

The rules of hosts and newcomers. Local forest management after resettlement in Ethiopia.

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Abstract

Since the 1970s, peasants were resettled in large scale state-enforced programs from the drought-prone and degraded central Ethiopia to the forested areas of the south-west. The basic rationale behind was to facilitate resource rehabilitation in central Ethiopia and to provide poor peasants with a better livelihood. The study tells about the impact that resettlement has on the institutional setup of forest resource management in two case study villages in Kaffa Zone of South-western Ethiopia.

Keywords: Ethiopia, resettlement, forest management, Kaffa, Kambata

1. Background and research framework

Resettlement has been employed by many African governments to respond to the mismatch of population numbers and environmental conditions, inter alia, to cope with landscapes which could not sufficiently nurture their inhabitants. In central Ethiopia, where large sections of the rural population are vulnerable to chronic food insecurity due to low agricultural output and droughts, the causes are usually perceived to lay in an increasing population pressure, which is thought to deteriorate ecological conditions and lead to severe resource degradation. Following this line of causality, several Ethiopian governments carried out large scale resettlement programs since the 1970s. In which peasants are relocated from central Ethiopia to less densely populated regions in the south-west of the country which were widely covered with Ethiopia's last remaining rainforests. The basic rationale behind state-enforced resettlement policy was to provide poor peasants from central Ethiopia with a better livelihood by making use of 'under-utilized' land and natural resources in the south-west. Up to today, national and international advocates of the Ethiopian resettlement policy argue that resettlement is the most cost-efficient option to cope with resource degradation and food insecurity in the long-term (Pankhurst 1990; Woube 2005; Moroda 2007).

This paper argues that resettlement in Ethiopia promoted legal pluralism in the areas of destination. Resettlement fostered the degradation of the Ethiopian rainforest in south-western Ethiopia not only due to the increase of the population and their demand for land but the

weakening of an institutional framework that promoted relatively effective and sustainable forest management systems beforehand. A broad literature has begun to identify the negative impact of resettlement schemes in Ethiopia on the state of natural resources as well as on the vulnerability of rural livelihood systems (de Wet 2004; Woube 2005; Moroda 2007). This paper is another contribution to this discussion and intends to highlight the importance of local natural resource management (NRM) institutions and typical patterns of local level institutional change.

The empirical data was collected during a long-term field research (2004-2006) in the context of the interdisciplinary German-Ethiopian research project “Conservation and use of wild *Coffea arabica* in the montane rainforest of Ethiopia” (CoCE, www.coffee.uni-bonn.de). The study was mainly based on qualitative methods, such as focus group discussion, interviews, mental mapping, and participant observation.

2. Resettlement as a strategy

2.1. Resettlement in Ethiopia

Home to over 80 million people, Ethiopia has the second largest population in sub-Saharan Africa (Munzinger 2010). The annual population growth rate is estimated with 2.6 percent (UNFPA 2005). The country-wide population density is 77 people/ km², however, with high regional differences (Munzinger 2010). Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for 80% of the population (Thomas et al. 2009).

Resettlement is an age-old and multi-faceted phenomenon in Ethiopia. Individual resettlement occurs on household and family level, whereas group resettlement tends to be based on government policies and is coordinated and implemented by state officials (Kassa, 2004). There are no official or accessible statistics on how many people in total have been resettled or dislocated in Ethiopia over the past decades. Resettlement is a political sensitive issue as it touches sensitive ethnic distribution/ relations and shows the limited capacity or commitment of the state to well organize resettlement. Under all governments, resettlement has also been motivated by political agendas.

The first large-scale, centrally organized resettlement program dates back to the Emperors time in the 1960s, when American sociologists and social anthropologists recommended the relocation of peasants from Northern Ethiopia to the Southern and South-western regions (Kassa, 2004). The Third Five Year Development Plan (1968-73) targeted an “*accelerating shift in the agricultural population [...] from the present overcrowded northern and central highlands to the lowland areas, and in a still longer run, to the Southwestern highlands...*” (IGE, 1968).

However, the scope of implementation of this plan was limited as ‘only’ estimated 20,000 families to have been resettled until 1974 (Clarke, 1986).

In 1974, the Ethiopian Emperor was overthrown by a military government, popularly known as the *Derg*.¹ The following land reform of 1975, depicted as “*one of the most radical land reform[s] ever attempted in Africa*” (Pausewang 1990), implemented a communist-inspired land tenure system formally abolishing all previous land tenure systems in the country. All land holdings, whether farmland, grazing land or forests, were nationalised and came under direct possession of the state. Peasant Associations (PAs) were assigned as the lowest administrative bodies of the state in which a number of village communities were grouped together. End of 1975, the PAs got a state mandate to give out usufruct land rights to individual peasants and to Agricultural Producers Cooperatives (EEA/EEPRI 2002; Pankhurst 2002; Stellmacher 2007a). Simultaneously with the transformation of land governance, also the governance of forest resources was transformed into a state matter. PAs got formal responsibility to govern the forest areas, however, in practice; their role was fuzzy and inconstant. Some officially formally distributed forest use rights among their members, some just informally, others not at all (Stellmacher 2007a; Zewdie 2003). This situation did not change much to the present day. Farmers and private investors can receive long-term use rights for forests, however, all forest in Ethiopia is still nationalised according to Article 40 of the 1995 Ethiopian constitution.

The Derg proclaimed the land reform as one appropriate and inevitable ‘tool’ to promote development in the Ethiopia. Another ‘tool’ - not less radical, meaningful and ambitious – was the enforced relocation of Ethiopian farmers from one area to another.

“As if to compensate for its initial tardiness [with regard to the famines], the government then embarked an ambitious project of resettling peasants [...] On the surface, it appeared a logical move. In reality the forcible nature of the resettlement, as well as the effect to combine it with the government’s cherished objective of collectivization, made it a highly unpopular move, both at home and abroad.” (Bahru Zewde 2007: 263).

The Derg resettlement programmes, depicted as some of the largest state-initiated resettlement programs in Africa, were reasoned as a political response to deteriorating ecological conditions and increasing population pressure in the highlands of Northern and Central Ethiopia, which faced severe land degradation, food insecurity and recurrent famines in this period. Between

¹ The rise of the *Derg* is partly attributed to the 1972-73 famine in Northern Ethiopia, since Emperor Haile Selassie’s governmental apparatus tried to conceal and understate its dimensions and reacted tardily, which ‘*exposed the insensitivity of the ruling elites to a lot of ordinary citizens’* (Gudina, 2003: 77). In this regard, the *Derg* regime commenced with a burden of an ecological catastrophe and growing public awareness of the need for more appropriate natural resource management (Marena ET02).

1984 and 1986 alone, some 600,000 people were resettled to destinations all over Ethiopia, mostly from the northern and central to the western parts of the country. One main direction of resettlement was from the drought stricken areas to relatively fertile, largely forested and lower populated areas of south-western Ethiopia, with Kaffa region in the centre. During 1985-88 about 50,000 households with approximately 250,000 people were relocated to Kaffa region (Alemneh, 1990). Later, this policy was backed by sub-article 2 of article 10 of the 1987 Constitution, which declares that: *“in order to create favourable conditions for development, the State shall ensure that human settlement patterns correspond to the distribution of national resources.”* (PDRE, 1987). In practice, resettlement was often violently enforced, poorly planned and badly organized, and not sufficiently maintained. There are figures saying that about 33,000 settlers died due to disease, hunger, and exhaustion. Thousands of families were systematically and intentionally broken up and scattered over different regions of the country in order to suppress their potential for political unrest and ‘counter-revolutionary’ activities (Mulat et al., 2006). These numbers support the argument that the Derg’s policy has been driven more by political imperatives than by humanitarian or economic objectives. In this understanding, resettlement was characterized as an instrument to bring rural communities under tighter state control as resettled people became permanently dependent from the government and the infrastructure it provided (Mulat et al., 2006).

Despite the critical debate on the Derg resettlement activities the succeeding government in power since 1991 shows a prolonged commitment to resettlement. This is, for example, documented in the Food Security Strategic document from 2002: *“As a strategy of responding to the problem of highland degradation, population and small farm size in moisture deficit areas, programs will be effected to resettle farmer in suitable, under-utilized areas.”* (FDRE, 2002). According to government plans from the early 2000s, a total of seven million Ethiopians ought to be resettled within the country in the midterm to balance population numbers with regard to potential agricultural productivity. In reality, over 180,000 households, accounting for about one Million people, have been resettled between 2003 and 2005 in the framework of the program, before the program was stopped after massive international protest (Kassahun, 2009). Based on a collection of case studies, Pankhurst and Piguet (2009) highlight the trend towards small-scale short-distance resettlement aiming at relocating people to make place for hydro-electric and irrigation dams, protected parks or urban centres referred to as development-induced displacement. From 2003 to 2006 alone, about 627,000 people were resettled in such schemes – almost meeting the numbers of the Derg period.

However, the former Derg resettlement schemes still impact on today's socio-economic and ecological conditions in large parts of the country. An important aspect is the interaction between host communities and new settlers more than 20 years after the resettlement. *“The crux of the matter lies in the relations between hosts and migrants and their resource use. [...] given the tendency for migration to exacerbate resource conflict, there is a need to promote peaceful coexistence through joint development initiatives.”* (Pankhurst and Piguet, 2009: 247).

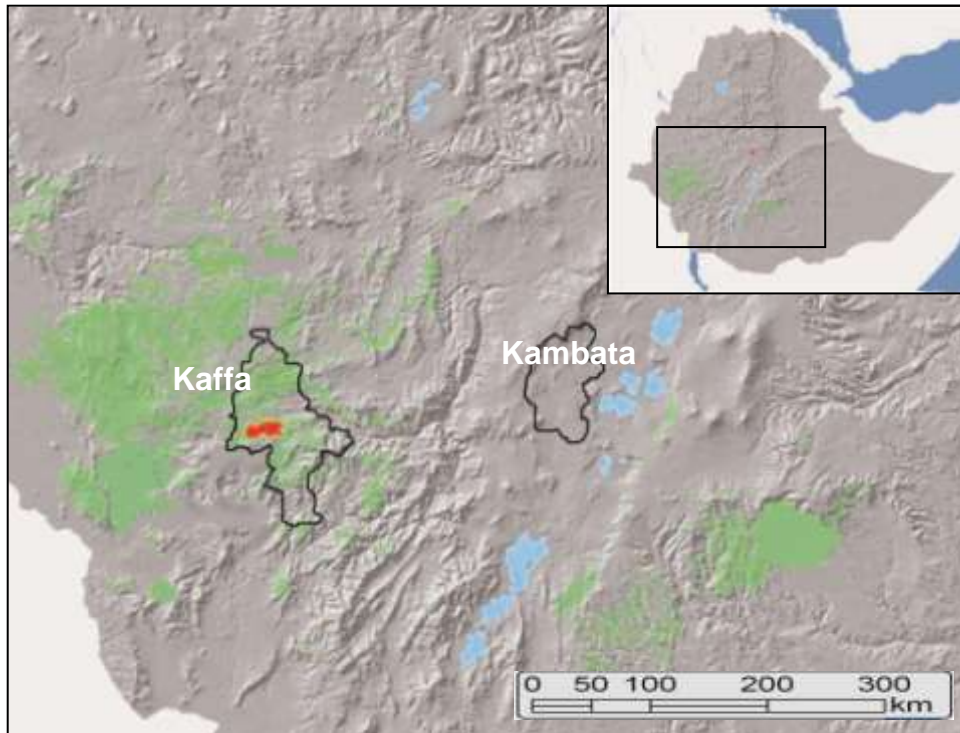
2.2. Resettlement to Kaffa Zone

In migration has been a relevant factor contributing to the current forest management regimes and in shaping the local forms of management, inter alia, its division into two management regimes in Kaffa Zone. The first wave of migrants came at the end of the 19th century when the Ethiopian state rewarded its loyal soldiers (mostly Amhara people from north and central Ethiopia) with land property rights in the conquered areas, which included the Kingdom of Kaffa (Crummey 2000; Stellmacher 2007b).²

The second wave of in-migration followed during the 1980s in the course of large-scale relocation initiated by the Derg. From 1985 to 1988, about 50,000 households, an estimated 250,000 people were moved to Kaffa. Place of origin was Central and northern Ethiopia, places that experienced frequent droughts and famine at that time. A major place of origin was Kambata region in Central Ethiopia, located some 50 km west of the Rift valley lakes (see Figure 1). The region displays the highest population density in Ethiopia, with about 300 persons/km², more than seven times more than the national average of about 40 persons/km² (Abbute 2003). The local population is suffering from a serious shortage of land. Average holdings are less than 0.5 ha per household. Main source of livelihood is intensive cultivation of *teff*³ (Abbute 2003). The following map gives an overview over the location of Kambata and Kaffa – which is the area of resettlers' origin and destination in the case study. The red area in Kaffa Zone indicates the location of Koma Forest where the field research was conducted. The greenish areas show the distribution of high forests according to a MODIS VCF 2000 satellite.

² This is why the term *neftegna*, which means ‘man with a rifle’ is still in use for Amhara people living in Kaffa (Stellmacher 2007b).

³ *Eragrotis tef*, the ‘Ethiopian national cereal’,



Source: Till Stellmacher, CoCE Project

Figure 1: Location of Kaffa and Kambata in southern Ethiopia

3. Study results: Local forest management regime in the region of destination

3.1. Introduction

The terrain of Kaffa Zone is dominated by a dissected tableland with flat to moderately undulating terrain on areas between 1,500 and 3,350 meter above sea level (Ersado 2001). The Zone holds some of the largest rainforests in Ethiopia (Senbeta 2006) and is sparsely populated by Ethiopian standards (Ahrens 1997; Baah, Kufa et al. 2000). The majority of the population is composed of the ethnic groups of Kaffa, but migration brought a considerable numbers of Amhara, Oromo, Gurage, Tigrinya and Kambata people in the Zone ever since its incorporation into the Ethiopian state. Traditional main source of livelihood are forest resources, supplemented by *enset*⁴ based agriculture. (Brandt et al. 1997).

People use forest resources in a multi purpose manner. One tree, for example, may be used at the same time to hang beehives, to provide shade for coffee plants, to supply fruits, firewood and timber. Most activities of forest resource use are done in working groups of neighbours that provide short-term work force beyond kinship ties on the basis of equal labour exchange in times of high labour demand (Stellmacher 2007a).

⁴ Enset is a perennial monocarpic rootcrop endemic to Ethiopia.

This paper concentrates on two neighbouring villages in eastern Kaffa, namely Agama and Komba, which are located close by to a primary rainforest of 1,200 ha, locally called Komba Forest. Whilst most of the Komba inhabitants are Kaffa people who are born in this area, most of the Agama inhabitants were brought here from Kambata region with the Derg resettlement programmes in the 1980s. The priest of Agama remembered “*I arrived here in 1980 [1987/88 in Gregorian calendar] from Kambata. We came here because of drought and scarcity of land with a governmental rehabilitation plan.*”⁵ Until today, Kambata people living in Agama have different land use practices than Kaffa people. Their livelihoods depends more on tillage *teff* agriculture in combination with animal husbandry and less on root crops like *enset*. *Both, Kaffa as well as Kambata people, however, heavily depend on the utilisation of forest resources from nearby Komba Forest.*

3.2. The forest use right regime

Present-day forest use rights in the case study area root in historic institutional arrangements. Before 1974, a district officer, the *chiquashum*, assigned use rights for agricultural land and forest areas to the peasants and, in return, obtained payment in kind. A Kaffa peasant from Komba narrates: “*first, the forest belonged to the chiquashum, but he distributed it permanently to [us]. But I got my land from my father. [...] The chiquashum gave the order to give 10 percent of our harvest to him. For all crops. When we collected coffee from the forest, he got 10 percent, also from the honey. [...] I had to pay 5 kg honey per year for the forest use to the chiquashum (for my 70-80 ha). At Haile Selassi’s time [before 1974], we used the honey to pay the chiquashum, now we have the honey for ourselves.*”⁶

After the revolution in 1974, the local institutional set-up changed fundamentally. The *chiquashum* were dispossessed by the Derg government, PAs were established and a land reform conducted. As a result of the land reform, all peasants of Komba village were provided with use rights to plots of agricultural land. “*The Derg gave land to all people that they could live equally. The Derg gave some land to me. [...] But there was no reform on forest land.*”⁷ This narrative provides a remarkable insight how the land reform was perceived and experienced by a local *gebber* in Komba village. The description hints to the fact that the *Derg*’s land reform sorted out the re-distribution of land for overall agricultural purpose but excluded primary forest land from the re-allocation process. The PAs *de jure* took over responsibility for Koma Forest, but new rules and regulations concerning its use, management and conservation were not enforced.

⁵ (24/11/2004: Tadesse Kasa)

⁶ (12/11/2004: Hailemariam Gebre)

⁷ (12/11/2004: Hailemariam Gebre)

Consequently, the local peasants perpetuated their local ownership in the understanding that their forest use rights had not changed: *“During the Derg, the forest belonged to the farmers. Starting from Haile Selassie’s time the forest belonged to us.”*⁸

From this time onwards, the local and state administration of forest property right drifted apart and resulted in a situation of legal pluralism in which the Kaffa peasants continued to execute forest resource use, management and conservation on the base of local traditional property rights rather than within the scope of the newly established local PAs or other state administration bodies. Local property rights in the forest were locally transferred to the next generation, mainly by patrilineal heritage: *“When a father divides his forest, the first son gets the most, the second and third etc. less. The boys who are engaged in school or in governmental jobs often get no forest.”*⁹ There is no evidence that local property rights in Koma Forest have been subject to disposal. The distribution of use right plots is part of the local common knowledge and not formally recorded or documented. This system does not allow the integration of people from ‘outside’, such as the new settlers. Not a single case was reported in which a new settler household obtained local property rights to Koma Forest.

In order to record this local knowledge, mental mapping exercises were conducted in which peasants from Agama and Komba village were asked to conjointly draft of a map showing the location of their villages, the names of the forest plot holders of Koma Forest and the location of the concerned plots. Interestingly, no conflict or major disagreement was observed between the participants when discussing and painting the map. The results of the mental mapping exercises are depicted in the following figure.



Figure 2: Mental map of forest plots and users in Koma Forest

⁸ (12/11/2004: Hailemariam Gebre)

⁹ (5/11/2004: Komba: Forest walk with Abetu Mamo and Assrat Gebre Mariam)

This map is the outcome of several-days long mapping exercises. The horizontal dashed line stands for the national road from Bonga town to Misan Teferi, the house symbols show the location of Komba village (down right) and Agama village (top right). Black double lines indicate major paths and the red lines small streams. The forest boundaries are shown as single lines in black; the Amharic words indicate the full names of the respective household head that holds property rights of this plot. Although Figure 2 is a hand painted sketch which settings are not geographically precise in terms of proportions of the plots and run of the boundaries, it provides a coherent picture of forest use rights in Koma Forest. According to the map, the entire Koma Forest is divided into a mosaic of 54 forest plots. Plot boundaries, however, are not demarcated on the ground. Small paths, streams, or big trees function as boundary earmarks. This local pattern of plot allocation was thus neither visible to state administrators involved in the planning of the resettlement program nor for the in-migrants, who rather perceived the forest as non-allocated, non-occupied land under formal state administration.

The local norms and rules that define these forest use rights are sanctioned and enforced by traditional local authorities, namely the elders and the *iddir*, a locally organised insurance system with often formal structures. The elders have the primary role within the village community to control compliance with traditions and to preside over conflicts that go beyond the scope of nucleus families and remain outside state courts. “*The elders are respected people to negotiate quarrel.*” (30/11/2004: Komba *iddir* group discussion). The importance of the ‘elders’ as mediators and ‘traditional’ juridical bodies in Komba village is also corroborated in the outcome of the quantitative survey by Stellmacher (2007a) in which the open-answer question “If the villagers have an argument, who can solve it?” was posed to forest users in Yeyebitto. 58 % named the elders, 38 % the *iddir* and only 5% the local state authorities. The ‘elders’ also hold a definite teaching and advising function, in the way that they pass on local knowledge to the local forest resource appropriators and to monitor its compliance.

“*The elders teach us to maintain the trees and to handle it in a good manner.*”¹⁰

“*The elder give advice how to manage the trees, not to cut them on a very early stage.*”¹¹

“*The elders said we did not have to disturb the trees. For cardamom they told us to clear every unwanted material from the plant. They restricted to cut wanza trees [important for lumber, equipment and furniture making]. They did not pronounce penalties, but they give us warnings not to do again.*”¹²

¹⁰ 26/11/2004: Woldemariam Gebre

¹¹ 25/11/2004: Yerango Ambo Gedawo

¹² 26/11/2004: Abeto Mamo

The importance of the elders in the enforcement of local norms and rules is also illustrated in other literature dealing with natural resources management in Ethiopia (Pankhurst 2002; Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003)

3.3. Challenges of forest management after the resettlement

To understand the natural resource use and management arrangements in the area of resettlements' destination, also the socio-economic, institutional and environmental conditions in the area of origin have to be considered. As mentioned above, Kambata region is the most densely populated region in Ethiopia. There is no primary forest in Kambata and hence no local forest management regime. Land use rights are distributed by the local PA administration, and formally registered.

The differences in the environments between Kambata and Kaffa area determine different perspectives of the Kambata and the Kaffa people on the Koma Forest ecosystem even thirty years after the resettlement has taken place. Divergent perspectives concern the view on the availability of forest resources, the legitimacy of resource use as well as the legitimacy of legal orders, which regulate access to the forest plots.

On one hand side, Kambata settlers historically rely on state regulation of land. Resettlement made them fully depended on state administration to gain agricultural land and other resources in their new place of residence. However, given the forest use rights by the Kaffa people, the Kambata were excluded from access to forest resources that in their perception seem comparatively abundant anyway. *"We did not get any forest plots, because we were newcomers."*¹³ This situation provokes settlers to make use of forest resources outside the regulations and agreements initiated by their Kaffa neighbours.

Kaffa people, on the other hand, perceived the use of forest resources by Kambata as rule breaking, and ignorant of local rules. This was expressed in many statements by Kaffa people, such as *"Kambata are not allowed but [...] they go into the forest and use coffee, cororima [...], and tmesh [...]."*¹⁴ or *"The elderly say it is forbidden to take over other ones forest products, but Kambata do not know about our traditions."*¹⁵

The utilization of Koma forest is multi-purpose. The forest offers a great variety of different forest products that contribute in one way or another to the livelihood of the Kaffa and Kambata people. The use and extraction of different resources on one plot of forest traditionally underlie

¹³ 27/11/2004: Gebre Michael Haile

¹⁴ 25/11/2004: Alemayu Haile

¹⁵ 27/11/2004: Asrat Mamo

different local rules. Both, Kaffa and Kambata people were asked whether the use rights for the most important forest resources, namely honey, coffee, spices and firewood, follow exclusive or open access regimes. The following table compares their accumulated responses.

Use rights	Kaffa people	Kambata people
Right to hang and harvest beehives	EXCLUSIVE Private Share-cropping	EXCLUSIVE Private Share-cropping
Right to manage and harvest wild coffee	EXCLUSIVE Private Plot owner	OPEN ACCESS
Right to harvest cash crop spices ¹⁶	EXCLUSIVE Private Share-cropping	OPEN ACCESS
Right to collect firewood	OPEN ACCESS	OPEN ACCESS

Figure 3: Use rights for forest resources in Koma Forest

The answers given in regard to honey extraction, hence the right to hang beehives in a particular forest plot, are pretty similar. When it comes to forest coffee utilisation, though, Kaffa people declared the extraction of forest coffee to be an exclusive right of the owner of the particular forest plot who also cares for the wild coffee plants to ensure optimal growing conditions (Stellmacher, 2007)

Kaffa people state that the right to extract forest coffee is individually given but geographically limited to highly productive forest areas. New settlers predominantly expressed that forest coffee in Koma Forest can be used in an ‘open access’ manner - despite the local system of forest property rights. According this institutional setting, forest coffee utilisation on Koma Forest follows two strategies. The ‘exclusive’ one, in which people recognise the demarcations plots and just pick coffee on their own plots, and the ‘open’ one, following a ‘first come, first served’ system, when people do not know about or deny the ownership rights or when the forest area is not productive in terms of coffee.

Figure 3 illustrates that new settlers are aware of the existence of certain local regulations concerning use of different forest resources, but generally perceive them to be more ‘open access’ than original settlers do. In this sense, new settlers remain outsider’ as they do not hold

¹⁶ Namely Ethiopian cardamom (*Aframomum corrorima*), wild pepper (*Piper capente*), and buckthorn (*Rhamnus prinoides*).

local forest property rights by their own, and are less involved in, bound to and knowledgeable about the local institutional setting regarding forest resource use, management and conservation than Kaffa people. This situation is prone to conflict; especially with the background that households of all groups depend on natural resources from Koma Forest for their livelihood and that the Kaffa plot holders invest labour to keep their forest plots productive.

Theory suggests that existence of institutions not automatically imply their adherence by all actors involved, especially when the group of actors is heterogeneous. This seems to be the case with local forest property rights and access to forest resources in Koma Forest. The issue of disobedience of the local forest related institutions is, as a matter of fact, a delicate one, and took much effort and time to be investigated. A major question in this regard is what happens in the case of non-compliance. Do violators need to fear any penalty when they use the forest due to their understanding? How are the above depicted institutionalised authorities involved with the resolution of concerning conflicts between different forest resources appropriators? To elaborate on these issues, the perceptions of Kambata and Kaffa people are comparatively presented in the form of interviewees' statements. Firstly, the perception and experience of Kambata new settlers is characterized by the fact that the existing local property rights are not strictly linked to the ownership of forest plots and that the use of many resources by non-owners is rather uncontrollable and not strictly sanctioned by the owners. A Kambata peasant said:

*"I do not know the forest borders. [...] I get firewood from everywhere within Koma Forest, also coffee and spices. I do not have to ask for permission. Also for house construction materials I simply go into the forest. The owner does not complain. Also the forest owner thieves coffee somewhere else. Even the hanging of beehives is sometimes possible without permission, otherwise the owner is very serious. The serious people kick the thieves and take all the products from the thieves. But the forest is not controllable, that is why I do not want to have my own forest."*¹⁷

As a matter of fact, the issue of local forest property rights and 'thieving' of forest resources respectively, looks different from an 'forest owners' point of view. A Kaffa peasant stated the following: *"Others are not allowed to take coffee, to take firewood, to hang beehives, spices, fruits, medicinal plants. Four days in a week (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday), I keep my*

¹⁷ 28/11/2004: Anbese Ambo

*forest from thieves by patrolling. When I meet the thief, I will catch him. He begs me not to bring somewhere, then I allow him to go, but he has to give [the forest product] what he gathered.*¹⁸

4. Conclusion: moving people – creating legal pluralism and problems

Most apparently, in our case study, resettlement created legal pluralism problems. More than 20 years after resettlement, new settlers are not integrated in the forest resource use regulations applied by the original population because there was neither a local mechanism for incorporation nor a state regulated way to access forest plots which would have allowed the new settlers to use forest resources in a regulated way. This mismatch has caused latent conflict between the original population and the new settlers.

For the new settlers, the resettlement entailed the shift from an intense agro-based livelihood to a forest-based livelihood system, which they had no experience with and were not prepared for. Kaffa and Kambata people refer to different local law systems to regulate the use of natural resources. As new settlers have no regulated access option, they have to undermine the existing Kaffa NRM institutions. Holding no forest plots and extracting resources from diverse and changing locations within the forest, they tend to use the forest less sustainably whereby Kaffa plot holders have more incentives to use forest resources in a more sustainable way by, for example, planting forest coffee seedlings. For the Kaffa plot owners can not control their plots effectively, they are not able to sanction unregulated access by the Kambata in many cases. As a consequence, a parallel regime of open access established which is perceived as legitimate by Kambata. This aspect of legal pluralism was neglected by the resettlement policy as well as the aspect of livelihood change resulting from the resettlement scheme. This opens the question of what the policy makers had in mind when declaring montane forest land as suitable for lowland cereal producers. Did they expect the peasants to cut down the forest for cereal farming or did they think that new settlers would be adopting more forest-based livelihoods? However, what can be learnt from this case study is the importance to integrate issues of local NRM and livelihoods in both the region of origin as well as the region of destination in a long-term perspective/projection. Further, resettlement is no ultimate way out of resource problems or a full alternative to agricultural reforms and technical innovation; it can rather act as one supportive strategy if institutional and livelihood aspects in the concerned communities are sufficiently considered and mechanism for integration of new settlers developed and encouraged.

¹⁸ 26/11/2004: Abeto Mamo.

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