



Strengthening the resilience of institutions governing communal grazing land in Ethiopia

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Background: Ethiopia

- Over 80% of population in highlands
 - Strong population growth
- Mixed crop-livestock farming dominant
- Role of livestock:
 - Drought power for ploughing fields
 - Source of manure
 - Source of food (milk, meat)
 - Cash income (milk, meat)
- Role of communal grazing land
 - Provides large share of feed for livestock



Crop production

Ploughing



Threshing



Manuring



Household livelihood

Sell milk



Sell butter



Food for family



50-80% Feed

- Rights to access communal grazing land
 - Rules guiding management of communal grazing land
- } Affected by stresses and shocks



Challenges: political changes

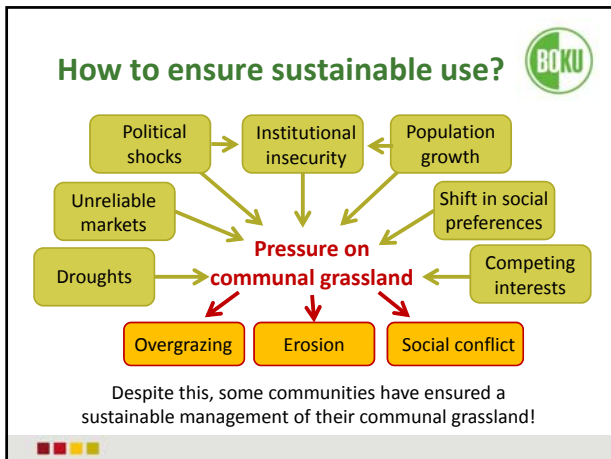
- Imperial regime until 1974
 - Land owned privately by aristocracy
- Marxist Derg-regime 1974-1990
 - All land owned by the state
 - Land redistributed to peasants
 - Formation of peasant associations
 - Civil war
- Market-oriented government since 1991
 - Land redistribution (to war returnees, etc.)
- led to insecurity regarding ownership and use rights of communal grasslands



Challenges

- Increasing population
 - Increasing demand for food
 - Increasing number of cattle
- Competition for land: grazing vs. cropping
- Pressure to privatize communal grazing land
- Unreliable markets
 - Self-sufficiency of rural households
- Changes in social preferences (gender issues)
- Recurrent droughts
 - e.g. 1973, 1984, 1988, 1991

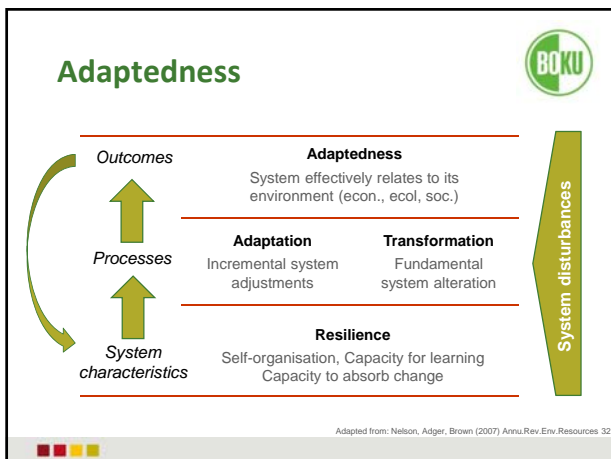




- ### Research question
- How did a community ensure the sustainable use of their communal grassland?
 - Study one peasant association
 - Take long-term approach: 40 years
 - Three very different political regimes
 - Land redistribution, resettlement, collective production
 - Civil war and market disruption
 - Insecurity of institutions governing land use

- ### Riding the dynamics
- How did the community manage to be responsive to the changes?
 - Unpredictable shocks, e.g.: droughts, civil unrest, lack of markets, changes in policies, resettlement,
 - Gradual changes, e.g.: demographic change, shift in preferences for land use, community composition
 - How did the institutions governing access and use of grassland evolve and adapt?
 - Analyse social learning and collective action

- ### Conceptual framework
- Adaptive Resilience
 - Adaptation in the context of change
 - Maintain the elements needed to renew after perturbation (e.g. memory, creativity, innovation, flexibility, diversity, self-organisation)
 - Adaptive co-management
 - Social learning: test and revise ecological knowledge
 - Adapt institutional arrangements to fit new framework
 - On-going process: dynamic and flexible



- ### Methods
- Literature review
 - Review political changes (resettlement, formation of peasant associations)
 - Review changes in laws governing land use
 - Case-study
 - One (or two?) communities with (currently) sustainable well managed communal grasslands
 - Data collection
 - Interviews with elders (men and women), officials
 - Focus group discussions
 - Reflection meeting: verification of preliminary results

Types of data to be collected



- Perception of changes (shocks, stresses)
 - Opportunity advance needs of community?
- Effect of external interventions
 - National programmes, int. development projects
- Decision-making in the peasant association
 - Institutions and power issues
 - Participation mechanism: Who? What decisions?
- Experimentation for grassland management
 - E.g. species composition, relation to cattle health



Expected outcomes



- Identify levers that the community used
 - To respond to changes, to reorganise
 - To perceive and use new opportunities
 - To experiment with new institutions
 - To adapt to new social goals
- Provide insights in levers that allow communities to become resilient
 - Climate change
 - Further demographic growth
 - Exogenous shocks in globalized world



Thank you for your attention!



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I welcome your feedback and suggestion, especially on:

- Conceptual framework
- Methods

