the very poor have no houses and rent a house to live in. Sometimes they live on the streets. In the rural areas the very poor live in a small hut, they do not have land and work in other people's houses.

After defining the different categories, the next step was to look at the wealth distribution of these categories. The officials discussed amongst each other how much the percentage of each category was for Jeldu District. They came to the conclusion that the majority in the District belongs to the average and poor, followed by the rich and very poor. According to them, there are very few very rich people.

Table 2 Perceptions of wealth distribution in Jeldu District by the officials

Very rich	0.01%
Rich	25%
Average	30%
Poor	25%
Very poor	20%
Total	100,01%¹⁵

¹⁵ The officials had difficulty giving percentages. Therefore the percentages in the table made up more than 100% and I corrected them afterwards. The figures indicate the perceived proportions.

Weddings and funerals

Weddings and funerals differ considerably amongst the different categories and are significant in exposing the wealth of a person. The officials expressed the differences in weddings and funerals.

Weddings

Rich people celebrate their engagement. When they get married, they come with ten cars or more and horses. They prepare different kinds of food, usually a buffet. They marry in their cultural clothes. Families build houses for their sons and give different gifts such as money, hotels (they construct those for the son) and shops. They also provide different household furniture. They need around 100,000-130,000 Birr for the ceremony. The ceremony is recorded with video and camera. Around 200-250 people attend the wedding ceremony.

The poor have arranged marriages or forced marriages, which are called *Buti*. Sometimes there is a so-called 'agreement marriage', where the boy and girl decide to live together without any ceremony. When there is a ceremony, the families buy new clothes and small gifts. They come by horse and on foot. They can only prepare two different types of food. Around 50-120 people attend the wedding (a bit more in the local town compared to the villages). Local beer and other traditional drinks are provided. The poor usually spend around 10,000 Birr on the ceremony. They may take some photos of the ceremony.

The very poor are unable to prepare any marriage ceremony. It is common for them to start living together in the form of an agreement marriage. *Buti* (forced marriage) is also very common amongst girls who belong to very poor families.

Funerals

The death of a rich person is communicated to different areas. Oxen are slaughtered, different types of food are prepared for many days. The ceremonies are recorded with video and camera. The deceased is taken by car and not carried by people. If the area of the deceased person cannot be reached by a car, every person present is eager to carry the deceased. Everyone attending cries. The life story of the deceased is told by a person on a horse. Flowers are prepared to put on the grave. A lot of people attend the funeral. Around 10,000-40,000 Birr is spent. Those who attend give a lot of money to the deceased's family. They also bring food and drinks. The coffin is sometimes even bought from Addis. The place of burial is selected for the very rich; it is a nice place, a mausoleum-type cement structure is placed over the grave.

When a poor person dies, the news is sent only to the relatives. Simple food is prepared, the ceremony is not recorded and no stories are told, even though the person may deserve many stories. Few people attend, usually only relatives and neighbours. The rich do not attend. The arrangement of the funeral and preparation is done by community groups (*Iddir*). The coffin is prepared in Jeldu. People cry a lot for the rich, but for the poor they say: this was better for him or her, than staying in this situation. The poor usually end up with a bad plot for their burial; for example, a rocky plot and often somewhere on the edges of the cemetery.

When someone very poor dies, the community contributes to the funeral and sometimes the government may buy the coffin or clothes. There is no food prepared, sometimes only coffee and roasted crops.

The very poor and development initiatives

The officials agreed that small- and micro enterprise initiatives are reaching the poor and average, not the very poor. Initiatives whereby groups are formed and there is some form of saving mostly reach the average. The very poor cannot save enough to join these type of groups. The NGO staff explains that the very poor were included at the beginning of their savings initiative, but they stopped because of the payment (amount per week or month that is saved).

Within the education sector there are some examples whereby clubs (private initiatives) are formed in schools that help very poor children who cannot afford books and uniforms, but this is not the case for all schools.

The World Food Program distributes maize, wheat, oil and peas in the summer season. For four months, poor people can collect 15kg of maize and other food per person in their household. This reaches the very poor.

The NGO 'Compassion' also works with the very poor. They include children who have no family and children of very poor people. They provide health services, food (breakfast), clothes, school fees, books and other materials, like blankets and sometimes crops.



Officials discussing the wealth ranking exercise

Workshops in the rural area of Jeldu District

Workshops were conducted with villagers from four different villages: Taatessa, Laafa, Luthu and Nyare, i.e. 'Taatessa'. The abbreviations mentioned below indicate the groups.

- Groups:
- Older men: OM
- Older women: OW
- Younger men: YM
- Younger women: YW

Perceptions about local history and important events

During the events exercise, the participants were asked to recollect important events that had occurred in the four villages in the last thirty years. Important events are those events that are part of the collective memory and/or are considered to have a lasting impact on the area. Through this exercise, a summary of the locally perceived history can be drawn. Moreover, the exercise assists participants in the following exercises, which require a comparison of the present and the past.

Table 3 Perceptions of local history and important events in Taatessa

Year	Description
1984	There was conflict between people in Luthu about farmland. Two people died during the conflict and one died in prison. The relative of the person who killed these people left the village, because it is permitted for the relatives of the deceased to kill a relative of the killer in revenge. The conflict occurred due to lack of farmland. The number of people increased, but the amount of land was still the same. (OM, OW, YM)
1985	There was extreme hunger, not only in the area, but at national level. Crops were shared in coffee cups (there was very little). Mothers left their children in the market, because they did not have any food for them. People had to eat soil and leaves. (OW) People were angry. Many people died and no one could bury them, because there were so many and because they did not have the strength to bury the dead. People also heard about their relatives in other places that had died of hunger. (YM). People had to travel far in order to get flour and even if they managed to get it, the quality was very low and it was bad for their health. The hunger was caused by a shortage of rain. Also, because there was a dictatorship people had to pay taxes (crops) and so the few crops that they had harvested, had to be given as tax. (OM)
1988	A disease killed a lot of people's cattle. The disease was called <i>gowomsa</i> . (OW) This means the disease that makes people foolish, because there were no signs of the cattle being ill, they suddenly died. People used to have enough cattle to sell, so after this disease people had to sell their crops to survive. (YM)

1989	Another conflict over farmland. (YM) During this year the Derg regime was recruiting young boys as soldiers, because it was almost the end of the regime and they needed soldiers to fight against Zenawi. Policemen surrounded the school to select the best and strongest students. Families who had money, gave them money to save their children. When people had boys they gave them girls' names to hide the fact that they were boys. (OM)
1992	During the transition from the Derg regime to Zenawi's regime, many people were killed by the government's soldiers. People lost their legs, were beaten and killed. The soldiers asked everyone to bring out their guns. Those who did not have guns were beaten or taken to prison. It was difficult because the people could not understand the soldiers as they were from the Tigray region and did not speak Oromifa. People did not know what these soldiers wanted and why they were killing people. (OM)
1995	Many families died as a result of <i>Lashe</i> (typhoid). The disease is contagious and therefore hardly anyone wanted to visit the sick people. Those who went put garlic in their noses to avoid the bad smell. One entire family died and no one wanted to bury them and their house was destroyed. They were left in the ruins. (OM)
1997	A disease called <i>Fatana</i> (meaning the disease that kills quickly) killed many people. The symptoms are a burning skin. If the black blood can be drawn from the body, the person can be saved from <i>Mura</i> (this means cut, another name of the disease) (OM). But not everyone can make the cut to draw out the blood. It is mostly traditional healers who are capable of doing this. (OW)
1997	There was shortage of rain. As a result there was hunger, but it was not as severe as in 1985. There were not many deaths, but many people started begging for food. Many people were drowned while trying to cross the river to go to other areas to beg for food. (OM)
2005	There was hunger as a result of lack of rain. The crops dried out. People were very hungry and angry. Their cattle became weak and they had to travel to another <i>Kebele</i> (municipality) to get flour. (YM) But only the poor and very poor were affected, because they had no cattle to sell and so some of them lost their relatives. (OW)
2006	There was a disease outbreak. It was like malaria, people suffered from headache, coughing, feeling cold and shaking. It affected the whole community. One pregnant woman lost her baby and others fell ill; there were no casualties, but some people are still taking medicines. (YW)
2006	This year the prices of crops decreased enormously. People bought 1 kilo of barley for 1 Birr for example. This was due to an excess of production that year. The soil was very fertile and there was rain in abundance. People did not even use fertilizers. (YM)
2007	A severe flood destroyed the crops. Rocks fell down from the mountain and hit the houses. The houses were also affected by the water and had to be rebuilt. People ate cabbage for two months until the corn was ready. That crop (corn)

	was strong enough to survive the flood. (YW)
2008	Another conflict over farmland. (YM)
2008	There was heavy rain and one farmland was completely flooded. There was less harvest that year. (OW)
2010	That year there was no rainfall in the summer at all. This meant that people could not harvest that year and had to wait for a whole year. There was hunger and in order to survive people started cutting trees to make charcoal and sell it. People managed, but it was a year that will not be forgotten. (YW)
2012	Rain and heavy wind destroyed the crops. It caused hunger. (OW)
2012	A boy killed himself because his parents could not afford a mobile for him while all his friends had one. He was tenth grade student of about twenty years old.(OW)
2013	There was a shortage of water due to lack of rain. People had to search for water at night. A woman went to fetch water in the forest at night and came face to face with a hyena. She shouted and people came to save her. (OM, OW, YM)
2013	There was a quarrel over water amongst the villagers. There were many injuries, especially those who did not have a male to accompany them were injured. (OW)
2013	A young pregnant woman who was ill had to collect water for her family, because it was her duty to do so. She went into the forest to collect water and became even sicker and lost her baby in the forest. (YW)
2013	No one had asked the women how they feel about certain issues before. Attending the workshop is an event. (YW)

There are a few types of events that recur, especially diseases affecting both humans and animals and hunger. In addition, the transition of the Derg regime to Zenawi's regime is an important historical event. The area is also marked by shortage of water in some years and heavy rainfall and floods in others.

Trends in capabilities: Perceptions of change

The second exercise conducted was the 'changes' exercise. The purpose of this exercise is to assess the perceptions of change within six 'capitals', i.e. natural, physical, economic, human, socio-political and cultural. Within these six capitals, 41 items are subdivided. But before these items were probed, the participants were invited to mention any type of change they could recall. Changes that happened over the past 25-30 years were captured. The results of this exercise are listed in table 4.

Table 4 Perceptions of change in Taatessa

capitals	Negative	Positive
Natural		
Animals (livestock, wildlife)	<p>For 20 years Taatessa has been affected by a cattle disease, called Gowomsa. Many cows and oxen have been killed by it. People lost their oxen that they used for farming and their cows that were used for milk. Moreover, people cannot use the meat of the animal, because they may also be affected by it. The major symptom of the disease for animals is a swollen body. Gowomsa affects cows, oxen, donkeys and goats. One year the donkeys are affected, the next year cows and so on. (OM)</p>	
Crops	<p>About thirty years ago there was an excess of crops, but this changed because of Ashkuri. This is a plant that hinders the growth of the crops. It starts growing amongst the crops and the crops dry out. People went to the Kebele agricultural office, but they have not been able to solve this problem yet. (OM)</p>	
Fertilizers	<p>Fertilizers have become much more expensive. Previously, 100 kg was 80 Birr, now it is bought for 1800 Birr. People have asked the government to lower the prices, but the government responded that it is impossible since the fertilizers are being imported. Also, in the past it was possible to borrow fertilizers from the government, but people could not always repay it and therefore the government stopped this. People need the fertilizers because the soil is becoming less fertile. They have asked the government to be moved to another area with fertile land. (OM)</p>	

Water	<p>There is a change of weather. Before it used to rain in the spring season, but now it does not rain. Because of that there is no grass for the animals to eat and no water to drink. As a result, there is less cattle production. There is a huge shortage of water. The women have to walk far to get water, which makes everything more complicated. They cannot wash the clothes and do other household chores because of the distance and the quantity of water. The cultivation has also decreased and people can no longer earn enough through agriculture. (OM, YM, YW) Also, women who were participating in adult literacy every day can now only attend classes once every two weeks, because in the morning they have to look for and fetch water. (OW)</p>	
Deforestation	<p>People need wood to make charcoal and therefore they have cut almost all trees in the area. So many trees have been cut that people have started to dig out the roots of the cut trees and make charcoal out of them. They have no other choice; they need the money to get food. People have tried to plant new trees, but because the water shortage, the trees dried out. (YW) The deforestation is also causing erosion, which makes the area more vulnerable to flooding (YM).</p>	
Land	<p>There is a lack of farmland, because the population has increased and soil is less fertile. (OM,OW)</p>	
	<p>The clinic that has been built in the village is not working and it has taken up people's agricultural land. (OM)</p>	

Soil	The soil is less fertile due to erosion. There is hardly any grass and so when it does rain, everything is washed away. Before people were able to plant many different crops (vegetables). (OM, OW, YW)	
Physical		
Irrigation system	The NGO has constructed an irrigation system. The water is supposed to be shared by three villages, namely Suki, Danno and Thathessa. Every day another village gets water from this system. The pipes are only cement until the village of Danno. When it is Thathessa's turn to get water, the water is 'wasted' along the way. Holes and other obstacles are filled with the water and so it does not reach Thathessa. There is a shortage of water in the village as a result of this. (OM)	
Roads		Previously, pregnant women sometimes died on their way to the clinic to give birth. Because of the roads, they can use a vehicle and reach the clinic faster. (OW) Also, people can transport their cereals to the market and buy other products. Moreover, merchants from other places can travel to the market in Osolee now. However transportation is not affordable for all. (YW)
Tools	Before there were mills that ran on water, but since there is a shortage of water, women have to walk very far to mills in other places. (OW)	
Human		

<p>Knowledge & Education</p>		<p>There are schools now. Previously, the schools were far away. Now women can write their signature and children can go to school. As a result of education both men and women became aware of the rights that women have. Women used to be married against their will at an early age. This has changed. Women know their rights now; they can no longer be forced. (YW) Also, since the children no longer have to walk very far (OM), they can help to take care of the cattle after school and in their breaks. (YM); the children started to learn at an earlier age. (OW)</p>
<p>Knowledge & Education</p>		<p>Through adult education people have learnt to read and write. They can write letters to their relatives or to the Kebele office. Before they used to sign with their thumbs, now they can write their signature. (OW) People have also learnt to save their crops instead of selling everything. The focus of their education has been on development, human rights and peace building. So people have started to cooperate more with each other. (YM)</p>
<p>Health & Hygiene</p>	<p>There is a clinic, but there are no medicines in the clinic. The clinic is also far away. Even if medicines are provided, they are not effective. Before people used to go to the nearest town and if the patient lived, he or she could be treated and the treatment was often effective. That</p>	

	was actually better than having a bad clinic that is closer by. (YW)	
Health & Hygiene	About twenty years ago, a new disease affected the area. It caused people to die suddenly. The villagers think it is something spiritual. There is a spirit that looks like a chicken, called <i>Dingetenga</i> (OW). If someone passes this spirit, they become ill. The symptoms of this disease are a burning skin, deformed eyes and mouth, followed by death. (YM)	
Health & Hygiene	The hospital in Jeldu is good, however the doctors there send people to their own (private) clinics. The doctors work both in their own clinics and in the hospital. And so people end up paying much more. This is a recent change. (YM)	
Health & Hygiene	For about twenty years, the area has been affected by HIV/AIDS and people have died. (OW)	There has been education about preventing HIV/AIDS. Religion has also played a role in the prevention. People who suffer from HIV/AIDS can take medicines. The education started about ten years ago and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is less now.
Population	For about 25 years, the number of people in the area has started to increase. However, the amount of farmland has remained the same. This has led to and still leads to several conflicts, causing death, imprisonment and injuries. (OM, YM)	
Economic		

Access to credit		<p>Saving groups have been introduced into the area. The group saves 2 Birr every two weeks. Through this group one classroom was built. The members are also farming on one piece of land together. Those who have oxen, bring their oxen. Others will join and help in every way they can. The produce from this land is sold. The money that is earned is added to the savings account. The members can borrow money with minimum interest. Before, they had to pay a lot of interest. If they borrowed 100 Birr from someone, they had to pay 50 Birr interest. Now, when they borrow 100 Birr, the interest is only 5 Birr. (YM). Moreover, people have learnt to buy crops just after harvest and save them during the summer when it is difficult to get food and it is more expensive. (OW)</p> <p>During the trainings run by the saving groups, people are trained in bee production, chicken production and cattle fattening for example. (OM)</p>
Markets		<p>People started to buy and sell oxen themselves. Before they used to give their oxen to others to sell them for them. Now they make more profit. They also know how to fatten the oxen, so they can buy a skinny ox and fatten it to get more profit. (YM)</p>
Out-migration	<p>There is out-migration of highly educated people to the towns. They do not wish to stay in the village,</p>	

	<p>because there is no electricity and water. They only stay if there is absolutely no other choice. This is bad, because if all the good teachers leave, the children will not have a good education (OW, YM, YW). In fact, it is a bad side-effect of more accessible education. Even health workers, who are sent by the government to carry out vaccinations, cannot work in the area, because of the heat and lack of water. (YW)</p>	
Out-migration	<p>Students who want to go to grades nine and ten have to go to Shukute. However, the quality of education at Shukute is very poor. When the time comes to do the national exams, the students have to compete with other students in Ethiopia and they fail. (OW)</p> <p>And there is not enough farmland for them, this is causing the youth to move out of the area. They head for areas like Gambella and Sidamo where it is very hot and there is a high risk of malaria. Some die in those places. Those who return can often no longer work, because they are still suffering from malaria. (YM)</p>	
Cultural		
Appropriate behaviour		<p>The practice of <i>Buti</i> has stopped. <i>Buti</i> meant that girls could be married against their will. Nowadays this has changed; girls and boys marry each other with consent. Forced marriage is now forbidden by law. So if someone forces their children to marry, they can</p>

		be sentenced to prison. (YM)
Appropriate behaviour		There used to be a cultural event in the past that involved the men fighting along the riverside. They lost their teeth, got hit in the eye and were injured. People have become aware through education and religion that this is a bad tradition and they no longer practice it. (YM)
religion		In the past, people used to believe in cultural beliefs (<i>waqqefaata</i>) and had to serve the cultural leaders and give them gifts. Things like money, seeds, oxen, butter and even a child to be used as a servant. (OW). Since people converted to Protestantism and Orthodoxy, this has changed. Now people are only expected to thank God and go to the church. Moreover, people used to be superstitious. They thought, for example, that if someone looked at a child while it was being breastfed, evil would happen. (YW). Also, in the past men were not allowed to sleep with their wives. They could only sleep with them on Sunday, because this was the leader's day. The men had to adhere to this rule strictly, because the leader would know if they slept with their wives. He would put evil on them and make them sick as a punishment. Some of the leaders also converted. There is no longer a fear of the leaders who did not convert, because the

		villagers believe God protects them from these evil leaders. (OM)
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The negative changes outnumber the positive ones in this area. Diseases, climate change, deforestation, lack of farmland and water and increased population are important negative changes. On the bright side, education and the construction of a primary school have improved the situation for the people significantly. Forced marriages are less common and people have been made aware of HIV. Roads and transportation have also led to positive changes, like getting people to health clinics faster.

Perceptions of wealth and poverty

The wealth ranking exercise of the PADev methodology was also done during these workshops. The workshop participants were asked to define five wealth categories, respectively: very rich, rich, average, poor and very poor. The exercise is an open question, participants give a description according to their perceptions.

Table 5 Perceptions of wealth and poverty in Taatessa

Very Rich (*bachabacha, tujara, duressa*)

Who:

The very rich are farmers and have people working for them for food. (OW) They farm the land together with their family. (OM, YM) Usually, they do not have many children, so they have less people to feed and clothe. (YW) They are respected in the society. (OM)

Characteristics:

Education:

Their children can go to school and can continue until college and university. (OM, OW, YM, YW) But it is difficult for them to find a good job. (YM)

Farm/land/harvest:

They have large farmland, from a minimum of 3 up to 10 hectares. (OM, OW, YM, YW). But not all land is arable, the maximum is about 5 hectares. (OM, YM) They can use fertilizers. (YW)

Food:

The very rich have three meals per day. Their food is prepared with oil or butter. Their injera is made of Teff or Teff mixed with Barley. (OM, OW, YM, YW). The quality of their food is better. (YM) Once a year, they can eat meat. (YW)

Housing:

They have a very big house made from 50 tin sheets.¹⁶ (OM, OW, YM, YW) They also have a kitchen made from 20-25 tin sheets. (OM, OW) The floor is nicely made and level. They can paint the houses with natural materials (YM) with red or white soil brought from the

¹⁶ One tin sheet is about 1 by 2 metres.

forest. The walls are made of mud. Inside the house there is a bed, a blanket and a gun. (YW) They also have separate stables for the animals. (OM)

Livestock:

They have two pairs of oxen and four cows. They also own goats (3-4), donkeys (2) and chicken (2-3). (OW, OM, YM, YW)

Social (support):

They never help anyone. They even want to buy land from the poor and make it their own. (OM) The poor can borrow seeds from the very rich, but pay back with interest. (OW) So help is never freely given. The poor can borrow crops; when they borrow one bag of seeds, they have to pay back two bags. (YM) People who do not have farmland and farm on their land, get an equal part from the harvest. Also people work for them for food. (YW)

Health

The very rich can go anywhere for their treatment if they fall ill. (OM,OW,YM,YW) Depending on the type of illness, they may go to Jeldu, Ambo or Addis. They can go wherever they are told to go. (OM,YM,YW)

Other:

They have better quality and fashionable clothes for their wives and children. (OM, OW, YM) They own suits, trousers, blazers, T-shirts, shoes and also traditional clothes, e.g. Gabii (OM). Their clothes are clean. (YW).

Rich (*soressa, ofgaha*)

Who:

The rich are farmers (OM,YW) They usually do not have people working for them, they just farm with their family. (OW)

Characteristics:

Education:

Their children can go to school (YM, YW) and to college (OW) with good clothes. (OM)

Farm/land/harvest:

They have 2-3 hectares of land. (OM, OW, YM) They can buy fertilizers and pesticides, to have a better yield. (YW)

Food:

They eat twice, some maybe three times per day but the quality of their Shiro with Injera is less than that of the very rich. (OM, YM) They can use less butter in their whot. (OW) They can eat roasted corn or wheat with coffee for lunch. (YW)

Housing:

They have big houses, but smaller than that of the very rich (YM). The roof is made of 40-30 tin sheets and a kitchen, but the roof is made of grass. (OM, OW, YW) The difference with the very rich is in the materials that are used to build the house. Also the floor and

the paint are not as nice. (YM) They have a bed and blankets. (YW) They have stables for their animals. (OM)

Livestock:

They own 2-3 oxen and 2-4 cows. (OM, OW, YM, YW). They have 2 goats, 1 donkey and 2 chickens. (OM)

Social (support):

They are independent, but cannot help others. (OW) People cooperate with them, because they give them food for work (day labour). The rich can lend seeds to the people they like. They are better at lending things to the average and the poor than to the very rich. (YW) They never help the poor, but they also do not want to hurt them. They are good people, not like the very rich. They are not regarded as better than other groups in the society, they are equal to them. (OM)

Health

They can also go anywhere for treatment if they are ill (YM, YW), like Jeldu or Ambo. (OM, OW)

Other:

They have good clothes for their family (OW), the same amount as the rich, but the quality is less. (OM, YM) Their wives and children are well dressed. (YM)

Average (humanjeru, wayya'a, foyya'a, ofdenda'a)

Who:

They are farmers. (OM, YW) They do additional work, such as making charcoal and selling things. They have many children. (YW)

Characteristics:

Education:

Children go to school (OM, OW, YM, YW) with a uniform and they can also buy books. (OM) They can complete up till grade ten, but they may not be able to go to college. (OW)

Farm/land/harvest:

The average own 1-2 hectares of land. (OM, OW, YM, YW)

Food:

Usually they eat twice per day, mostly injera with salt (OM, YM) or with cabbage and pumpkin. The shiro is without oil. Sometimes they may eat roasted wheat or corn. (OW, YW) They eat before going to their farm and on their return. Others will eat at the farm when their family brings them something. (YM)

Housing:

The roof is made of 20-25 tin sheets (OM, YM). Due to the current shortage of grass, they sell their cow or ox and buy tin. (OM) The house is not big and not small, it is medium size. (YM) The roof of the kitchen is made of grass. (OM, OW, YM, YW) They have beds, but made of teak and rope. (YW)

Livestock:

They have one ox and one cow. They use their ox together with someone else who has

one ox, because two oxen are required for farming. (OM, OW, YW, YM) Some may have a donkey, but usually they do not have goats or chicken. (OM)

Social (support):

They cannot help anyone, but farmers can cooperate with each other and help out on each other's farmland. (OW) They do not help poor people. (OM, YW) If they lend seeds, the interest will be twice the amount that was lent. (YW)

Health

When they are ill, they can go to a clinic in Osolee or Shukutee.¹⁷ (OM, OW, YW). At most, they can go to Jeldu for treatment. YM

Other:

They only have one pair of clothes. (OM) If they are lucky, they get new clothes once a year. (OW) The quality of the clothes of their wives and children are not so good. (YM) But their clothes are better than the poor and the very poor. They have better shawls for example. (YW)

Poor (*iyessa*)

Who:

They are farmers (OM, YM, YW), they make charcoal (OM, YW) and do labour work, like harvesting for the rich. (OM) They help the rich by collecting firewood and water for food. Their children have to help the rich by looking after their cattle after school. Even the faces of people who are poor are different. You can see they are not happy. (YW)

Characteristics:

Education:

Their children go to school (YM) in the morning or afternoon and they work the other half of the day at a rich person's house. They buy books from the money they earn. (OM) They wear old uniforms. (YW) They cannot always complete their education. (OW)

Farm/land/harvest:

The poor only have land to build their house. They have a small garden. (OW, OM, YM, YW) They farm on rich people's land and share the crop. (YM, YW)

Food:

They eat once per day. (OM, OW, YM, YW) They have coffee with roasted crops (OM, OW, YM) It is difficult for them to have shiro or whot. They usually have their injera with salt and in the rainy season with cabbage. They also eat potato, because it is cheaper. The rich may sometimes help them by giving them cabbage, pumpkin or a meal, when the poor go to 'greet'¹⁸ them. (YW)

Housing:

Their houses are small and covered with strong grass and, if they have a kitchen, it is also in that house. (OM, OW, YM, YW) Their house is not as beautifully made as that of the average people. (OW) Everything is done in the same room: cooking, sleeping (YW),

¹⁷ A town about 25 km from Osolee

¹⁸ The poor go to greet the rich hoping to get something. It is not directly begging.

and if they have animals, they also stay in the house. (OW, YM, YW) They make a 'bed' from soil. They do not have a blanket. (YW)

Livestock:

They do not have oxen or cows. (OW, YW) They can borrow sheep and goats from the rich. When the animals breed, they give back the sheep or goat that they borrowed. (OW, YM)

Social (support):

They are not supported by anyone, but they can help the rich to get money or food for compensation. (OW)

Health

They usually cannot go to a clinic (OW, YM, YW), but if they go, they can only go to Osolee. (OM) The poor use natural herbs and heat up leaves. They smell these or use them as an ointment. (YW) They go to traditional healers. (OW) They can borrow money to buy medicine and have it injected by people around them. (YM)

Other:

They have one set of clothes, but it is old and torn. (OM) They buy used clothes from the market and use it for two or three years. (YM) If they have a traditional cloth (Gabii), it is made of cotton and the quality is poor. It is also less white. (YW)

Very poor (*badduba'a, iyessa babbadaa, rakkataa*)

Who:

The very poor do manual labour for the rich for food (OM, OW) and make charcoal. However, it has become harder to make charcoal, because of lack of trees. The very poor do dirty and difficult work; for example, when an ox dies, they will help to remove the skin. So they also work as skin removers. (OM, YW) They are not respected in the society, people do not like them, because they are dirty, they never wash (YW); others hate them and ignore them. (YM, YW) They are treated differently and not seen as equal to others in the society. For example, at meetings when they try to speak, people never let them speak. (OM) Everyone says, this beggar has come, why don't they work hard, why do they always come to people, but they have no land to farm and there is no industry, so they have to beg. They will go to people's homes and talk about their problems, hoping to get something. They ask for food or work. There are also very poor who will get something and sell it for drink. The children of the very poor work for the rich, the bigger children will look after the cows and oxen, the smaller ones after the goats and sheep. (OW)

Characteristics:

Education:

Most children are working at other people's houses. So they usually do not go to school. (OW) They cannot buy uniforms and it is difficult for them to buy books. (OM, OW) If the very poor have two or three children, they send one to school and the others work for the rich. (YM) They go to school barefoot and with old clothes. During their break, they go to help the rich and get food in return. Many children drop out, because they cannot pay for the uniform and the school supplies. So they sometimes work for one year and then join school again. Some quit completely, others may continue after a break. (YW)

Farm/land/harvest:

They do not have any land, just enough to build their house. (OM, OW). They work on rich people's farms (YM, YW) and they often have to go far to search for farmland to work on, because they do not own any oxen. They work with their hands. (YW)

Food:

It is difficult for the very poor to have one meal per day. (OW) They normally do not prepare food at their own house and get food from the person for whom they are working. They may get cabbage or pumpkin. (OW, YM) They will bring some of the food that they received to their homes to feed the family. (OM, YM) They may also beg the rich for some crops. (OW)

Housing:

The house is very small and there is no garden. It may even be built on the land of a relative. (YW) The roof is made of cheap grass or sugarcane leaves. (OM, OW, YM, YW) The walls are made from the stems of maize and need to be repaired every year. (OM, YM) Everyone can see if they are in the house, because you can see through the walls. They do not have many things in their houses. (YM)

Livestock:

The very poor have no cattle. (OM, YM) They do not have any space for animals and therefore people may not give them their sheep or goats. They fear that the animals may be eaten by a hyena or some other wild animal. (OW)

Social (support):

The very poor are not helped, they only receive food for work. (OM, OW)

Most people cannot afford to help others, they can just feel sorry for the very poor. (OW) Some poor people may be helped by the rich, because they serve them well. Moreover, if the very poor die, people contribute to buying their coffin. (YM)

Health

When they are ill, they cannot go to the clinic. (OM, OW) Since they cannot borrow money (they cannot repay it), they just wait till they get better. (OW) They sleep and wait for the disease to pass. (OM) They use natural leaves and traditional healing methods. (YW)

Other:

They wear very old clothes given to them by the people they work for. (OM) Because their clothes are very old with holes, they have to sew them. (YW)

The very rich are respected in the society, in contrast to the very poor who are not only not respected, but even 'hated' in the community and not seen as equal. Moreover, the very rich are considered unhelpful and the very poor cannot be helped by the average or poor, because they do not have any reserves. At best, they may have pity for the very poor.

After describing the different categories, the participants were also asked to reflect on the distribution of the different categories in their villages. They did this by dividing ten stones amongst the five categories. Each stone represents 10% of the population. The following division was made:

Table 6 Perception of wealth category distribution in Taatessa

	Very rich	Rich	Average	Poor	Very poor	Total
Older men	10%	10%	30%	40%	10%	100%
Older women	10%	10%	20%	40%	20%	100%
Younger men	10%	10%	30%	30%	20%	100%
Younger women	10%	20%	30%	30%	10%	100%
Total	10%	12,5%	27,5%	35%	15%	100%

The largest wealth category in Jeldu according to the participants is that of the poor, followed by the average and the very poor. The very rich are the smallest category.

Weddings and funerals

Weddings and funerals differ considerably between the different categories and are significant in exposing the wealth of a person. The villagers explained these differences.

Weddings

When the rich marry, they give their children gifts e.g. bed, tin, clothes, radio, closet and materials for the house. They slaughter oxen and make different drinks (local beer) and food. They are able to do everything themselves.

The poor need help to organise their weddings. They are helped by their relatives. They can slaughter a goat and prepare one type of dish. They give their children some clothes, small gifts and some materials to build a house. Their relatives help to arrange the dowry.

The very poor do not have wedding ceremonies. Frequently, a poor girl just goes to her new husband's house without any ceremony. The parents are unable to give their children any gifts. They are usually not helped by anyone and cannot ask for help, because they have nothing. They cannot ask their relatives to pay for everything.

Funerals

"The day and night are not the same". The rich slaughter an ox, prepare a meal and tea or coffee. Many people cry for the deceased while saying *"oh respected one"*.

When a poor person dies, not many people attend the funeral (relatives and neighbours only) and no ox is slaughtered. The coffin is the same as a rich persons, the only difference is that the rich can cover the body with plastic. The poor usually prepare one simple dish, which is not prepared by them, but by community groups (*Iddir*) who bring the food to the funeral.

A short history of development initiatives

This exercise is intended to provide an overview of the initiatives that have been implemented in the area for approximately the last thirty years.

Table 7 A short history of development initiatives in Taatessa

Year	Project/initiative/intervention
1988	Church built by the community and the NGO. Five churches were built in total in the different villages. The first one was built in 1988. (OM)
1998	A church was constructed by the community. (OW,YW) and the NGO (YM)
2005	Church was constructed by the community. (YW)
2007	A well was dug by the community and the government/the NGO. (OM,YW,YM)
2009	A primary school was built by the community and the NGO. (OM,OW,YM,YW)
2009	Savings groups by the NGO (OM,YM)
2009	A road from Gojjo to Osolee was constructed by the government and an NGO. (YW)
2010	The community and the government built a health clinic. (OM,OW,YM,YW)

It is really striking that there are very little initiatives mentioned. The NGO studied is the only NGO in Taatessa and is also the actor that has been most active in the area.

Best and worst initiatives

After listing the initiatives, the participants were asked to rank the five best and best worst initiatives according to them.

Table 8 best initiatives in Taatessa

Group	Initiatives and ranking	Reason to judge it positively
Old men	1. church by the community and the NGO	Freed people from evil spirits and people were able to come together. The church also started the school and savings groups project.

	2. school by the NGO	Children can go to school at an early age, because the school is close by. Before they had to climb the mountain to get to Osolee.
	3. savings group by the NGO	People learnt how to save. Before, they used money to drink. They can now save and borrow money. Also, people come together and discuss different issues and they have received different trainings.
Old women	1. church by community	Freed people from different problems and evils. God has helped the people and brought the NGO to the area to do other things.
	2. school by the NGO	The children can go to school at an early age now and do not have to walk far.
	3. savings group by the NGO ¹⁹	The group has helped to teach the women how to save some money and save other things, like crops. Moreover, in the past, money could only be borrowed by paying high interest. Also, in these groups women have learnt about health and hygiene issues.
Young men	1. school by the NGO	Children and adults started to learn and benefit from it. Before the children had to walk far and they were hungry. Now they can help their parents after school.
	2. church by the NGO	The church has freed people from bad cultural habits.
	3. savings group by the	The members of the group

¹⁹ Probed. ? [not sure what this means?]

	NGO	come together and work together. They farm together and sell the harvest.
Young women	1. school/savings group, ²⁰ initiator unknown/community and NGO	The school provides the children with education. The savings group is functioning as a social safety net. Women can turn to each other in good and bad times and discuss their issues. Moreover, they can lend money when needed.
	2. road by the government and an NGO	Merchants can bring oil, salt and kerosene. Villagers can also go to the town and sell and buy things. Also, patients can go to the clinic or the hospital much easier and faster.
	3. church by the community	The church has freed people from bad cultural habits.

Table 9 worst initiatives in Taatessa

Group	Initiatives and ranking	Reason to judge it negatively
Old men	1. well by the NGO	The well does not work anymore, while people are struggling to get water.
	2. health centre by the community and government	It is not working and occupying farmland.
Old women	1. health centre by the government	The centre is not functioning. It is only used during vaccination periods. There is no benefit for the community at this moment. At the moment, it is just a building that the villagers

²⁰ Probed

		can stare at.
Young men	1. health centre by the government	There is a building, but there are no medicines or health workers.
	2. well by the NGO	The well only functioned for two years. People applied to different (water) bodies, but there has been no answer, the well has still not been fixed.
Young women	1. well by government and the community	It stopped functioning and water is the most important resource for people. The government promised to fix it, but it has not been fixed yet. The issue has been raised in every meeting, but nothing is done.
	2. clinic by an NGO	Their clinic is not functioning. Only the building has been constructed. It is currently a home to rats and mice.

Since there are only a handful of recent initiatives in Taatessa, it is understandable that these are mentioned amongst the best projects. The initiatives that are mentioned as the worst ones, are those that no longer function (e.g., the well) or have not been completed (e.g., the health centre).

Reaching the very poor

The participants agreed that, in general, the very poor are not reached through the few initiatives that are present in Taatessa. They are not involved in the saving groups because they are unable to save two Birr per week and there are no special groups for them. If they do join the saving groups, they leave soon after. The very poor also do not have the time to join these groups; they are working the entire day. Moreover, they do not have good clothes to join the meetings and they are not respected in the community. The participants thought that maybe the very poor benefit from the school. Their children get education, but they were not sure whether the very poor actually send their children to school. The church may be an advantage for those who are Protestant. They may sometimes get some help, but only during really bad times.



A very poor man standing in front of his house in Taatessa

Most important outcomes and conclusions

- Many youngsters are in the category of the very poor, due to a growing lack of farmland. The parents are better off, because they own land.
- Many young people are forced to migrate and very few actually benefit from it. Most of them return, some with serious health issues. Others do not return, they even die in the gold mines where they try their luck.
- Hardly any very poor are included in development initiatives. Even if they are invited, they do not attend, because they are disrespected, do not have good clothes to attend the meeting with and they are too busy working hard to make ends meet.
- Area with very little development intervention.
- The initiatives that are present are led by church committees who favour people in their social networks. The very poor do not belong to these networks.
- In general, there is social exclusion of those who do not belong to the NGO's church.

The studied NGO

- In theory, the NGO has a quite well thought-out approach to target the very poor; in practice, they rarely manage to reach them.
- The area is geographically difficult, which probably makes it hard for the NGO to visit regularly. But this is essential and, according to the villagers, the staff do not visit regularly enough to know what is really happening on the ground.
- The very poor do not feel welcome to join the NGO's initiatives and most of them have never even been approached.
- The NGO has to target more actively and more effectively.

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