**Securing communities
for development:
community policing
in Ethiopia's Amhara
National Regional State**

Lisa Denney with Demelash Kassaye

October 2013

Report

Securing communities for development

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Key messages

- There is growing interest in community policing internationally as a way of involving communities in their security provision.

- Ethiopia's Amhara National Regional State offers a unique perspective on this, and its 'top-down' community policing model emerges from a particular political context shaped by its political structures and ideology, state-society relations and the existence of long-standing customary security and justice practices.

- In practice, community policing in Ethiopia serves multiple purposes – from sharing the state's burden of policing with customary actors, to reducing crime, involving communities in security provision and contributing to national development.

- Both positive and negative effects of this community policing model are apparent, with some improvements in perceptions of crime levels and police-community relations but concerns around the quality of justice on offer as well as contribution to an effective state surveillance system.

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

CSO	Civil society organisations
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
ICG	International Crisis Group
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
TPLF	Tirgay People's Liberation Front

Executive summary

Community policing is increasingly popular among communities, police departments, governments and donor agencies, with diverse practices existing across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Yet how much do we really know about what community policing looks like on the ground and its implications for peoples' access to security and justice? To grapple with these questions, ODI's 'Securing Communities' project aims to examine different models of community policing around the world, to understand the diversity of objectives, approaches and methods of community policing, and what this means for those who might aim to support these models. This first case study examines some key features of community policing in Amhara National Regional State in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopia case study reveals a unique model of community policing that has developed from a particular political context in which there is a history of violent political transition, a political structure characterised by ethnic federalism and a political ideology that straddles liberal capitalism and democracy, on the one hand, and state-led development and centralized control on the other. This sits alongside the existence of long-standing informal security and justice actors and weakened state-society relations since violent national elections in 2005 that have since led to the implementation of more authoritarian policies.

In this context, community policing was developed in 2005 and serves multiple objectives. The police see community policing as a way to reduce crime. Communities speak about community policing as an opportunity to take on policing responsibilities themselves. Both of these objectives are brought together in an overarching rhetoric of community policing as a way of 'mobilising for development' – whereby the community cooperate with the police to reduce crime, which otherwise inhibits development progress.

Community policing in Amhara has primarily involved the placement of Community Police Officers at the *kebele* level across the State. In addition, a number of structures have also been established in the community including Advisory Councils, Conflict Resolving Committees, family police and the use of shoe shiner's and other trade associations as police informants. In addition to these newly created structures, community policing also draws upon pre-existing customary actors, such as militia and elders. Conflict Resolving Committees, Community Police Officers and elders were reported as the most common first ports of call when community members experience a crime.

This reveals a unique model of community policing, although similarities exist with community policing models in China, Mozambique and the United Kingdom. The Chinese and Mozambican models of community policing share with Ethiopia an emphasis on social control as a driving objective; whereas the UK model emphasises community mobilisation in policing, which is also evident in the Amhara context. Interestingly, countries now developing community policing are able to draw on a 'smorgasbord' of diverse models, leading to hybrid approaches, such as the Amhara example.

Our analysis highlights that the model of community policing in Amhara has had both positive and negative effects. Community policing may have assisted in reducing crime (although figures are unreliable). It has clearly increased communities' access to policing services, although this is not always attended by increased access to justice. Community members also indicate that public perceptions of the police have improved since the introduction of community policing, in part due to individual Community Police Officers who have, with limited resources, innovated some impressive strategies to improve safety in their neighbourhoods. However, more broadly community policing has provided the state with more effective surveillance of the population – a potentially oppressive function in the current political context.

Ultimately, community policing in Amhara is anything but straightforward. It has been a process of attempting to demonstrate the benefits of newfound (and controversial) 'democracy' following years of dictatorship,

drawing on generations of customary dispute resolution, providing both improved access to security for communities and an enhanced surveillance capacity for the state. Those wanting to engage in community policing will have to navigate how (and whether it is possible) to isolate the aspects they are comfortable with from those they are not.

For external actors looking to engage in community policing, this case study reveals the importance of a close analysis in assessing potential merits, risks and entry points of programming. Factors found to be central in shaping the nature of community policing in the Amhara case include the structure of the political system, state-society relations, cultures dispute resolution and political ideology. An understanding of how these factors have shaped community policing can assist in separating out multiple objectives ascribed to community policing, and importantly, how these objectives compete with or complement each other. Understanding these objectives is critical to developing an awareness of the various interests involved and how these can be brought together, or where fracture points can be anticipated. It can also help to ensure programming takes account of whose agendas are being served (and whose are not). For external actors, working with the police is always risky in terms of doing harm, but this is heightened in a political context where there are concerns about authoritarianism. It is imperative to understand both the potentially positive and negative effects of community policing so that programming can strengthen the positive and be vigilant against the negative.

Ultimately, however, transformations in Ethiopian policing may require a broader decoupling of the police from politics, which is probably not possible in the current political context. As a result, development partners may have to work on the edges of community policing to improve local-level delivery, and monitor closely broader political shifts that will continue to shape the nature of community policing.

1 Introduction

Community policing in Ethiopia's Amhara National Regional State is a fascinating study in both the impressive and perverse effects of political power. On the one hand, the state has been incredibly effective at developing and disseminating a policing policy that has undeniably provided greater access to police services across a large and, in places, highly remote, territory. Every person we spoke to (see interview list in Annex 1) knew about community policing – a policy that was introduced to a population of approximately 19 million people over the last eight years. On the other hand, community policing has also provided the Ethiopian government with a tool to reach far into the communities and households of its citizens, constituting an effective, and potentially sinister, surveillance system. Ethiopia more broadly is still in the early stages of developing approaches to community policing and the Amhara experience is instructive in highlighting both the potential successes and pitfalls that other regions should be aware of.

ODI's Securing Communities Project

This is the first of a number of case studies to be conducted as part of ODI's 'Securing Communities' project, which aims to understand the different manifestations of community policing around the world, the factors that determine the unique shape that they take, and what this means for relevant national and international actors. Further case studies will be conducted throughout 2013 and 2014[1], informing a synthesis paper, to be published in 2014.

This first case study was preceded by a background paper (Denney and Jenkins 2013) which detailed the multiple definitions, objectives and models of community policing. It argued that in order to understand this diversity, it is critical to take account of a number of political features that shape the manner in which community policing develops. These features include:

• Histories of state formation;

• Evolution of the political system;

• State-society relations;

• State presence;

• Experience of conflict or emergency;

• Social cleavages and inequalities; and

• Cultures of protection and dispute resolution.

The analytical purpose of this case study is to understand the model of community policing that has developed in the Amhara Region, and importantly why it has developed in the manner it has and for what (and whose) purposes. The findings will assist in building an understanding of how community policing develops under certain political conditions and what the opportunities, merits and risks are of supporting community policing in such contexts.

Ethiopia offers interesting insights due to its unique community policing model, which it has developed largely independently, learning from interactions and trainings with Western police personnel but without donor leadership or large scale funding. In addition, there are interesting insights for the donor community about the issues raised in working with the police in a challenging political context, where the nature and extent of

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[1] All years and dates in this report are in European format. The Ethiopian calendar is eight years behind the European calendar.

democracy is contested, and the maintenance of intricate webs of political relationships across diverse regions is paramount.

This paper sets out the methods used in conducting the case study research, and then unpacks the political context that has shaped community policing. The fourth section details the development of community policing within the Ethiopian Federal and Amhara Regional Police and the various objectives that are ascribed to it by different actors. Sections six and seven, respectively, demonstrate the community policing structures that exist in Amhara, and the ways in which people actually use these structures in practice. Its effects to date and the ongoing challenges facing community policing are then discussed. Finally, the conclusion reinforces the importance of how the shape that community policing has taken in Amhara has been forged by the political context and how defining that context is for what is possible on the part of both domestic and international actors.

2 Methods

Amhara Regional State was selected as the focus of the Ethiopian case study on the basis of consultations with the Ethiopian Federal and Amhara Regional Police, Ethiopian researchers and DFID. Amhara, in the North of Ethiopia, is one of the country's nine Regional States, with a population of approximately 20 million (see Annex 2 for a map of Amhara Regional State). Amhara National Regional State was the seat of Imperial Ethiopia and, as a result, Amharic was the language of government until the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. As the historical home of government administration, Amhara considers itself more cosmopolitan and advanced than the rest of the country and is relatively strong within the government, often considered the 'deputy sheriff' to Tigray, the home of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (Pausewang 2009). Community policing is significantly more developed in Amhara and therefore offers experiences and lessons that will be helpful there, as well as in other parts of Ethiopia that are still developing community policing plans (Greene and Kebede 2012: 50; Baker 2013: 210). The Amhara Regional Police Commission is currently in the process of developing a second community policing strategy, and this case study was therefore particularly timely in being able to feed into that process. In addition, the Ethiopian Federal Police are also currently developing a nation-wide community policing strategy and it is hoped that the findings here will be useful in that process also.

This case study was undertaken by a researcher from ODI, working alongside a researcher from the University of Addis Ababa. Fieldwork was undertaken in Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar and Gondar for a period of two weeks in August - September 2013, during which time interviews were conducted with police officers in the Ethiopian Federal Police and Amhara Regional Police, as well as with academics, civil society, donors and justice sector representatives. In addition, six Community Police Offices were visited (four in and around Bahir Dar and two in Gondar). These were primarily in urban contexts, with one including a smaller town and one including a more rural setting. In each office, interviews were conducted with the Community Police Officer, 1-2 members of the Advisory Council, and 1-2 community members. In each community, a combination of males and females were interviewed.

While every effort was made to ensure the objectivity of the research, biases were unavoidable and have undoubtedly impacted on the findings. For instance, it is important to note that many interviews were organised by or through the Amhara Regional Police. This is likely to have had an impact on the shape that interviews took. To balance this, efforts were made to contact a number of civil society organisations and academics independently (see Annex 1). However, in the Ethiopian context it was not possible to conduct research on policing and gain access to police officers without official approval of the research by the Amhara National Regional State Police Commission.

Similarly, while interviews with community members were conducted in private and did not record the names of the individuals to ensure anonymity, these interviews were conducted in the Community Police Office, and in some instances the Community Police Officer called Advisory Board and community members to participate as interviewees. Although there was no sense of this being orchestrated (as people were asked at random as they passed by the Community Police Office), the influence of the interview setting cannot be discounted. Also important are the interviewees' perceptions of the interviewers – one Australian female who does not speak Amharic and one Ethiopian male from Addis Ababa University who was formerly a member of the Ethiopian Federal Police and conducted translation. While interview questions were open and aimed not to lead interviewees, the influence of the researchers themselves on the situation is undeniable. Such methodological challenges are inherent to work on sensitive issues such as policing, as well as in a political context such as Ethiopia. Where possible, the researchers have tried to mitigate the resulting biases but, of course, this is never entirely possible. We have also removed the names of all interviewees we spoke with and do not ascribe statements or opinions to particular interviewees. While this presents a challenge in term of research rigour, we felt it paramount to protect the privacy of our interviewees in discussing a sensitive issue such as policing in Ethiopia.

3 Context

As set out in the background paper to the 'Security Communities' project, understanding how and why community policing develops in the unique ways that it does, is explained at least in part by the very different contexts that the practice emerges in. These different contexts are shaped by specific processes of state formation, political ideology, histories of conflict, state presence, state-society relations, social cleavages and cultures of dispute resolution (Denney and Jenkins 2013: 24-31). In this section, the pertinent contextual features that explain why community policing looks the way it does in Ethiopia's Amhara Region are set out. This provides the background – which in the context of Ethiopia reaches very much into the foreground – to the development of community policing. In particular, Ethiopia's history of violent political transitions, ethnic diversity, which underscores extensive local customary dispute resolution practices, and commitment across multiple regimes (under various guises – socialist, authoritarian, etc.) to national development, makes for a highly unique political context that has resulted in a particular kind of community policing.

3.1 Histories of conflict and state formation

Ethiopia is one of only two African countries[2] to have resisted the imposition of colonial rule, defeating the Italians in 1896 and again in 1942. Ruled by a series of Emperors with Shakespearean tendencies for political assassinations, Emperor Haile Selassie came to power in 1930 and ruled until 1974 (he was previously Regent from 1916-1930) (Clapham 1988: 42). His Imperial Court operated a highly elitist government that oversaw expensive 'development' projects that did little to alleviate the massive inequality that characterised the country (Clapham 1988: 32). Having garnered significant opposition both domestically and amongst the international community, the Emperor was overthrown by the Derg military regime of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1974. Despite its socialist intentions to correct inequality and wastefulness, the Derg proved a particularly brutal regime, murdering political opponents as it struggled to maintain control over a country divided by ethno-separatist conflicts (Clapham 1988: 62). The role of the police under the Derg was to enforce the regime's rule and eliminate opposition. As a result the police gained a reputation for arbitrary arrests, detention and killings (Paul 1997: 140). As one interviewee explained, during the Derg government people hid and ran from the police fearing they would be captured to fight or be imprisoned. Another interviewee told how, as a young man growing up under the Derg, he assumed that those who were arrested by the police were killed.

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[2] The other is Liberia.

Meles Zenawi was the leader of one of the armed ethno-separatist groups fighting against the Derg, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which espoused a Marxist-Leninist ideology (ICG 2012: 3). By 1989, Meles also chaired the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), 'the umbrella-party for a number of ethno-nationalist fronts created to rule after it toppled the Derg' (ICG 2012: 3). The EPRDF overthrew the Derg in 1991, with Meles becoming President of the transitional government and, following a new constitution in 1994, Prime Minister of the new government in 1995. A Peace and Stabilisation Committee was set up during the transitional government and used militia (armed community volunteers, many of whom were remnants of the guerrilla groups) to fulfil policing duties while the police of the Derg regime were either dismissed or retrained. As the partly retrained and partly recruited new police force strengthened, it took over policing duties from the interim volunteers. Meles remains a central feature of Ethiopian politics, having ruled until his death in August 2012. It is his portrait, and not that of his successor, Haile Mariam Desalegn, that still adorns every government office and many public places.

3.2 Political structure: Ethnic federalism, social cleavages and cultures of dispute resolution

The EPRDF, continuing its role as an umbrella grouping for a number of ethnic-based political parties, has sought to resolve Ethiopia's national question through a policy of ethnic federalism, rather than a unitary state (Hagmann and Abbink 2011: 579). As a multi-ethnic state (with over 80 distinct ethnic groups), the country is divided into nine ethnic-based regional states (the degree to which they are, in fact, 'ethnically-based' is subject to controversy in some parts of the country, particularly in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) which brings together a number of ethnic groups) (ICG 2009). The 1994 constitution recognises the differences between the regional states and allows for a high degree of decentralised decision-making, although some interviewees noted that, in practice, major decisions are recognised to be taken in Addis (Greene and Kebede 2012: 21-25). Indeed, as a 2012 ICG report notes, in spite of ethnic federalism, the guerrilla history of the TPLF, as the locus of power within the EPRDF, mean that they continue to operate as a small group with a highly centralised and closed decision-making style (ICG 2012: 3). In theory, the constitution allows for ethnic aspirations extending to the right to self-determination – but this does not seem possible in practice, with the Ethiopian government retaining a tight hold on areas where separatist conflicts continue to simmer, such amongst Oromo and Somali populations (ICG 2009: 22). Ethnic federalism is, however, a bold and innovative strategy on the continent for attempting to achieve national unity. As Hagmann and Abbink note, it has:

> led to the official recognition of ethnic diversity as a politically relevant fact ... This return to ethnic politics was exceptional, as most if not all post-colonial African states rejected such an approach as "tribalist"
> (2011: 579).

Ethnic federalism is not without its critics, however. Significant minorities exist within each State that, in some cases, suffer marginalisation by the majority that ethnic federalism can mask and this constitutes one of the most pressing social cleavages within the country (Pankhurst 1999; ICG 2009: 22-25). Some national opposition movements within Ethiopia promote a vision of national unity as an alternative to the perceived divisiveness that ethnic federalism can promote. Many interviewees also spoke of frustration at the musical chairs that ensue when political appointments are made, given the necessity to include an appropriate balance of all ethnic groups, rather than simply appointing the most qualified candidate as an Ethiopian.

3.3 Political ideology: Revolutionary democracy

'Revolutionary democracy' was Meles' middle ground between adhering to the Marxist-Leninist principles of the TPLF and pressures to democractise (Hagmann and Abbink 2011: 582; ICG 2012: 3). In theory, it advocated capitalism and free markets but tempered by a highly state-led process which sees, for instance, land still nationally (and controversially) controlled. Development priorities are set out in five-year development plans, the latest being the Growth and Transformation Plan (ICG 2012: 3). The 'middle path' has proved difficult to tread in practice and has opened the EPRDF up to criticisms about the weak quality of democracy that it promotes. As Hagmann and Abbink note:

Ethiopian "democracy" is of a peculiar form: it continues to be strictly controlled by the EPRDF-led government and its old-time elite, and political alternation is not an aim. The tension between the ruling party's promises of democratisation and its reticence to live up to these principles has been a defining feature of post-1991 Ethiopia. (2011: 582).

While some have pointed to Ethiopia's constitution and administrative structures as being incredibly democratic (Henze 1998), the country's unique path of development has not been without its critics. Gebru Tareke, for instance, argues that '"Revolutionary democracy" has invariably been little more than the seizure by self-selected elites of what Lenin calls "the heights of power"' (2009: 54). Similarly, Richard Joseph refers to Ethiopia's 'democracy' as 'a stark demonstration of how the idea of democracy can be distorted and turned into a shield for what are at best semi-authoritarian practices' (1998: 55).

Yet the EPRDF has been successful in achieving considerable economic growth – which the government argues is the greater priority in terms of the interests and quality of life of the people (EPRDF 2005). According to official figures, average annual GDP growth between 1992 and 2000 was over 4% and double that figure after 2003 (Hagmann and Abbink 2011: 588). Development remains as much a buzzword in Ethiopia now as it was under Emperor Haile Selassie in the 1960s. The socialist aspect of revolutionary democracy is apparent in the oft-repeated dictum 'community mobilisation for development'. This community mobilisation is ensured by encouraging or requiring people's participation in administrative functions through the myriad of committees the EPRDF has set up – ranging from the Development Army, women's and youth's associations, community policing committees, health and agricultural committees – to name but a few. This kind of 'people power' is seen to be the key to promoting increased economic growth which will, in turn, lead to better quality of life for citizens. Of course, requiring citizens to participate in these committees also serves other purposes – such as sharing the government's administrative burden and providing the EPRDF with a mechanism to surveil its citizens by keeping them in a particular location where they have to regularly attend meetings. As critics within Ethiopia and the international community note, 'community mobilisation' has not led to greater political pluralism or protection of individual rights (ICG 2012; Tareke 2009: 54).

3.4 State-society relations: A democratic deficit?

The 2005 elections were a turning point in Ethiopian political discourse. The EPRDF, under pressure to demonstrate progress on democratisation, opened political space allowing opposition parties access to media outlets and to organise rallies (Aalen and Tronvoll 2008: 112). For the purposes of winning the election, four opposition parties joined together as the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) and were able to compete for all seats in the National Parliament, as well as in City Councils in other parts of the country, such as Addis Ababa and Amhara (Pausewang 2009: 552-4). On election day, to the surprise of the EPRDF, the CUD won 172 of 547 seats in the lower house and control of the Addis Ababa City Council (ICG 2012: 4). This is in spite of claims by international observers (rejected by the Ethiopian government) that extensive rigging took place and that the elections fell below international standards (ICG 2012: 4). The CUD, believing it had been robbed of a national electoral victory, organised street demonstrations to contest the results. These demonstrations turned violent and were perceived by the EPRDF to constitute an attempt to subvert the political process and overthrow the democratically elected government (Aalen and Tronvoll 2008: 112; ICG 2012: 4). The subsequent crack down, carried out primarily by the Ethiopian Federal Police, resulted in 193 deaths (including at least six police officers), 20,000 arrests and detention of over 70 opposition leaders, journalists and activists (ICG 2012: 4).

Some interviewees referred to the 2005 election as the 'shock to the system' that catalysed a range of new policies that have shifted Ethiopian politics towards more authoritarian tendencies (Aalen and Tronvoll 2008). Ostensibly in the interests of national development and security, the EPRDF introduced legislation that has curtailed political scrutiny or dissent (Aalen and Tronvoll 2008; Hagmann and Abbink 2011). This includes the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation that affords the government significantly greater oversight of civil society organisations (CSOs) and requires that CSOs operating in Ethiopia receive no more than 10 per cent of their funding from external sources. Given the number of CSOs that were dependent on donor funding, this has effectively shut down large portions of civil society, particularly those working in politically sensitive areas, such as security and justice (Greene and Kebede 2012: 76). Indeed, Hagmann and Abbink note:

In 2009 Ethiopia was home to almost 4000 local and international NGOs. Since anti-NGO legislation, which came into full force in 2010, their number is seriously reduced and they mostly had to concentrate on strict "development" of humanitarian aid, i.e. non-political service delivery. (2011: 584).

Part of the motivation for the legislation is said to lie in the EPRDF's belief that Western donor funding supported government critics and opposition parties (Hagmann and Abbink 2011: 584). The logic of the new CSO approach, explained by interviewees, is that if organisations are genuinely representative of citizen views, then they should be financially sustained by citizen contributions and not require foreign support in matters of domestic development.

Also in 2009, the EPRDF introduced anti-terrorism legislation which treats criticism of the government as a security threat (through incitement to terrorism), punishable by imprisonment or death. The law was implemented in 2010 and by mid-2012, 24 journalists and political opponents had been arrested on suspicion of inciting terror, and those convicted receiving sentences ranging from 8 years to life imprisonment (Human Rights Watch 2012; Maasho 2013). While some of those convicted may pose a genuine threat, such legislative measures have also had the effect of significantly limiting dissenting voices in Ethiopia politics.

Another policy introduced in 2010 that some interviewees perceive to be part of the EPRDF reaction to the 2005 elections is the 1:5 organisational principle, which can be found throughout government administration (including in community policing) in Ethiopia. The ratio denotes how households will be represented up in the multitudinous citizen committees that the government has established. Every five households is represented by one individual at the local committee level, and similarly, every committee will be represented by a number of its members at the next highest committee using the 1:5 ratio, and so on up the hierarchy. In practice, 1:5 is shorthand, and the ratio is often more flexible – between 1:5 - 1:15. This organisational principle is a useful way of ensuring citizen participation and representation in administrative processes, while simultaneously providing the government with grassroots reporting structures that can be utilised as a surveillance system. Following the introduction of such legislation and policies, in 2010, the EPRDF claims to have won 99.6 per cent of the vote, with 545 of 547 parliamentary seats (Hagmann and Abbink 2011: 589; Baker 2013: 202).

The death of Prime Minister Meles in August 2012 was a significant political moment but the ramifications are not yet entirely clear. The new Prime Minister, Haile Mariam Desalegn, is reportedly less bound by the leftist ideology that characterises the TPFL and more open to capitalism (The Economist 2013). However, he is widely perceived to have little room to manoeuvre within the EPRDF (The Economist 2013). For the foreseeable future therefore, predictions are that the EPRDF will continue to govern by Meles' fading blueprints and that alternative visions either do not yet exist, or do not yet have broad party support to replace Meles' legacy (ICG 2012; The Economist 2013).

The nature of state-society relations in Ethiopia since 2005 has engendered a survivalist mentality within the EPRDF and has meant that laws and policies introduced since then have opened the government up to greater criticisms of authoritarianism and social control. Yet despite this, those interviewed in Addis Ababa and Amhara took a long-term view of governance. People interviewed compared the EPRDF with the past regimes of the Derg and the Imperial Palace and rarely with alternative visions of what governance could look like. While there is certainly discontent within the current system, interviewees also indicated that democratic transition is a long term process and that the country is significantly better off under the current government than it was under previous regimes.

3.5 Policing structures and cultures of dispute resolution

Formal policing in Ethiopia adheres to the broader national structures of ethnic federalism. As a result, there is both a Federal Police and Regional Police for each of the nine National Regional States. The Ethiopian Federal Police are responsible for policing in the federally-administered cities of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. They also provide support to the Regional States. In the case of the more 'developed' regions (Amhara, Harare, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region and Tigray) this is through support and influence over the Regional Security and Administration Offices (Greene and Kebede 2012: 25). In the case of the four 'developing' regions (Afar, Benishangul-Gamuz, Gambella and Somali region) the Federal Police operate more extensively and with little accountability to the Regional Governments (Greene and Kebede 2012: 25).

Security and justice in Ethiopia, however, are characterised by long standing pluralism, so that the state police are just one of a number of dispute resolution mechanisms in the country. Alongside the Federal and Regional Police, then, are also militia and elders. Militia are present in every Regional State and substantially outnumber the Regional Police. They are generally armed volunteers, some of whom were a part of the ethno-nationalist guerrilla groups fighting against the Derg. They are responsible for policing duties such as community patrols and manning checkpoints at the entrance to towns (Baker, forthcoming). Militia are an important complement to the policing resources – for instance in Amhara there are approximately 128,000 militia as compared with 14,000 Regional Police. However, a number of interviewees indicated that the militia, more than the police, are seen to be representatives of the EPRDF and so while they are much more accessible than the police as a source of protection and safety, they are also viewed with some degree of suspicion.

Elders are the most utilised dispute resolution mechanism in Ethiopia and use locally specific customary principles of justice to resolve matters in their communities. These matters range from minor issues such as insults between individuals, to clan-level conflicts that can result in cattle raiding and revenge killing (Baker, forthcoming). So revered and popular are the elders as providers of dispute resolution services that they are usually the first point of call for community members reporting crimes, and even Community Police Officers regularly refer minor crimes to the elders for their resolution. Civil society representatives interviewed spoke about how in many communities a dispute is not considered truly resolved until it has been dealt with by the elders (see also Adebo and Tsadik 2008).

3.6 Police-community relations

Understanding the current state of relations between the police and the communities they serve in Ethiopia requires the ability to accept a certain amount of 'double speak' (Epstein 2010). No cut and dry picture emerged from interviews, or the limited literature on policing in Ethiopia and views expressed even within a single interview, let alone between them, seemed at times contradictory. It is not the case, therefore, that people spoke about the police in the derisory terms often apparent in fragile state contexts, for instance, bemoaning unprofessionalism, lack of discipline, corruption, abuse of power, and so on. The picture was significantly more nuanced.

The political environment set out above helps to provide some context to police-community relations. It is clear that the harrowing experience of policing under the Derg and surrounding the 2005 elections have been instrumental in shaping perceptions of the police. Some community members and most civil society representatives interviewed spoke about fear of the police and how any interaction with the police was generally seen to be a negative thing, as conventionally people only deal with police when something has gone wrong. A civil society interviewee explained how communities used to (and, at times, still do) hide criminals from the police so that they can deal with them through customary dispute resolution, rather than get the police involved. However, alongside this more negative view, many more community members interviewed expressed a seemingly genuine trust in and respect for the police (at least at the local level) as well. Indeed, in some instances a single interviewee would express both fear of and trust in the police. Corrupt or unethical behaviour was almost never mentioned without direct questioning, and even then, people made the point that while there were of course corrupt officers (particularly within the traffic police) this was not representative of the police as a whole. Furthermore, community members distinguished between the police they knew personally (their Community Police Officer and perhaps some officers from the local police station), who they generally perceived to be good, and the police as an institution writ large, which they generally held in lower esteem. This suggests that the challenge for policing in Ethiopia might be as much about transforming the national image of policing as it is about changing the behaviour of individual officers at the local level. It is in the context of this complex police-community relationship that community policing has been introduced.

4 Development of community policing

Community policing in Ethiopia was announced officially as a policy at the national level in 2005 but development of the approach had been ongoing for a number of years previously. In 1997 members of the Ethiopian Federal Police undertook community policing training provided by British trainers in Addis Ababa. Following this, some senior officers travelled to Europe to undertake further training and returned to sensitise colleagues about the community policing approach. This sparked an interest within the Federal Police and key individuals began to read more about the approach and to articulate how it could be shaped to help address the challenges faced in the Ethiopian context. It is important to note that the development and implementation of community policing was happening within the context of the dramatic 2005 elections, as well as increasing crime rates, or perception of crime, at least in Addis Ababa (no reliable crime statistics were available to confirm this but was repeated by police and CSO interviewees).

Implemented as part of broader police reforms since 2006, community policing has emerged in a surprisingly top-down manner for a practice that is, according to some, meant to be a bottom-up approach of monitoring police behaviour (Greene and Kebede 2012: 49; Wisler and Onwudiwe 2009). Police and politicians essentially announced to communities that community policing would be the new policing approach. This introduction led to the inclusion of community policing in the training curriculum at the Ethiopian Police University College. Pilot community policing programmes were also carried out in Addis Ababa and the four advanced regional states (Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's) (Greene and Kebede 2012: 49). In Amhara, a regional community policing strategy was developed by the Amhara National Regional Police Commission in 2005 and, based on this, community sensitisation was conducted about the importance of passing information onto police. Community policing training was integrated into Amhara Regional Police training (although this appeared to involve one lecture on community policing for officers). In 2010 this training was to be extended with the support of a Canadian police consultant who assisted the Amhara Police Commission in developing a new curriculum but it is unclear whether this curriculum has in fact been implemented. The placing of Community Police Officers in communities, however, was not undertaken until more recently – exact dates were not provided but it seems from around 2008, with some communities only receiving Community Police Officers in the last year or two. These were initially pilots established in select communities and only later rolled out throughout the State. An internal evaluation of this strategy by the Amhara Police Commission in 2010 has informed the development of a second regional community policing strategy, a draft of which is currently before the Regional Parliament.

While the development of community policing appears to have been a rapid and top-down process, its speed and uptake are also due to a degree of continuity with pre-existing cultures that mean that community policing is not an entirely new philosophy. In the Federal Police, police officers spoke about the importance of community consultation in policing that had existed since the EPRDF came to power. One police officer told a story about how earlier in his career he had assigned junior officers in his station to meet with communities members in order to 'mobilise them for crime prevention' long before he had known what community policing was. Rather, he saw this as an important part of the EPRDF's culture of community mobilisation. Similarly, in Amhara Regional State, the Regional Police spoke of the nonchalance of rural communities when they were introduced to the concept of community policing, responding that this did not seem to be anything particularly new and that their ancestors had been resolving disputes at the community level for generations. Thus, while community policing may have required the establishment of various committees, at least to some extent, this was seen to be merely the formalisation of existing practices of both traditional dispute resolution, as well as a political philosophy that encourages community participation in administrative functions (see also Baker, forthcoming).

5 What are its (various) objectives?

One of the objectives that community policing serves in Ethiopia is to share the state's administrative burden of policing with communities themselves. Bruce Baker points out that 'it is elders and traditional leaders who provide most of the protection from crime and disorder, and the resolution of it through mediation and compensation when it occurs', and that community policing thus largely formalises informal dispute resolution practices that have existed for generations (Baker, forthcoming; Baker 2013). Community policing is thus, at least in part, about the state sharing its policing responsibilities because it has insufficient resources to provide nationwide police coverage itself. Indeed, part of the reason that community policing has been so quickly accepted by communities in Amhara is due to its resonance with, and even utilisation of, customary dispute resolution practices. Yet this is not the objective that police or communities themselves ascribe to community policing. While it may explain why community policing was an attractive policy for the government, additional objectives were listed by police, Community Police Officers and community members that also seem important in understanding the nature of community policing in this context, given that it is these people who shape and operationalise community policing and the objectives it serves at the local level. Three objectives were routinely mentioned in interviews and are discussed below.

5.1 Community policing as citizen participation in policing

Some community members interviewed indicated that the objective of community policing was to involve citizens in policing duties so that they take more responsibility for safety and security in their neighbourhoods. Community members interviewed referred to community policing as being about the ability to resolve their own disputes without needing to rely on the police and their obligation to contribute to policing functions. In this sense, they saw community policing, at least in part, as not requiring the formal policing of the state but being able to get by with their own community level policing processes (Baker 2013). A very small number of interviewees (one community member and civil society representatives) made reference to the community holding the police accountable for their behaviour.

5.2 Community policing as crime prevention

In contrast, most police interviewed either explicitly spoke of community policing as a way to reduce crime, or implicitly described the effects of community policing in this way. For instance, two police officers spoke about how before community policing was introduced citizens rarely provided information to the police and this limited their ability to respond to or prevent criminal behaviour. These officers saw community policing as a way of rectifying this reporting and information deficit so that the police could more effectively reduce crime. This was commonly said to involve making citizens 'crime haters'. Several community members interviewed also spoke of how important it is to pass information about any suspicious behaviour or criminal acts onto the police so that they can protect the community. In this way, the community have bought into, or at least tacitly accepted, the vision of community policing as being about increasing information flows from the community to the police in order to reduce or prevent crime. Community acceptance of this approach is likely due, in part, to the fact that community policing has been a top-down process, rather than being driven by community demand.

While these objectives may be different, they are ingeniously brought together within the broader purpose of community policing that more senior police officers and some Community Police Officers and Advisory Council representatives spoke of – that is, community policing as contributing to Ethiopia's national development. Tensions between competing objectives of community policing are thus largely avoided by

uniting them in a broader discourse that is already monolithic in Ethiopian society and with which no one can really disagree.

5.3 Community policing as development

In one Community Police Office (these are located at the *kebele* level, described below) visited, a sign hung behind the desk reading 'Community Policing is Development'. This was the local Advisory Council's agreed understanding of the purpose of community policing and adheres with the broader rhetoric in the upper echelons of the Ethiopian Federal and Amhara Regional Police. At this level, community policing is integrated into broader government plans that focus on economic growth and how this drives development and improved quality of life for citizens. The logic (often cited by interviewees) is that crime inhibits development and that community policing will, by reducing crime, help to achieve development. To reduce crime, communities take responsibility for resolving minor crimes and disputes (which they have in fact done for generations through customary dispute resolution) and provide information to the police to facilitate their investigations of more serious matters. In this way, the community and the police, in the words of one community member interviewed, 'should work together for development.'

This is a much broader purpose than most of the literature would ascribe to community policing (Ferreira 1996). Yet in some ways, this argument perhaps represents the ultimate articulation of the security-development nexus. That is, helping the police to do their job better will help to achieve broader developmental objectives. This logic makes policing developmental – which is something that the donor community working on security and justice issues frequently try to demonstrate to justify their work in these sectors (OECD INCAF 2009: 6). The result is perhaps a surprising complementarity with the international development community's thinking on the rationale of security and justice work, albeit expressed in a way that suggests a stronger focus on crime reduction than accountability. Of course, while these are the stated objectives of community policing, whether they are in fact achieved in practice is an open question and is discussed in section eight of this paper.
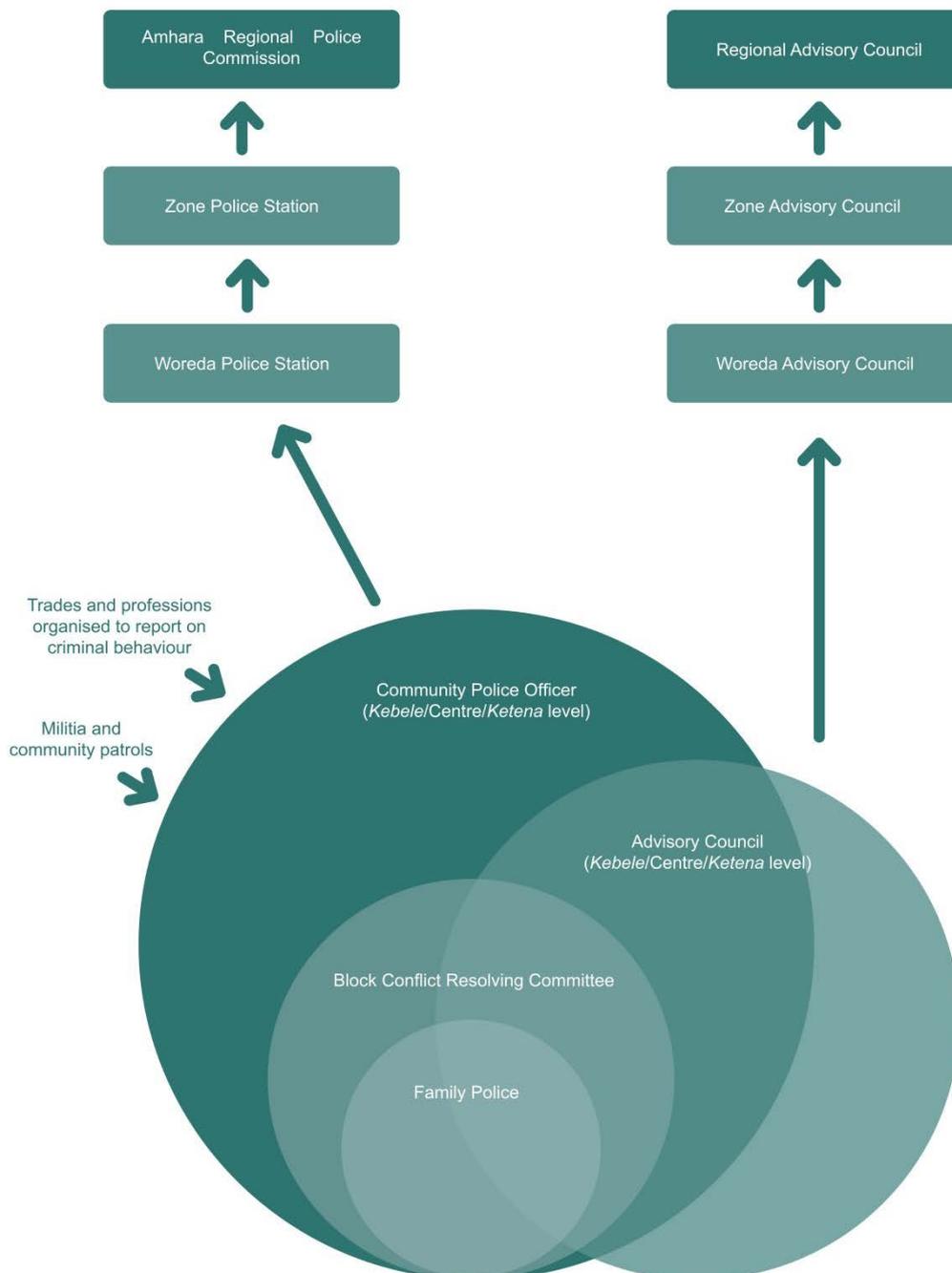
6 What does community policing look like/entail?

Understanding the community policing structures in place in Amhara depends upon an understanding of the constantly shifting constellation of government-sanctioned committees and administrative zones. Indeed, in some urban communities, interviewees seemed themselves confused about the various committees and the levels at which they operated. While there is a surprisingly consistent general structure within Amhara, different communities may have a greater number of committees, the functions of the committees may be shared differently and the administrative level at which the committees sit may vary (see Table 1 for a list of the various administrative levels reported in Amhara's community policing structure). What is sketched out below is the generally accepted structure of community policing apparent in the six communities visited and reported as the regional model by police stations in Bahir Dar and Gondar and the Amhara Regional Police Commission. In section seven, the manner in which these formally endorsed structures are in fact utilised will be examined. These structures are not dissimilar to community policing structures being piloted in Addis Ababa, although they are much more entrenched and widespread in Amhara.

Table 1: Administrative Zones in Amhara Regional State

Administrative zones throughout the State	Additional administrative zones used in some communities
Regional State **Zone:** (11 zones) *Woreda*: (140 *woredas*) *Kebele*: (approx. 3,429 *kebele*s): In rural areas, usually the lowest administrative level but in urban areas with higher population density, can be further broken into centres, *ketenas* and blocks.	**Centre:** made up of 2-4 *ketenas* *Ketena*: made up of several blocks **Block:** made up of approximately 30-50 households

Figure 1: Community policing structures in Amhara

Amhara Regional Police Commission

Regional Advisory Council

Zone Police Station

Zone Advisory Council

Woreda Police Station

Woreda Advisory Council

Trades and professions organised to report on criminal behaviour

Militia and community patrols

Community Police Officer (*Kebele*/Centre/*Ketena* level)

Advisory Council (*Kebele*/Centre/*Ketena* level)

Block Conflict Resolving Committee

Family Police

6.1 Family Police

Community policing in Amhara begins at the household level, with the family police. One family member is elected (though in many cases, it is automatically the father) to take responsibility for conflict resolution within the family and report any criminal or delinquent behaviour up the community policing chain. The family police representative must fill out a form with the names and contact details of all members of the household. While there is, in principle, a formal family police structure (with the father usually acting as the chair and the mother as the secretary) most community members reported that this worked more informally in practice, with the family having ad hoc discussions about family issues as and when necessary, and that minutes were not taken. Community Police Officers do, however, undertake household visits to ask for reports from the family police representative and whether there is any need for police assistance. This structure means that the police, at least in theory, have an 'in' to every household, which has serious ramifications for notions of privacy in the home.

6.2 Conflict Resolving Committee

The next level of community policing is at the block level (only one community visited did not use the block as an administrative unit and these appear to play less of a role in rural areas, although can still be utilised there). A block is made up of approximately 50 households with 5 representatives (using the 5:50 ratio) forming the block committee, usually referred to as the Conflict Resolving Committee. These committees are responsible for maintaining order within their immediate neighbourhoods and hold meetings when necessary, including over traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremonies[3], to discuss issues of local crime, disorder, or disputes and where possible resolve them through customary means. Block committees report to the Community Police Officer regarding any matters they cannot resolve or need assistance with.

6.3 Advisory Council

The next layer of community policing is the Advisory Council, which can be found at a number of levels – the *kebele* (this is generally the lowest administrative level in Ethiopia and is made up of a number of blocks), the centre (some larger *kebeles*, particularly in urban areas, are divided into centres, with up to 4 centres within a *kebele*), or the *ketena* (in urban areas some centres are further divided into *ketenas*, made up of several blocks). The Advisory Council is an 'elected'[4] body of 8-15 individuals who are generally respected members of the community (although a small number of interviewees – including community members, academics and civil society representatives – suggested that Advisory Council members are usually either EPRDF members or supporters and that known opposition party supporters are not allowed to participate). They hold regular meetings (ranging from weekly to monthly) to discuss issues of crime or conflict in the community, develop a plan to deal with crime and, importantly, to fundraise for the local Community Police Office. In all communities visited, the Advisory Council was responsible for raising funds to build and furnish the Community Police Office and, in some cases, accommodation for the Community Police Officer (usually a single room attached to the office). Some cases are resolved through the Advisory Council, but their primary function is more administrative, enabling the Community Police Office and the structures that fall under it to operate.

6.4 Community Police Officer

The Amhara Regional Police Commission claim to have dedicated Community Police Officers in 94.65 per cent of the State's 3,429 *kebeles*. These are very junior officers not recruited from the regular police, but are new recruits generally with a high school diploma, plus eight months of police training, including just one week dedicated to community policing (Greene and Kebede 2012: 50). The Community Police Officer carries out a vast array of duties, seemingly dependent on their own initiative, to a large degree. They are responsible for raising awareness about crime issues, liaising with the Advisory Council (they attend the meetings and keep minutes), the Conflict Resolving Committees and the Family Police, as well as any other committees that exist

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[3] Local coffee is prepared by young women who roast, grind and brew the beans for members of the community, who usually drink coffee three times a day (morning, noon and evening). Coffee ceremonies involve drinking three cups of coffee in a sitting (the third is said to bestow a blessing) and connect the generations through the sharing of one pot. Coffee ceremonies are considered important social events, bringing people together to discuss issues of local importance.

[4] All interviewees described the Council as elected, however there is not a formal vote, rather the community put forward names and people are accepted as members of the Advisory Committee on a no objection basis.

in the community (Greene and Kebede 2012: 51). They are also responsible for arranging the schedule of the militia and community volunteer patrols. Community members regularly report crimes or disputes to the Community Police Officer, who then helps them decide whether to pursue the matter through customary or government law (if it is a serious crime then the matter, at least in theory, immediately goes through government law) and then calls the elders or police station accordingly.

Community Police Officers are also responsible for coordinating a number of other community policing practices that do not fall immediately within the hierarchy of committees set out above. This includes, for instance, militia and community patrols (discussed below), as well as a myriad of other committees that individual Community Police Officers innovate. For instance, one common initiative in the Community Police Offices visited was for the Community Police Officer to organise shoe shiners to provide information on a regular basis about crimes, disputes or suspicious behaviour. Various other trades and professions – usually those who work in public areas – are also organised in such a way. This includes prostitutes, sheep and cattle sellers and 'weighers' (those who weigh produce in the marketplace). These groups are mobilised by the Community Police Officer to watch out for and report on crimes or potential crimes.

6.5 Militia and Community Patrols

While militia have existed in Amhara, as in other regions of Ethiopia, prior to the introduction of community policing, their functions have been incorporated within the community policing structure. Militia play a kind of armed neighbourhood watch function and will bring any suspected criminals to the Community Police Office or police station. Under Amhara's community policing structures, the militia are organised by the Community Police Officer alongside community volunteer patrols and 1-3 paid security guards to conduct night patrols within the community. Paid security guards can be both armed or unarmed and are funded by community contributions. Community patrollers are unarmed and wear high visibility vests and participate on a scheduled basis. Community patrols usually operate up until midnight, with paid patrollers and militia conducting patrols throughout the night.

7 How are community policing structures used in practice?

While the community policing structure is highly hierarchical and suggests that crimes or disputes are dealt with initially at the lowest level and, if unresolved, work their way up the chain, in practice, people engage with the community policing structure through a variety of entry points. There is not one agreed reporting mechanism or linear chain that cases follow, but rather an assortment of possible entry points that people resort to depending on their personal relationships with those involved, the severity of the crime/dispute and convenience. In addition, cases often do not work through the entire community policing system but rather can be resolved at any point along the chain (indeed, one of the purposes of community policing in Amhara is to resolve crimes and disputes before they reach the police or courts). In practice, community policing more accurately follows the chain depicted in diagram 2 below.

Interviewees variously responded that they would report crimes or disputes in the first instance to the Conflict Resolving Committee, the Advisory Council, the Community Police Officer, the Police Station or to elders. All of these fall along the 'community policing chain' but, as above, crimes and disputes can enter into this chain and be resolved at any point. It is important to note that only the family police, Conflict Resolving Committee, Advisory Council and Community Police Officer are 'new', having been introduced as part of the Amhara Regional State's Community Policing Strategy in 2005 (they may have taken some time to actually get going,

and a number of communities visited had only had a Community Police Officer for the last two years). Elders and police stations pre-date these structures and so while they are now a part of the community policing structure, they have also existed previously as entry points for reporting crimes and disputes and continue to be utilised. Alongside these structures, a number of female interviewees indicated that they would first report a crime of a sexual nature to a non-government organisation, such as a HIV/AIDS organisation, both to gain medical support and to avoid stigmatisation within the community. A very small number of interviewees also mentioned community associations such as *Idir*[5] and *Mehaber*[6] as playing conflict resolution functions for their members. Interestingly, while community members listed the family police as a community policing structure, when asked about how this operated in practice, responses suggested that it either exists in name only, or operates very informally – with father's having discussions as and when necessary with their children about their behaviour. Nonetheless, interviewees reported that Community Police Officers do collect forms from the 'family police' listing all members of the household and conduct home visits to offer assistance and monitor the household situation.

Figure 2: Entry points for dispute resolution/crime reporting in Amhara (in practice)

Of these potential entry points, the most frequently cited as the first instance for reporting include the Conflict Resolving Committee, the Community Police Officer, elders and (in more serious cases only) the Police Station. Interviewees indicated that most crimes or disputes were resolved by the Conflict Resolving Committee, the Community Police Officer or the elders (in practice, there is often a conflation of these structures with elders regularly members of the Conflict Resolving Committees and the Advisory Council). Few matters seemed to be referred to the police station and even fewer to court (in a number of communities, neither the community members nor the Community Police Officer could remember a single case going to court). This means that the majority of disputes and crimes are resolved through customary means, based on prevailing social norms about what is fair and appropriate. Such customary resolution is conducted by elders, Conflict Resolving Committees and possibly the Community Police Officer in relation to minor crimes, rather than by Police Stations and courts using government law (see also Greene and Kebede 2012: 10). It also means that the reporting structures that existed prior to the introduction of community policing (elders and police stations) continue to be utilised and that only two of the new structures (Conflict Resolving Committees and Community Police Officers) seem to have gained traction in communities.

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[5] An association where members make financial contributions to the association who then cover funeral costs for families. In some communities, Idirs have evolved to play more of a savings and loan function.

[6] A religious association of Orthodox Christians that sets ethical standards of conduct that members must adhere to.

In practice then, community policing in Amhara provides an array of crime/dispute reporting options, some of which are new and have been brought in as part of the community policing strategy, and others that have existed previously and are only now integrated into community policing structures. While many matters are resolved (as they have been for many years) through elders and customary law, others are now resolved through the Conflict Resolving Committees or the Community Police Officer (though likely still using customary law). In relation to the Conflict Resolving Committees, this is no doubt at least in part due to the fact that such dispute resolution practices draw on longer traditions in Amharic culture. In relation to the Community Police Officer, reporting does seem to suggest some degree of citizen trust in the officers, as well as the importance of improved access to policing that Community Police Offices at the *kebele*/centre/*ketena* level affords. The impact of the introduction of these community policing structures in Amhara is discussed below.

8 What is the effect of the community policing practice?

Determining the effects of community policing in Amhara is difficult, in part because it is still a relatively new phenomenon, with Community Police Officers having only been in posts for 1-5 years – a short and uneven timeframe in which to achieve changes in safety and security. In addition, there has been no rigorous evaluation of its impacts (Greene and Kebede 2012: 51). As a result, even where changes in the crime rate, conviction rate, public perceptions and so on are claimed to be apparent, it is difficult to attribute this to community policing. With these constraints in mind, achievements against a number of the key objectives of community policing are set out here, demonstrating some progress, as well as some potential concerns.

8.1 Has community policing reduced crime?

All police respondents and virtually all community member respondents claimed that since community policing has been introduced, incidence of crime in the community have decreased. This is supported by statistics obtained from the Office of Crime Statistics in Amhara Regional State, which show that the total number of reported crimes decreased from 73,384 in 2008 to 51,368 in 2013 (the Ethiopian calendar year ended the week after fieldwork was conducted, so this figure will have increased only very slightly). The reliability of these statistics is, however, open to question. At the Community Police Office and even police station level, officers were consistently asked about reductions in crime and then for supporting evidence to demonstrate their claims. On a number of occasions this supporting evidence was not available and there was significant confusion about where numbers claimed emerged from. Given that the Crime Statistics at the Regional State level are simply aggregates of numbers reported from police stations and, before that, Community Police Offices, the total figures may not be reliable.

Setting aside issues of reliability, it is also somewhat surprising that crime rates have decreased so dramatically so quickly. Usually, one would expect to see a potential rise in the official crime rate following the introduction of community policing as citizens feel more comfortable reporting to the police. In the Amhara Crime Statistics, while there was a slight increase in the official crime rate from 2009 to 2010, every other year since 2008 has seen reductions in crime. This might be explained by the fact that community policing in Amhara encourages resolution of disputes or crimes at the community level prior to reporting to a Community Police Officer (and indeed, as discussed above, it is these customary resolution mechanisms either by elders or Conflict Resolving Committees that seem to be the most popular first choice for crime/dispute reporting). As a result, there is a possibility that a number of crimes that would otherwise have been reported to the police, were in fact dealt with through alternative 'pre-police' community policing mechanisms and explain the reduction in reported crimes.

8.2 Has community policing made people feel safer?

Regardless of whether the official crime rate and actual experiences of crime have in fact decreased, there appears to be a genuine perception that this is the case, among both police officers and community members. Numerous interviewees reported that they now felt safer walking at night, and that if they heard a gunshot they would now run to see what was happening rather than running away, because they know that the Community Police Officer would also be running to the scene. Community members consistently reported that the presence of a Community Police Officer in their immediate vicinity was an important development and had improved their quality of life. This sense of increased personal safety was also supported by civil society and academics interviewed, although some indicated that this is true only insofar as individuals do not openly oppose government policy.

8.3 Has community policing improved access to security and justice?

The emphasis in interviews on the importance of policing presence at the local level reveals that the establishment of Community Police Offices has improved access to police services in Amhara. People frequently commented in interview that the local Community Police Office was a welcome development, meaning that they no longer have to walk for up to a day to reach a police station to report an incident, or worry about not being able to rely upon timely response from police. However, less certain is whether this improved access to police services equates to improved access to justice.

Community policing in Amhara is partly about helping communities to resolve crimes and disputes before reaching the police and the courts. In the context of Amhara, this means that the justice being provided is one built on customary norms about what is fair and acceptable. There is no denying that elders in Amhara, and Ethiopia more broadly, have generations of experience in maintaining community order and resolving often lethal disputes, such as revenge killings[7]. Yet there are also important questions about how vulnerable groups, such women and girls and ethnic minorities, fare under customary justice. One female community member interviewed spoke of how elders are not interested in listening to women, and young women interviewed did not mention elders as a popular avenue for reporting crimes they have experienced. As a result, while customary justice provides a useful mechanism for resolving some matters, this does not imply that the state justice system is irrelevant. Rather, ensuring that multiple justice avenues are available to community members, particularly the vulnerable, is important in promoting the ability to forum shop between them in order to achieve the best justice outcome possible.

In relation to the formal justice system, almost no interviewees (including Community Police Officers) could name a single case that went to court. When asked about the justice system, many community members expressed that the courts were the most corrupt part of that state. It was felt that there are unnecessary delays and that sentences are often too lenient and so do not deter crime. Generally speaking, people did not look to the courts as an accessible or viable avenue for achieving justice. While interviews with justice sector officials reveal that they are sensitised to community policing, and court staff and prosecutors now have monthly meetings with the police and corrections staff to coordinate through the government's 'Business Process Re-Engineering' (BPR) strategy, what passes for effective community policing in the justice sector is quite worrying.

When asked about the effectiveness of community policing, justice sector staff pointed to a greater willingness of community members to act as witnesses for the prosecution (but not for the defence) and to the massively increased conviction rates (in one of the sub-cities of Addis Ababa, the Federal Justice Ministry reports a 96.13% conviction rate for 2013, up from 33% in 2009 – it was not possible to get statistics for Amhara). A strategy to encourage more citizens to come forward as prosecution witnesses has recently been recommended in Addis Ababa, involving paying witnesses a small sum of approximately 50 Birr (USD 2.60) to cover their transport costs. In addition, defendant's rights are limited by the lack of free legal representation in courts of first instance. While legal aid is provided in higher courts, due to a lack of lawyers in the country, free legal

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[7] Revenge killings have historically been a problem in Amhara, where the family of someone murdered is responsible for avenging their death by in turn killing a member of the family of the perpetrator. Elders have been highly involved in resolving such disputes. See for instance Aspen 2001: 218 and Glowacki and Gönc 2013.

representation was reportedly not provided in courts of first instance (which have the jurisdiction to impose penalties of up to 10,000 Birr (USD 530) or 15 years imprisonment). The equation of effective community policing with higher conviction rates and weak protections of the presumption of innocence suggests that community policing cannot be said to be improving access to justice through the formal court system. While most disputes might be being dealt with through customary mechanisms, the fact that the formal justice system is perceived as an unviable justice channel is problematic for community policing.

8.4 Has community policing improved policy-community relations?

Perhaps the way in which community policing in Amhara has been most effective is in improving police-community relations. While there is still some amount of distrust and fear of police by the community, interviews suggested that overwhelmingly public opinion of police has improved since the introduction of community policing (Muluneh, no date). This is reflected, in part, by stories told by Community Police Officers about the cold reception with which they were received by the communities at the beginning of community policing, to the manner in which community members talked about their Community Police Officers now being 'part of the community', 'sharing our joy and our grief' and being invited to participate in community events. Moreover, as part of the End Child Marriage Campaign in Amhara, it was reported that every *kebele* with a Community Police Officer nominated him to fill the position of Community Conversation Facilitator (a community volunteer who leads on speaking with parents of girls to be married). This suggests that people see their Community Police Officers as respected community representatives.

These strengthened community-police relationships have been built in part by the innovation shown by individual Community Police Officers who operate with extremely limited financial resources or support. In one community visited, the Community Police Officer had developed hand-drawn manuals for illiterate community members depicting the most common crimes in the community and how to respond to them in pictures. In another community, following complaints by the block committees that crime was being facilitated by a lack of light during night time, as well as an abundance of places to hide, the Community Police Officer organised blocks to hang lights outside their properties on a rotating basis (so that the cost of doing so was shared) and so that criminals would be deterred from the neighbourhood. Similarly, the community was organised to clean up the neighbourhood, for instance by removing rubbish and clearing bushes that would provide cover for criminals. In the same community, the Community Police Officer has tried to incentivise community participation in such initiatives by assigning each block a grade depending on the level of crime in the neighbourhood, the extent to which the community participates in community policing activities and how clean they keep the neighbourhood. The grades are publically displayed and blocks compete to get better grades. Elsewhere, Community Police Officers have done simple things to improve their relationships with communities, like providing feedback forms that are publically displayed outside the Community Police Office so that peoples' experiences of using the office are publicised, acting as both a 'naming and shaming' exercise and encouraging others to use the office on the basis of demonstrated positive experiences. A range of social service functions also seem to be played by Community Police Officers and initiatives that fall outside of a traditional policing purview include the organisation of literacy and numeracy training for community members, and skills training or setting up small businesses (like car parks and coffee stalls) for unemployed youth. Such initiatives were often cited by community members as evidence of how Community Police Officers were making genuine efforts to contribute to the life of the community. It is not clear that this positive opinion of Community Police Officers always extends to the Regional or Federal Police more broadly, but it is a start.

Of course, the big question in the Ethiopian context, given the overarching national objective that community policing has taken on there, is whether it has contributed to development (and indeed, what 'contributing to development' in fact means). This was beyond the scope of this case study to examine but given donor interest in similar questions (ie, whether improved security leads to better development outcomes) Ethiopia may offer an interesting case for future research.

9 What challenges does the community policing practice face?

A number of challenges potentially limit the effectiveness of community policing to provide improved security and justice to communities in Amhara. These relate to practical operational constraints, as well as more fundamentally political challenges. While there are undoubtedly other challenges not captured here, the five most apparent and pressing are dealt with below.

9.1 Funding

Community policing in Amhara has, to date, been funded almost entirely by communities themselves. While the Regional Police cover the salaries of the Community Police Officers, no resources or equipment are provided outside of community contributions. To date, the Amhara Regional Police Commission estimates that across the State, communities have contributed buildings and materials equivalent to 70 million Birr (approximately USD 3.7 million). While this is an impressive demonstration of communities' willingness to contribute to community policing, every interviewee in Amhara cited this as a problem for the sustainability of community policing. A small number of interviewees suggested that some community members choose not to attend community policing meetings as they know that they will be asked for financial contributions. Community members felt that, as a government policy, the government should bear some of the costs associated with the implementation of community policing.

Community Police Officers, and many of their community members, spoke of the need for transport, in particular, to enable officers to cover their *kebeles*, get to crime scenes quickly, and transport victims or crime suspects to the *woreda* police station. In some communities Advisory Councils have fundraised and purchased a motorbike for Community Police Officers, but this is rare. In addition, computers and office supplies were frequently requested to enable Community Police Officers to record crime rates and statements electronically. Two Community Police Officers also said they would like access to the internet in order to research about community policing practices internationally that may be relevant to the Amhara context.

Possibilities for donor support to assist in plugging such funding gaps seem limited as community policing is not a priority under the government's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) – the five year development plan that sets out government priorities. In addition, the philosophy around community policing, and also the Charities and Societies Proclamation and EPRDF ideas of revolutionary democracy more broadly, is that citizens themselves should contribute to sustain what are meant to be community structures. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, interviews with Federal and Regional police revealed little interest in donor support to community policing in spite of articulated needs in this area. Without funding support from somewhere, however, it is likely that communities will suffer burnout as they are increasingly asked to make contributions from their often already small incomes. In order for community policing to continue and not to become a grudge held by the communities it is meant to serve, alternative funding sources are needed (Greene and Kebede 2012: 51).

9.2 Training

Another challenge commonly cited by police, civil society and community members is the need for more training. This includes training of the police, as well as of government officials and community members involved in Advisory Councils and Conflict Resolving Committees. On the part of Community Police Officers, this is due to concerns about their limited educational and training background, which can mean they are under-equipped to communicate effectively with their communities and to carry out their duties. In particular, leadership training was recommended. Particularly astonishing is that just one week is devoted to community

policing in the training of Community Police Officers. Given that this is their primary function, more time needs to be spent on sensitising new recruits to debates on the purpose and pitfalls of community policing (Greene and Kebede 2012: 51). While some Community Police Officers demonstrated impressive innovation – especially given funding constraints – a general sense was reported (by senior police rather than by community members) that officers tend to fall back in practice on traditional policing approaches and see community policing as simply an add on to that philosophy. Transforming their policing approach will clearly take more sustained training efforts. It is important, however, that this go beyond merely technical training about the principles of community policing, to practical mediation/negotiation skills that are about strengthened communication, social and leadership skills. This is particularly important when Community Police Officers, who are young high school graduates, are expected to be involved in discussions of child marriage, revenge killings, and so on. Training in such skills is not straightforward and mentoring by elders and other respected community leaders may be useful.

On the part of government officials, many interviewees felt that a lack of understanding of the purpose of community policing inhibited greater support and participation. Grievances are held, in particular, against government officials who reportedly at times refuse permission to communities to build Community Police Offices due to planning and zoning rules. Community members perceive this as a lack of understanding of the importance of community policing and the role it can play in national development.

More training is also needed for community members involved in community policing. In part, this was mentioned by interviewees as a priority in order that communities understand the purpose of community police and therefore participate more actively. However, perhaps more importantly, given that community policing, as discussed above, is partly about resolving crimes and disputes through community-level arbitration, training is particularly important to ensure that this does not enforce an arbitrary customary system that actually decreases people's ability to access security and justice, rather than increasing it. Of course, some of the community members involved in Advisory Councils and Conflict Resolving Committees are elders, who have been undertaking conflict resolution duties for generations and clearly do not need such training. However, in order to ensure that community policing provides improved security and justice outcomes to communities, sensitisation on issues such as early marriage and other harmful traditional practices, as well as women's rights may be useful in strengthening the protection of rights under customary law. Already such sensitisation efforts are underway through initiatives like the End Child Marriage Programme operating in parts of Amhara and there are opportunities to extend such initiatives to support protection of rights of vulnerable groups.

9.3 Connections to the justice system

As set out in section eight, community policing does not currently support improved access to quality justice through the formal system. While one emphasis of community policing in Amhara is to share the burden of policing and conflict/crime resolution with customary mechanisms, thus decreasing the need to rely on the formal justice system, given that the courts perceive themselves to be playing a role in community policing, it is important to consider what effect this has in practice. Two features stand out in particular as obstacles to the courts contributing meaningfully to community policing – the problem (real or perceived) of political interference and corruption in the court system and the interpretation of effective community policing as being about convicting more criminals. In order for community policing to go beyond the provision of just safety to also providing access to quality justice through the court system, there is a need to ensure protections of the presumption of innocence and rights of defendants are in place. In addition, addressing the challenges of delays in the court system and issues of accessibility would help to make community members feel that this justice avenue is available to them, alongside customary mechanisms.

Some initiatives are underway, at least in Addis Ababa, that might help to address this. Prosecutors there have a pilot programme of visiting community policing meetings and providing education on laws and rights. Such initiatives seem limited however and could be rolled out much more extensively so that both sides of the policing and justice system (security and justice) are beneficiaries of community policing. More thinking needs to be done on how legal support and information can be provided through the Community Police Offices.

9.4 Addressing the needs and interests of women and girls in Community Policing

Worryingly, women and girls are virtually absent from community policing in Amhara. There are no female Community Police Officers in the entire Regional State. This is apparently because being a Community Police Officer means moving away from one's home community and given that women conventionally do not move away from their father's or husband's homes, this makes it a difficult profession for them to be a part of. This is despite the fact that there is a clear female presence in the Amhara Regional Police more broadly. Women were also disproportionately underrepresented on Advisory Councils. While all Advisory Councils claimed to have female representatives (although one Community Police Office visited during fieldwork that had the smallest Advisory Council had no women) these were generally 2-3 in number alongside 8-10 men. When asked about the most common crimes in the area, no Community Police Officer mentioned domestic violence or harmful traditional practices, such as early marriage. When prompted on issues of domestic violence, Community Police Officers admitted that this does happen, but that it is not particularly prevalent in their community. This seems particularly striking given estimates that 71 per cent of Ethiopian women experience violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (WHO 2013); and 50 per cent of girls in Amhara are married by the age of 15 (Pathfinder International 2006: 1). This suggests that such crimes involving women are either note being reported through community policing structures, or are not treated as genuine crimes.

Some Community Police Offices visited apparently had women's groups as part of their community policing structures that were intended as the first point of call for crimes involving women, but no women we spoke with mentioned these groups and it was not possible to meet anyone who was supposedly a part of them. The women we spoke with did seem to have a largely positive view of Community Police Officers (although some younger women and girls noted that they would not date a member of the police because they would worry they were always looking for information) but there are clearly challenges in ensuring that community policing is for women and girls, as much as for men.

9.5 Balancing police accountability with crime reduction and surveillance

Perhaps the greatest challenge confronting the future of community policing in Ethiopia is the balance between its function of empowering local communities to participate in policing and hold the police to account for their behaviour, on the one hand, and the surveillance function of the police, on the other. While some degree of community surveillance is, of course, important in police work, too much of it can harm the police-community relations that community policing is intended to foster. For instance, requiring families to report on each other may take the idea of informal community dispute resolution too far (and in any event, it seems that few people use the family police as a formal community policing forum in practice). Similarly, mobilising trades and professions to essentially act as police informants might not be the best long-term strategy for promoting improved community safety and security, given the fear and distrust that this can create within communities.

While it is not possible to change the fact that, in Ethiopia, community policing has been a top-down process to date, it is possible to try to 'grow roots' so that community policing becomes more community-owned and responsive to community interests. While local practices of customary dispute resolution are well established and community policing builds on these, there is still a sense that the structures of community policing that have been introduced in recent years are still imposed (albeit without much objection), rather than locally owned. Yet the sense from interviews with community members is also that demand for improved policing may not be likely to come from them, no doubt at least in part because the political context is not one that encourages citizen activism. Civil society groups and academia offer potentially the most engaged and critical parts of society that can help to balance the functions of community policing. Equally, there appears to be an appetite within the senior echelons of the Ethiopian Federal and Amhara Regional Police for a more genuine engagement with community policing that achieves sustained transformation in police practice. Of course, Police Commissioners of the Federal and Regional Police are political appointees and so the room for manoeuvre for even senior officers remains delimited by political forces. Focusing on these potential agents of change, however curtailed the space for change might be, may be more effective than waiting for communities to demand improved services themselves.

More broadly, of course, the form that community policing has taken in Ethiopia to date is the result of a particular political configuration that will not be resolved by reforms to the police alone. The police are largely

perceived to be the coercive arm of the government and a key challenge for improving the public's perceptions of the police is thus to depoliticise their role within Ethiopian society. Until this is achieved, the pervasive political environment will therefore be a constraint on the potential of community policing.

10 Conclusion

This paper has detailed the objectives, development, structures, effects and challenges of community policing in Amhara. The Amhara region has clearly been successful in a large scale roll-out of a new policing policy that has been widely picked up and is helping to improve access to police services for some, as well as community-police relations, at least at the local level. The successful roll-out has been aided by the fact that community policing in Amhara builds on long-standing customary dispute resolution practices with which people are familiar. At the same time, community policing has also allowed the state increased surveillance of its population in a manner that may not contribute to international ideas of community policing as a strategy for police accountability. It also has some way to go in connecting with the justice sector and the needs of women and girls, so as to ensure that community policing leads not just to improved access to safety, but also equitable justice for all community members. As community policing is developed in other regions of the country, these are important experiences to bear in mind.

For external actors looking to engage in community policing work, this case study reveals important considerations to bear in mind when assessing potential merits, risks and entry points of programming. A close analysis of context can assist in separating out the multiple objectives ascribed to community policing by different actors, and importantly how these objectives compete with or complement each other. Knowledge of these objectives is critical to developing an awareness of their various interests of the different actors involved and how these can be brought together, or where fracture points can be anticipated. It can also help to ensure programming takes account of whose agendas are being served (and whose are not) by community policing and, where possible, engage in shaping this for the benefit of excluded groups. In the Amhara context, it is important to recognise the variance in objectives as described by senior police, Community Police Officers and communities. Attention also needs to be paid to those who appear to be largely excluded from community policing structures – women and girls, as well as those who are reportedly opposition party supporters.

There are inevitably risks involved in engaging with the security sector in any country, however these are heightened in a political context where the police have a history of excessive force and are perceived to enforce the rule of a political party that has an increasingly limited tolerance for criticism (Tareke 2009). If we accept, however, that it is only possible to improve such security sectors by engaging them, rather than isolating them, then the question becomes one of how to mitigate risk, rather than how to avoid it altogether. As one interviewee noted, it is highly likely that police somewhere in Ethiopia will be involved in practices that donors would rather distance themselves from in the coming years. However, such practices will be in spite of donor efforts to reform the police, rather than because of them.

Indeed, this case study highlights both positive and negative effects of community policing in Amhara and understanding both of these is a condition for doing no harm. Strengthening those aspects of community policing that contribute to more accessible policing, improve police-community relations, and build connections with the rights of women and girls and the justice sector are all potential entry points that can help to improve the positive aspects of community policing. In embarking on such initiatives, however, programmers must be vigilant that the negative aspects of community policing (such as strengthening state surveillance rather than personal security) are not simultaneously benefitting. Disentangling community policing's positive and negative effects, and how to engage in support of one or the other, will be aided by a deep understanding of the political context, incentives and motivations of those involved, as outlined above. While it may not always be possible

for external actors to limit the potentially harmful aspects of community policing, it is imperative that they do not exacerbate them.

Engagement options might thus focus more fruitfully on, for instance, facilitating discussions amongst community policing advocates in the Federal and Regional police commissions. Currently, discussions are somewhat isolated within the Federal Police, on the one hand, and each of the Regional Police Commissions on the other, and community policing agendas are often watered down by competing agendas. Bringing key advocates together could help to build momentum across police forces in Ethiopia, allow them to learn from each other, and enable a conversation amongst community policing advocates who are often lone voices within their own police services. In addition, there is ample room for training/sensitising community police officers, as well as others involved in the various community policing structures, in a combination of dispute resolution, leadership, dealing with crimes against women and girls and legal empowerment. This may help to equip community policing structures with the skills and knowledge to provide improved security and justice to all community members. Realistically, however, broader transformations in Ethiopian policing require a decoupling from politics that is probably not possible in the current political context. As a result, development partners may have to work on the edges of community policing to improve local-level delivery, and to closely monitor broader political shifts that will continue to shape the nature of community policing.

Of course, donors and their implementing partners will likely have limited influence in shaping the community policing agenda in Ethiopia. In part, this is due to the broader style of development in Ethiopia, which has conventionally been significantly more independent from donor influence than many other contexts (Borchgrevink 2008). Yet it is also due to the fact that community policing is determined by a host of other internal socio-political dynamics that develop largely outside of donor influence. Understanding this constellation of local dynamics is crucial in comprehending how and why community policing develops in the manner that it does.

More broadly for community policing debates, the Ethiopia case study reveals that particular manifestations of community policing cannot be divorced from the political-economy features that shape them, as set out in section three of this paper. The prevailing cultures of dispute resolution, political structure of ethnic federalism and complicated ideology of the EPRDF, in particular, help to form the mould in which community policing has taken shape. That is, the size and diversity of the country, with long histories of popular local customary dispute resolution processes, provided the EPRDF government, concerned with both development and control, with some of the key tools to develop community policing structures that have taken on multiple purposes of maintaining order, promoting access to security and facilitating surveillance. This reveals a unique model of community policing that the background research to this project did not unveil, although similarities exist with community policing models in China, Mozambique and the United Kingdom (see Denney and Jenkins 2013: 18-21). The Chinese and Mozambican models of community policing share with Ethiopia an emphasis on social control as a driving objective; whereas the UK model emphasises community mobilisation in policing, which is also evident in the Amhara context. Interestingly, this highlights how countries developing community policing now are able to draw upon a diversity of models that exist around the world, leading to unique hybrids of what exists elsewhere. This has no doubt always happened to some extent, but with community policing models and literature expanding in the last twenty years, there is now more of a 'community policing smorgasbord' to choose from.

The ultimate impression from the case study is that community policing in Amhara is anything but straightforward – and it has simultaneously positive and negative effects that must be balanced. Community policing has been a process of attempting to demonstrate the benefits of newfound (and controversial) 'democracy' following years of dictatorship, drawing on generations of customary dispute resolution, providing both improved access to security for communities and a potentially sinister surveillance capacity for the state. All these dynamics exist at once and those wanting to engage in community policing will have to navigate how (and whether it's possible) to isolate the aspects they are comfortable with from those they are not. In doing so, efforts to engage with or alter community policing will only be successful to the extent to which they can work within Ethiopia's challenging political context, as it will continue to influence the shape of community policing for the future.

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Annex 1: Interview List

Amhara Women's Association, Bahir Dar
Community Policing Expert, Ottawa, Canada
Deputy Head of Administrative and Security Affairs Bureau, Amhara Regional Police Commission
Deputy Head, Federal Justice Ministry, Bole Sub-City, Addis Ababa
Executive Director, Peace and Development Committee, Addis Ababa
First Secretary, Canadian International Development Agency, Addis Ababa
Former Ethiopian Federal Police Officer, Addis Ababa
Girl Hub, Addis Ababa
Governance Advisor, UK Department for International Development, Addis Ababa
Head of Community Policing, Addis Ababa City Police
Head of Crime, Bureau of Justice, Amhara Region
Head, Department of Community Policing, Gondar City Police
Lecturer and PhD candidate, Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University
Lecturer and PhD candidate, School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University
Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Bahir Dar University
Process Owner of Community Policing, Amhara Regional State Police Commission
Program Director, Justice for All Prison Fellowship, Addis Ababa
Research Institute Director, Ethiopian Police University College
Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa
Sub-Process Owner of Community Policing, Amhara Regional State Police Commission
Team Leader of Community Policing Awareness Programme, Gondar City Police
Team Leader, Community Security and Justice Programme, London
Yegna Ambassadors, Bahir Dar (6 females aged between 14 and 24)

Community Police Office 1, Bahir Dar:

Community Police Officer and Station Coordinator
Female Advisory Council member
Male community member
Male community member

Community Police Office 2, Bahir Dar:

Community Police Officer
Male Advisory Council member
Male Advisory Council member and militia
Female community member

Community Police Office 3, rural area outside of Bahir Dar:

Community Police Officer
Male Advisory Council member
Male community member

Community Police Office 4, town outside of Bahir Dar:

Community Police Officer

Male Advisory Council member
Male community member
Female community member

Community Police Office 5, Gondar

Community Police Officer and Station Coordinator
Male Advisory Council member
Female community member
Male community member

Community Police Office 6, Gondar

Community Police Officer
Male Advisory Council member
Female community member
Male community member

Annex 2: Map of Amhara Regional State 11 Zones and 140 *Woredas*:

(Source: UN OCHA, http://www.ocha-eth.org/Maps/downloadables/AMHARA.pdf).

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Cover photo taken by ODI Researcher, Lisa Denney, of a Community Police Officer in Amhara National Regional State, Ethiopia standing outside the Community Police Office.