



Exploring vulnerability and resilience from a multifaceted and systemic perspective

Case studies in Ethiopia and Somaliland

Nina de Roo and Jan van der Lee



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The COVID-19 pandemic, and especially its responses such as lockdowns and transport restrictions shocked the world in 2020. Rapid assessments of the crisis showed that especially poor people were hit hard, facing immediate threats to their food and livelihood security. Various UN agencies indicated that progress towards achieving SDGs is likely to be set back by decades. The people suffering from hunger is on the increase. With that context in mind a research was started at Wageningen University to assess impact of shocks such as COVID-19 on the **most vulnerable** groups of people, anticipated to suffer even more.

The research assignment developed three methodologies that allows both academic as well as support organisations to better understand how more vulnerable groups in society respond to crisis and what room there is to enhance their resilience. These methodologies were tested in two case studies (migrant labourers in the sesame sector in Ethiopia, jobless migrant youth from pastoral communities in Somaliland). Concepts and methodologies are described in seven reports that to a large extent build on each other.

1. Guijt, J. and N. Rozemeijer. Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Synthesis paper. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543741>
2. Wigboldus, S. and J. Jacobs. Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Clarifying and unpacking key concepts. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543742>
3. Wigboldus, S. and J. Jacobs. Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Towards a sense-making framework and assessment methodology. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543743>
4. Roo, N. de and J. van der Lee. Exploring vulnerability and resilience from a multifaceted and systemic perspective – Case studies in Ethiopia and Somaliland. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543744>
5. Wattel, C.J., M. Sopov and M.A.J.M. van Asseldonk. Responsible finance for vulnerable groups under COVID-19. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543745>
6. Wattel, C.J., M. Sopov and M.A.J.M. van Asseldonk. Finance for Resilience Tool (FORTE) – A rapid assessment tool. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543746>
7. Fonteijn, H., J. Groot and X. Guo. Analysing the resilience of food systems with scenario analyses and reverse stress tests – Concepts and an application on the Ethiopian sesame value chain. <https://doi.org/10.18174/543747>

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ETB	Ethiopian Birr (currency)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHH	Female Headed Household
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPC	Integrative Food Security Phase Classification
MHH	Male Headed Household
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SBN	Sesame Business Network
TLU	Tropical Livestock Unit
UMYWSR	Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives
WCDI	Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research
WUR	Wageningen University & Research

1 Introduction



Credits: Khadar Mohamed (@FAO Somalia)

To test the methodology developed in Wigboldus, S. and J. Jacobs (March 2021). Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Towards a sense-making framework and assessment methodology, two cases were studied – one in Ethiopia and one in Somaliland – in which the defined profiles were operationalised for a particular vulnerable group. This paper describes the methodology used, then presents the case descriptions, and closes with a discussion on learnings from these cases.

2 Methodology

2.1 Framework used

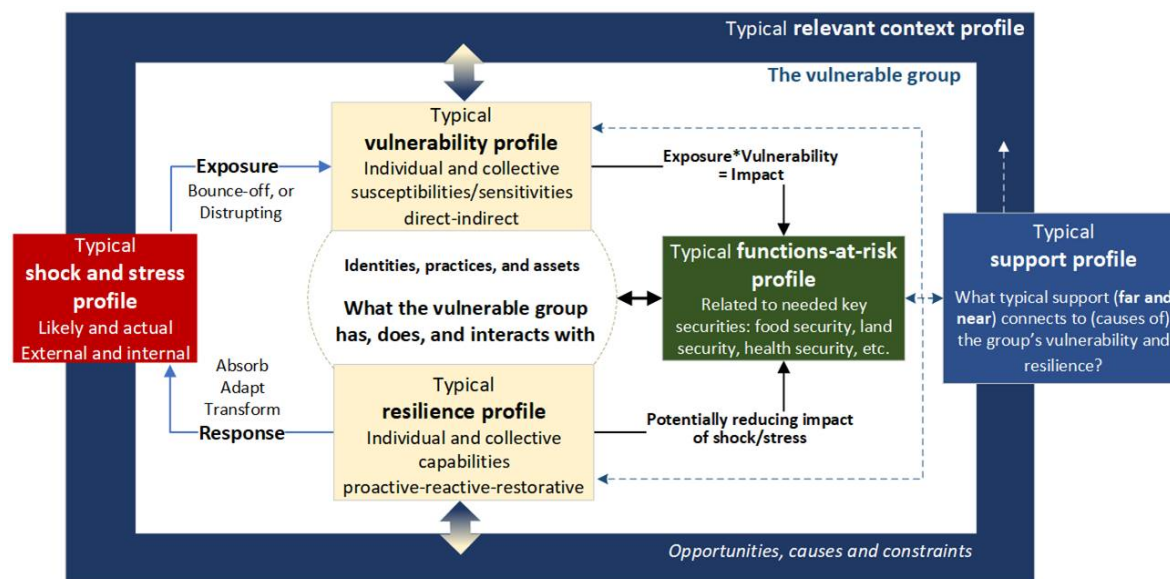


Figure 1 Framework used for case studies (Wigboldus S. and J. Jacobs, March 2021)

2.2 Case selection

A longlist was made of projects in which WCDI or partners were involved, that could serve as potential cases. This resulted in 18 potential cases in Somaliland, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Bangladesh. From this longlist, a shortlist of cases was created using the following inclusion criteria: the case 1) concerns a vulnerable group in an informal market; 2) studies diverse shocks; 3) has data & data collection options available; 4) offers access to perspectives of the target group; and 5) offers the potential use of a food system perspective. The following criteria served as exclusion conditions: the case 1) concerns large scale actors; 2) has primarily a refugee population; 3) concerns major sudden onset disaster; or 4) has a single commodity focus. Cases that best fit these criteria are shortlisted in Table 1. For these cases, more detailed discussions were held with WUR staff and partners involved in the cases, after which a final selection was made. This led to selection of one case in Ethiopia – migrants working in the sesame production area in the Northwest – and one case in Somaliland – unemployed migrant youth from pastoralist communities in the Eastern districts of Sool and Sanaag.

Table 1 Shortlisted cases considered for this chapter

Org.	Project	Case (main livelihood activities/focus)	Comments
WCDI / FAO	FNS Repro	Somaliland, Sool and Sanaag regions (livestock & fodder)	Rich data available, food system approach
		South Sudan (gum arabic and seed)	Complex, relief phase, poor data availability
WCDI – Benefit	BENEFIT-Sesame Business Network	(seasonal) sesame labourers, Tigray and Amhara regions, Ethiopia	Data available; team for additional collection; sesame important commodity (FS focus)
	BENEFIT-REALISE	PSNP+ areas – link with sesame labourers?	t.b.d.
ICCO		Horn of Africa, various cases	Limited interest – no clear business prospect
		Bangladesh (salt-tolerant crops) Myanmar (pulses)	Interest to be confirmed

2.3 Data collection and analysis

Data collection focused on operationalisation of profiles listed in *Wigboldus S. and J. Jacobs, March 2021*, and in Figure 1. Data were collected through literature review, interviews, and online workshops.

Case 1 – Ethiopia: Migrant labourers working in sesame

An important data source of this case study is a review of relevant literature. Primary data collection took place in the form of face to face focus group discussions, and two semi-structured interviews with key experts. Data collection was done by staff of the SBN project (in close collaboration with the lead author Nina de Roo), and took place between December 15-30, 2020.

- **Focus Group Discussion 1** – discussion with six labourers from Central Gondar Zone, Belese district (*woreda*), Guhala village (*kebele*) (migration source area) about their motivation to migrate, their vulnerabilities, resilience, aspirations and coping strategies, and susceptibility to shocks and stressors.
- **Focus Group Discussion 2** – discussion with six labourers from West Gondar Zone, Metema district, Abdereg Delelo village (migration destination area) their motivation to migrate, their vulnerabilities, resilience, aspirations and coping strategies, and susceptibility to shocks and stressors.
- **Focus Group Discussion 3** – discussion with six farmers from West Gondar Zone, Metema district, Abdereg Delelo village (destination area) about their vulnerabilities, resilience, aspirations and coping strategies, and susceptibility to shocks and stressors (this Focus Group Discussion was mainly conducted to be able to compare the situation between smallholder farmers and migrants).
- **Expert interview** – Birara Shumye, Industry Linkage Expert in West Gondar zone, Metema district about the situation of labourers in Metema district.

Case 2 – Somaliland: Unemployed migrant youth from pastoralist communities

Data were collected from literature, from online workshops and from email communication. A series of three workshops was held through video conferencing in the period December 7-21, 2020. Next to the project team, participants included staff and partners of the FNS-Repro project¹, implemented by FAO and WCDI. Participants are listed in Appendix 1. Workshop findings were augmented with email communication with the Somali participants. The workshops dealt with the following three subjects:

- **Workshop 1** – discussion of draft profiles for pastoralist communities (which were based on literature sources Boerema et al. 2020; Kaut 2020abc; Waithanji et al. 2020) and identification of most vulnerable group
- **Workshop 2** – discussion of profiles for most vulnerable group (i.e., unemployed youth, specifically those without support from relatives)
- **Workshop 3** – discussion on finance options available to pastoralist communities (see Wattel, C.J., M. Sopov and M.A.J.M. van Asseldonk (March 2021). Responsible finance for vulnerable groups under COVID-19).

¹ The Food and Nutrition Security Resilience Programme (FNS-REPRO) is a four-year programme funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by FAO and its partners. Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation is responsible for facilitating REPRO's learning agenda on food system resilience. Building Food System Resilience in protracted crises is an important goal of REPRO. REPRO adopts a food system approach to analyse, understand and promote absorptive, adaptive and transformative resilience capacities (in the face of shocks and stressors) for improving Food & Nutrition Outcomes (FNS). The programme's objective is to set examples of building food system resilience in protracted crisis, in some of the least stable regions - South Sudan, Sudan and Somaliland. For each country, one value chain was selected as focus – the seed sector in South Sudan, gum arabic in Sudan, and the fodder system in Somaliland.

3 Case 1 - migrant labourers working in sesame in Ethiopia

3.1 Introduction

Situation sketch

Youth unemployment is becoming one of the critical development challenges facing the country. Urban centres have limited capacity to create employment opportunities to these employment seeking population (Tesso 2020). There is no doubt that lack of alternative employment opportunities at both rural home and urban centres of Ethiopia leads to increased labour migration to other rural areas (Linger and Terefe 2019).

The agricultural sector is the largest employer in Ethiopia, employing about 80% of the labour force. In Northwest Ethiopia, sesame is one of the major crops creating employment. The sesame zone strongly depends on hired labour. More than 500.000 poor, young people yearly work in the sesame production season to complement their sources of income in their area of origin. The main migration season is roughly from May – October (Antenne and Dirks 2020).

Sustaining one's livelihood is becoming more difficult with the ever shrinking land size. Nowadays youngsters are forced to establish their independent household without obtaining farm land either from their family or the government. In this context, landless and land scarce households tend to adopt labour expansion (migration) as one of their livelihood diversification strategy (Linger 2018).

The major source areas of migrants to the sesame sector are highland and midland districts (*woredas*) in Amhara and Tigray regional states, but migrants also originate from Oromia regional state and even Sudan. In this case study we will focus on the following districts as source districts: Lay Gayint, Quarit, West-Besele and Debark. These are all districts in regional state of Amhara. For pragmatic reasons we did not focus on Tigrayan source areas. In 2020, violent conflict in Tigray made the local situation very dangerous. This made it impossible to collect data from areas in Tigray.

Selection of the most vulnerable group

The source areas of Debark, Lay Gayint, Quarit and West-Besele can be generally characterised as very poor areas with limited natural resources, limited employment opportunities, overpopulation and land degradation. The main source of livelihood is a mixed farming system dominated by crop farming which is complemented by livestock keeping and in some areas with alternative income from off- and non-farm activities such as charcoal making, petty trade, etc. A key livelihood strategy in these source areas is migration to sesame areas. There are roughly three categories of migrants:

- Migrants who engage in sesame farming during the sesame production season by renting or sharecropping a piece of land (approximately 45% of migrants).
- Migrants who perform casual labour activities (mostly daily labour on sesame farms)(approximately 30% of migrants)
- Migrants who engage in full-time labour activities (as sesame farmer for males and in other jobs such as cleaning, cooking for females)(approximately 25% of migrants)(Linger 2018).

In the description of the profiles that follows, we distinguish the main vulnerable group in the source area - from now onwards referred to as smallholder farmers in Lay Gayint, Quarit, West-Besele and Debark districts - and the three mentioned categories in the destination area (sesame growing area).

3.2 Context profile

In Table 2 below the major elements of the context that affect the most vulnerable group in Quarit, Belese, Lay Gayint, Debark districts. We distinguish elements of the context in the source area (Quarit, Belese, Lay Gayint, Debark districts), and context elements in the areas to which people migrate (destination area).

Table 2

Source area (smallholder farmers)	Destination area
What relevant characteristics of the context (e.g. food system) (potentially) affect their vulnerability?	
<p>Push: Migrant source districts in Amhara (Quarit, Belese, Lay Gayint, Debark) are all characterised by land scarcity and land degradation (notably the highlands), food insecurity, and extreme poverty. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) aims to support the poorest of the poor in form of cash transfer and food aid. However, the programme is not sufficient to support all who need it. A significant proportion of the migrating households indicated that their household do not receive support from PSNP, while they are eligible.</p> <p>Overpopulation, decreasing land size and youth unemployment drive mainly young landless dwellers to seasonally migrate as one of their livelihood diversification strategies (Linger 2018). Continuous cultivation and poor land management practices as well as unpredictable rainfall make that agriculture is insufficient to feed the growing population let alone save money (Berlie 2015).</p> <p>Ethiopia has a context of unwelcome attitudes of the government towards migration. There are explicit policy orientations that discourage rural urban migration. Implicitly, migration is discouraged by means of its land policy that requires landholders to settle permanently in rural areas and use the land; otherwise they are subjected to lose the land (Linger and Terefe 2019).</p>	<p>Out-migration is fuelled by the promotion in commercial agriculture (notably sesame) by the Ethiopian government (Linger 2018).</p> <p>The sesame sector is dominated by small-scale farming despite increasing involvement of private investors who follow the Growth and Transformation Plan of the country (Kostka and Scharrer 2011).</p> <p>Private peasant sesame cropland increased from 185,912 ha in 2007/2008 to 388,246 ha in 2015/2016 (Linger and Terefe 2019).</p> <p>As opposed to other countries, Ethiopia produces sesame largely for export, which is as high as 75% of the produce (GAIN 2016). Sesame is the second largest foreign currency earning agricultural product next to coffee. The high dependence on export makes small scale farmers vulnerable to price fluctuations.</p>
What relevant characteristics of the context (e.g. food system) (potentially) affect their resilience?	
<p>The PSNP support programme aims to support the poorest of the poor in form of cash transfer and food aid. This programme is meant to increase the resilience of participating households by providing direct food/cash but also through asset building interventions.</p> <p>Households in source areas have a longstanding history of poverty and – generally – not a very trustful relationship with the (local) government. On the other hand, the lack of trust that the government will help them has resulted in strong social cohesion among households to help each other out in case of emergencies and needs. While this is a strong basis of resilience, it should be noted that earlier research in Ethiopia has demonstrated that such social networks are not necessarily supportive to the poorest of the poor (McGuire 2008)</p>	<p>Sesame is a booming sector. If the weather and prices are good, it is highly profitable to produce sesame. This group migrates seasonally to sesame areas to hire land and cultivate sesame.</p>

Source area (smallholder farmers)	Destination area
What relates to public sector conditions and what to private sector conditions?	
Ethiopia is dominated by a strong national government. However, there is no initiated policy, strategy and programme towards supporting migrants and their situation back home or while migrating most of the migrants are employed in the informal sector, which is characterized by low institutional protection (Linger 2018).	
How do the context conditions differ between local, national, and global?	
Global sesame prices have an impact on sesame production and on pulling more or less labourers into sesame growing areas.	
Seasonal labour migration between surrounding highlands to the sesame growing areas in the lowlands has been taking place for decades. While sesame farmers cannot operate their farms without seasonal labour, most inhabitants of the highlands need additional employment to make a living. This interdependence is strengthened by climatic conditions and the consequent cropping systems in the two areas. During the short rain (April-May), poor smallholders in the highlands plant their crops, before they go to the lowlands to earn an additional income as labourers. This coincides with the peak labour demand in the sesame zone for weeding and harvesting (July-September). During the absence of migrants, their family members take care of the fields (Antenne and Dirks 2020).	

3.3 Shocks and stresses/risk profile

Tables 3A and 3B list the shocks and stressors that were identified in the literature and validated by the focus group discussions as being most likely to have an impact on the most vulnerable group(s). In the source areas, these are health shocks, ethnic violence, unemployment and shocks related to environmental issues such as erratic rainfall and drought (see Table 3A).

Table 3A Typical risk profile of vulnerable group in the source area

Shocks/stressors	Likelihood	Susceptibility	Impact	Details
What are the most important shocks/stresses (potentially) exposed to?				
Health shocks (e.g. Covid-19)	Medium	High	Medium-high	Little information is available about the impact of Covid-19 on source areas. Most of the labourers who had not started their travel did not migrate last year, due to the Corona pandemic. They faced serious financial challenges to survive (FGD). From other studies it is known that the impact is not so much being infected by COVID-19, but more in mobility restrictions to prevent spreading of the disease. In general poor people in cities and those active in informal positions in the value chain are hit hardest. FGD: "We didn't travel to the sesame area and we couldn't earn what we regularly earn every year. So we were badly in need of money. My wife was very sick and she couldn't be treated in the local health clinic. I should have taken her to Bahir Dar town for better treatment but I did not have the resources".
Ethnic violence	Medium	High	High	There was an outbreak of violence in Tigray in 2020. In areas in Amhara bordering Tigray this has led to political unrest. So far, in the source areas there is no report of violence. In some other source areas (not part of this case study), the lack of police enforcement has according to some sources resulted in riots and theft and violence in some villages (notably in the West of Ethiopia).
Land degradation in source area	High	High (higher for highland districts)	Medium	Overcultivation has resulted in land degradation and reduced soil fertility.
Unemployment in source area	High	High	High	Lack of employment in the source area is a key reason to migrate elsewhere.
Erratic rainfall	Medium	High	High	Most people have (small) plots of land. Erratic rainfall or drought results in food shortage and death of animals. This reduces direct food intake and also removes buffers (selling of animals). Over the past three years, the major natural hazards reported were drought by 43.4%, flooding by 40.7% and erratic rainfall by 30.2% of the sample households.
Drought in source area	Medium	Medium (higher for midlands)	High	
What livelihood activities are impacted by COVID-19 and the recent war?				
- Migration	Due to COVID-19 a proportion of the vulnerable group did not migrate to source areas because it was not possible to travel. This limits their options to earn an income from migration.			
- Crop production				
- Marketing	Those who remained in their source area were affected by COVID-19 as well as inputs were more difficult to get by and marketing was constraint.			
What root causes underpin the susceptibility to these shocks and stressors?				
- Dependence on migration and agriculture	Migrating households are not able to think beyond agriculture as their main livelihood. There are no or very limited options beside engaging in agriculture (or migration), and no information is available to the most vulnerable group about any possible alternatives. Migration as strategy is a way out of urgent extreme poverty, but at the same time a lock-in which makes other pathways out of poverty less likely.			
- Lack of options to diversify				

The Table 4 below indicates how hazards have affected households in one of the source areas (Lay Gayint district), in 2017 (copied from the baseline study of the BENEFIT-REALISE programme (Ayalew et al. 2019). Even though the table makes a distinction between recipients from PSNP support and those without PSNP support, the table shows that the vast majority of households who are affected by shocks loses (part of) their harvest. This shows the relative dependence and risky nature of agricultural-based livelihood in the source areas.

Table 4 (Ayalew et al. 2019)

Direct impact of hazards	PSNP				Non-PSNP				Total	
	MHH		FHH		MHH		FHH			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lost crops/reduction of yield	96	83.5	62	86.1	61	88.4	6	75.0	225	85.5
Lost livestock	4	3.5	3	4.2	2	2.9	0	0.0	9	3.4
Food shortage for less than 3 months	4	3.5	3	4.2	3	4.3	0	0.0	10	3.8
Food shortage for 3 - 6 months	3	2.6	1	1.4	2	2.9	1	12.5	7	2.7
Food shortage for 6-9 months	5	4.3	1	1.4	1	1.4	1	12.5	8	3.0
Migration/displacement	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4
Damage to assets	2	1.7	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.1

Source: Survey results, 2018

Tables 3A and 3B list the shocks and stressors that were identified in the literature and validated by the focus group discussions as being most likely to have an impact on the most vulnerable group(s). In the destination areas, these are health shocks (related to COVID-19 and working conditions of labourers), theft and ethnic violence. For migrants engaging in sesame cultivation different shocks were identified, which mainly relate to sesame production and marketing (erratic rainfall and price fluctuations).

Table 3B Typical risk profile of vulnerable group in the destination area

Shocks/ stressors	Likelihood	Susceptibility			Impact	Details
		Crop farmer	Wage labour	Casual labour		
What are the most important shocks/stresses (potentially) exposed to?						
Health shocks (working conditions)	Medium	Low	High	high	Medium-high	<p>The harsh environment and limitations in access to basic health services, nutritious food, clean drinking water and appropriate shelter create severe challenges for labourers. Very little or no support services are provided by the farmers employing labourers because of the ad-hoc and temporary nature of the employment.</p> <p>According to SBN (Sesame Business Network), the shocks that are most likely to hit are communicable diseases such as hepatitis, HIV and Covid-19.</p> <p>In case of disease, migrants often do not have the money to pay for health care or their return to their home town. Friends/social network helps them in that case.</p>
Ethnic violence	Low	Low	High	high	High	<p>In 2019 there was an outbreak of violence in Tigray. It is difficult to find reliable sources about this conflict. Journalists reported that a group of approximately 100 migrants (form Amhara) working in sesame areas in Tigray were killed in 2020.</p> <p>Besides this recent violent conflict, there is reported to be distrust between people who moved to Northern Gondar earlier (called Saluges) and newer migrants (called Gofers). Saluges feel threatened by Gofers and attack temporary migrant casual labourers in particular. Partly because gofers are assumed to be taking available employment opportunities, causing the price of labour to go down (Linger 2018).</p> <p>In some areas, such as Benishangul Gumuz Region, conflict is also common. It is indicated that conflict between a single migrant and a local (a Gumuz) can cause a group of migrants to be victims of eviction or indiscriminate attack by local people (Linger 2018).</p>
Covid-19	Medium	high	high	high	high	<p>The Corona pandemic affected the life of migrants in many ways. For instance, Kokit village (Metema district) is near to Sudan and there was an isolation centre in Kokit. Because of this the village was considered as potential centre of spread. The village was isolated. Most transport service providers were not happy to provide transport service and when they do the price for transport doubled. The border with Sudan was closed and all basic goods which brought from Sudan stopped. All these problems raised the cost of living. Most people sold their animals and other fixed assets to survive.</p> <p>FGD participant “my children live in Gondar in rented house attend their school. Due to Corona pandemic school was closed for eight months, however I was paying the house rent. I couldn’t handle the cost so I sold a piece of land I have in town to compensate my income.”</p>

Shocks/ stressors	Likelihood	Susceptibility			Impact	Details
		Crop farmer	Wage labour	Casual labour		
Theft / Breaching of contract	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Employers prefer informal/verbal agreements as they employ many labourers. There are many cases where conflicts arise between farmers and labourers based on performance and payments (Antenne and Dirks 2020). migrants' exposure to theft is partly associated with tendency to move from one place to another in search of jobs and their tendency to carry money because of inadequate banking services or lack of trust in banks (Linger 2018). Quote: "Last year I travelled to Sudan to work. I heard that my employer conspired to take my kidney and sell to rich people. So, at night I escaped and travelled through the forest."
International price fluctuations of sesame	High	High	low	low	medium	Exposure to this shock is more prevalent among crop farming migrants then other migrants.
Erratic rainfall	Medium	High	low	low	medium	Exposure to this shock is more prevalent among crop farming migrants then other migrants.
What livelihood activities are impacted by COVID-19 and the recent war?						
- Migration	COVID-19 and the subsequent mobility restrictions made it more difficult to access inputs and transport for sesame marketing. Also, labourers were affected due to the measures as they were formally not allowed to work, but informally they worked under unsafe conditions. This puts them at health risk, but also limits their options to earn an income from migration.					
- Basic security						
	The war puts all livelihood activities at risk as the lives and security of people is threatened.					
What root causes underpin the susceptibility to these shocks and stressors?	See Table 3A					

3.4 Vulnerability and resilience profile

Table 5 below shows the vulnerability and resilience profile. It describes the basis of vulnerability and resilience capacities: how the identified vulnerable groups access (or lack access to) the five capital assets natural capital, physical capital, financial capital, human capital and social capital.

Table 5 *Resilience and vulnerability profile*

Assets	Source area	Resilience what assets and practices enable resilience responses?	Destination area	Resilience what assets and practices enable resilience responses?
	Vulnerability what assets and practices play a role?		Vulnerability what assets and practices play a role?	
Natural	<p><u>Assets</u></p> <p>Land degradation makes reliance on agriculture very risky (but there is no other employment in the area)</p> <p><u>Practices</u></p> <p>Overgrazing & intensive cultivation practices cause land degradation and erosion.</p> <p>Households from the degraded highlands migrate more often than households from the mid-altitude areas.</p>	Not found.	<p><u>Assets</u></p> <p>Access to clean water limited and water quality is low (This is major source of diseases)</p> <p><u>Practices</u></p> <p>Intensive cultivation practices, limited incentives to practice soil conservation as the land is hired and labourers only perform short term labour</p> <p>Lack of water management systems to improve water quality</p>	favourable conditions for sesame production (soil, climate, etc.)
Physical	<p><u>Assets</u></p> <p>Land scarcity is the major challenge in these areas, which is increasingly threatening livelihoods.</p> <p>Poor households have very small plots of land (if at all) and are endowed with limited livestock holding with an average livestock holding of 2.37 Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU). In comparison, crop migrant households have an average livestock size of 3.54 TLU.</p> <p><u>Practices</u></p> <p>Overgrazing is increasingly common, increasing the pressure on land.</p>	<p>For those who have it: Land</p> <p>Keeping livestock is a key asset for all households in source areas. Poorer households are more often engaged in small ruminants, while better off households also keep cattle.</p>	<p><u>Assets</u></p> <p>n/a (land is hired)</p> <p>shelter is badly maintained. Migrants live in abominable houses.</p> <p><u>Practices</u></p> <p>Limited/no investment in better housing (to save money)</p> <p>No incentive of employers to improve living conditions of labourers</p>	Not found

Assets	Source area		Destination area	
Financial	<u>Assets</u> No or limited access to/use of credit. No collateral. <u>Practices</u> Saving is rare. PSNP programme provides opportunity to save money from cash transfers. However, the vast majority does not use this opportunity because they use the money for direct needs and nothing is left to save (or they don't trust the bank).	Borrowing from private money lenders and saving institutions/churches are the major sources (43%) of finance followed by household savings (41%), selling asset (29%) and borrowing from relatives/friends (17%). (Linger 2018) Local saving mechanisms (see also support profile)	<u>Assets</u> Migrants have no access to credit in destination areas because this is mostly for residents and they are no permanent residents (expert interview). <u>Practices</u> Informal money lending is common, often with high interest rates. Employers also engage in money lending/credit (advance payment). Conflicts over contract are common; contracts are almost always informal.	The income from sesame is a source for investment in other assets. There are informal money lenders available. Despite the disadvantages this is the best option to access financial capital for migrants.
Human	<u>Assets</u> Low level of education is common in the area. <u>Practices</u> Not found	People have their own physical strength to earn an income. This is one of their most important assets. Migrants are very strong in coping with constant shocks. It has made them strong. REALISE programme has organised capacity development activities in relation to asset building, agriculture, and off-farm options.	<u>Assets</u> Crop Migrants are generally higher educated than other migrants. <u>Practices</u> SBN has organised financial literacy training (but not for migrants yet).	SBN has organised awareness raising campaigns about migrant rights. Migrants are very strong in coping with constant shocks. It has made them strong and able to deal with emergencies.
Social	<u>Assets</u> Households that send family members for casual wage labour have a limited social network. They participate in relatively few social organizations. <u>Practices</u> No practices found	Strong social cohesion to help each other out in case of need. Local saving mechanisms are common (see also support profile)	<u>Assets</u> Migrants are linked to each other but not well linked to support networks in their destination area. This makes them vulnerable towards their employer. <u>Practices</u> Not found.	Migrants have built migrant networks. The longer people migrate, the stronger their connections. Crop farming migrants have the widest social network (Linger 2018).

In the text below we analyse how resilience capacities are activated through responses to shocks that vulnerable groups are faced with. We do this by distinguishing three types of capacities: absorptive, responsive and transformative capacities.

Capacities to increase resilience: *Absorptive capacity*

Redundancy: Vulnerable groups in the source areas have built strong absorptive mechanisms, showing redundancy at times. The efforts to build and maintain a livestock herd, communal grazing lands and the storing of food and seed all create buffers that can be used in adverse times of shocks or heavy stresses. In a sense, food aid can be considered as a buffer as well. However, the most vulnerable group asset scarcity and constant shocks lead to lack of buffers. For those households, engaging in casual wage labour is an absorptive strategy to reduce the number of mouths to be fed back home. The strategy to send their family members away to perform casual or wage labour is a deliberate strategy which is least risky and needs least assets (as compared to crop farming in sesame areas). As a result, this type of migration is also the least likely to contribute to asset building.

Flexibility: Seasonal migration to sesame areas allows poor households to 'follow the rains'. Furthermore, selling of livestock in case of shock is a key coping strategy for all households in this area. Saving is often done in the form of rearing small ruminants that can be sold in case of urgent need of money. Households who do not have any livestock left may resort to eating their seed in case of emergencies.

In case of shocks and urgent need of money, people mainly rely on each other (instead of formal organisations or credit. Informal money lending from each other (source area) or investor farmers is most common (destination area). For instance: " I borrowed 3000 ETB from my wife's sister and paid for my son treatment. I paid back my debit by selling my cow." (quote focus group participant).

Capacities to increase resilience: *Adaptive capacity*

Diversification: Better-off households engage in crop diversification, intercropping, growing of trees and adaptive management/natural conservation practices. These households also have a different motivation to migrate; for them it is a diversification strategy. In combination with the agricultural activities back home, they seek employment opportunities in sesame growing areas to earn extra (additional) income. While crop production needs more investment and is more prone to risks, it is also highly profitable. Money earned with sesame production is invested in other assets (livestock, schooling, land). However, as compared to farmers who live in sesame growing areas this group has a weaker starting point: they are considered as 'invaders', they have more limited access to services and networks than farmers who originate in these areas.

In some cases, migrants try to build local rapport with the locals, especially in Oromia and Benishangul. Godfather (a local), as claimed by migrant farmer focus groups, provides his godson (a migrant) with secret information about the possible conflict/attacks waged against migrants. Godfather-based strengthening relationship between Amhara migrants and local people is also reported in East Wollega Zone of Oromia Region, Ethiopia (Tesfaye, 2007).

Capacities to increase resilience: *Transformative capacity*

Not found.

3.5 Function-at-risk/basic needs profile

In the Table 6 we list the basic needs that are or may be under pressure as a result of the shocks and stresses listed above.

Table 6 Basic needs profile

General	Details (implications/ in what way)	
	Migrant crop farmers	Migrant casual and wage labourers
What basic needs are already under pressure? Because of what?		
Food security	The food security status of the sample farmers indicated food	Same
- food availability	shortage mainly in the months of September, August and July.	
- food access	For non-PSNP households, four months of adequate food provision were reported, but none were reported for PSNP	
- food quality	clients. Food gap months of PSNP households were twice those	
- food stability	of non-PSNP, with an average of 2.65 food gap months reported, which is much higher than reported by (Berhane et al. 2018) for Amhara region i.e. 1.4 for PSNP and 1.1 for non-PSNP households, compared with the findings of this study for PSNP MHH of 2.96 and FHH of 3.11 while for non-PSNP MHH it was 1.47 and for FHH, 3.71 (Ayalew et al. 2019). The least consumed food types reported were fruits, eggs and meat or other meat products, while consumption of fresh or dried or fried fish was not reported at all.	Specific
	Home produced food is affected by erratic rainfall	For full-time wage labourers, food is provided but of low quality. Within the migrant households, casual wage labourers are the most food insecure (Linger 2018).
	Food consumption is one-sided (animal protein, vitamin a and c, iron are lacking)	More of households with casual wage labour migrant (51%) than full-time wage labour migrant (32%), non-migrant (26%) and crop farming migrant (21%) could not satisfy their own food demand from own production alone (Linger 2018).
	In destination areas:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food is expensive and of low quality. • Non-migrant households source their food mostly from their own produce, while migrant households are more likely to complement their food with other sources. • Migrant households are more food insecure (moderately vulnerable: 23% and highly vulnerable: 14%) as compared to non-migrant households (moderately vulnerable: 14% and highly vulnerable: 7%) ($P < 0.01$). This reflects that non-migrant households are relatively in a better livelihood condition as compared to migrant households which might be associated with their better endowment of land that translate into better food security status (Linger 2018). 	
Land security	There is no threat that land will be taken away, but land is becoming more scarce (see context and risk profile)	Same
Health	See risk profile	Same
Security, Safety Shelter	See risk profile	Same
Freedom	Freedom of speech may be relevant for international community, but it is not mentioned by people themselves as being important. The most important securities in their eyes are food, shelter, and basic health.	Same
What basic needs are anticipated to become (even more) under pressure because of relevant shocks/ stresses? (in view of existing vulnerabilities)		
COVID-19	Most people start by reducing number of meals and type of food (from fresh and animal protein to stables and dried pulses to eating their seed). Then selling of livestock or other assets. Reducing buffers makes families even more vulnerable to other shocks such as weather or health or violence related shocks.	This group has less assets to begin with, and thus less options to draw from. The likelihood that these groups need to turn to reducing meals and reducing animal protein and other 'luxury products' is higher, and will occur sooner as compared to non-migrants and migrant crop farmers.

General	Details (implications/ in what way)	
	Migrant crop farmers	Migrant casual and wage labourers
Ethnic violence		In case of ethnic violence victims could be killed, seriously injured, or traumatised or at least feel unsafe during their migration time. The effects of this are not measured in this study but it would most probably reduce their ability to absorb other shocks. Also, it may cause the victims to choose other strategies than migration (which are generally perceived as less remunerative). Casual labourers are more likely to be hit by this shock than migrant crop farmers.
What do they consider to be of primary importance in terms of livelihood function?		
Land to engage in agriculture	FGD: most migrants see migration as a long-term strategy whereby they are trying to increase their asset base to hire more land in the future, to produce more sesame. These migrants do not see other options than agriculture, as this is what they know and have been taught from their early age.	Same. However, because this group generally has less land available, they may be more inclined to engage in other opportunities than migrant crop farmers.

3.6 Support profile



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The last profile that we describe is the support profile, where we describe the most common support mechanisms that the most vulnerable group can draw upon for support. We distinguish between internal support (e.g. social capital, human capital), external support from within the community (e.g.

community based support organisations, church, etc), and from outside the community (aid organisations and government support programmes). The first type of support (internal) is also briefly touched upon in the resilience and vulnerability profile under the capital assets.

a. Traditional community support mechanisms

People strongly rely on each other for support. *Equb* and *Idir* are common mechanisms of local saving and reciprocity among the communities in the source area. *Equb* is an association established by a small group of people in order to provide substantial rotating funding for members to improve their lives and living conditions, while *Idir* is an association established among neighbours or workers to raise funds that will be used during emergencies, such as death. *Iqub* and *Idir* can be characterized as traditional financial associations. While *Idir* is a long term association, *Iqub* can be temporary or permanent, depending on the needs of the members (Bekerie 2003).

Furthermore, Migrants that migrate together have a strong connection and help each other out in case of urgent need for support. For instance, in the FGD it was mentioned that if someone falls ill while migrating, and if he/she does not have funds for medication or to return home, it is common to help each other out.

Reason for strong informal social safety nets may be due to the limited trust in government and banks (who are closely linked to the government). People have been relying on each other for centuries, with limited support options from external actors. PSNP (see below under b) is omnipresent, but some sources mention that PSNP is closely linked to local politics. For instance selection of participants is sometimes said to be politicised (Cochrane and Tamiru 2016).

b. Formal support mechanisms

In source areas: The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) is set out to provide financial support to the most vulnerable households. The primary reason for selection into this programme is lack of household assets followed by having no land and being unable to build asset for various reasons. Households with a head of family member with physically disabilities or who lost their parents are also often selected. Support is in the form of cash transfers. For instance, In 2018, in Lay Gayint and Tach Gayint (two districts in Amhara regional state) 33,108 households received cash: 26,878 households received cash for work and 6,230 households received direct support. Participant households were paid as per their family size. The PSNP allows a maximum of five family members per household to access entitlement. A household with only one able-bodied participant receives Birr 41 (equivalent to 1.5 USD) per day for a maximum of five days/month which makes the monthly income Birr 205 (equivalent to USD 8). Accordingly, households with 2, 3, 4, and 5 participant members receive USD 15, 23, 30, and 38, respectively if they have fully participated in the programme (USAID 2018).

The programme is internationally praised for its integrated and innovative approach. However, there is also critique. A study done by USAID in 2018 mentions that recipients face the following challenges: Delayed transfer of money (often between 10-15 days of delay of a monthly transfer); Limited connection (due to political unrest) hampering cash transfers to take place; selection of beneficiaries. The latter is related to the fact that the programme is not sufficient to help all household who need support. In Quarit for instance, only 10% of households have access to PSNP support. More non-migrant households (15%) have access to transfer as compared to migrant households (statistically significant at 0.05 confidence level), which is not in line with other findings that migrants generally have less assets than non-migrants (Linger 2018). Envy among those who are not selected is quite common. Another often criticised aspect is the mechanisms of graduation. The idea behind PSNP is that households will move up the ladder of poverty and finally graduate when they are resilient enough not to fall back into poverty. However, in a study among seven communities that are part of the PSNP programme, Cochrane and Tamiru conclude that the mechanisms of selection and graduation are to some extent interwoven with (local) politics (Cochrane and Tamiru 2016).

There are limited training opportunities in the source area. BENEFIT-REALISE, an agricultural research for development programme in PSNP areas in Ethiopia, funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy, has implemented several action research, training and support interventions in Amhara regional state, among others in Lay Gayint district. Among others, the programme has implemented farmer trainings

on nutrition sensitive agriculture, livestock keeping. Furthermore, the programme has piloted the development of social enterprises for youth to diversify their income (Wageningen University and Research 2019).

In some areas there are support programmes (e.g. CARE) with interventions that encourage community saving organisations.

In the source area there is very limited industry or value chain development. there is no mentioning of agricultural sectors with growth potential by the sources that were used. Only option would be to migrate to the regional capital (Bahir Dar). This has so far not been a serious option because most migrants migrate to the sesame areas as they consider this to be the highest likelihood of job opportunities.

In destination areas: The Sesame Business Network (SBN), in collaboration with the Labour and Social Affairs departments and offices; health departments and Offices of Agriculture on zone and district level, conducted several support activities focusing on awareness creation among employers on responsible use of the labour force and among labourers on labour rights roles and responsibilities.

For instance, mobile cinema shows were organised at places where temporarily large number of labourers can be found. The mobile cinema shows mostly focused on Ethiopian labour laws, safety and health, working and living conditions. Over the years, more than 5,000 laborers were reached through mobile cinema, brochures, and radio programs that were transmitted twice a week in Amharic and Tigrigna language (Antenne and Dirks 2020).

As a result of this support, positive trends have been observed regarding the understanding of labour working and living situations. Investor farmers and farm managers start to understand and acknowledge the critical role labourers play in sesame production. Recently, an investment committee was established which reviews the performance of investor farmers in relation to labour conditions. This committee also created a common proclamation on decent labour conditions. It has been observed that in some cases, non-complying investor farmers were penalised (Antenne and Dirks 2020). SBN has provided training to migrants on their migrant rights.

3.7 Discussion and conclusions on this case

The overall livelihood situation of people in the study districts has been very fragile and constantly prone to different sets of shocks and stressors. This is not surprising as this was the main reason to select these areas, and the respective communities that live there. We distinguished three types of vulnerable groups:

- Households with relatively more and diverse assets (land, livestock, social network). This group sends members of their households away for seasonal migration for better employment opportunities in sesame areas. They hire or sharecrop land and hire casual labourers in peak times. This type of strategy requires more investment, is more risky (in case of loss of harvest the investment is lost and the migrants become indebted), but also more rewarding if things go well. They have the strongest social network in the migration community and often are most experienced in the seasonal migration. They are also the eldest (although still young; approximately 25-30 year old).
- Secondly there is a group with limited assets in the source area. These households have limited or no land, a few small ruminants, and limited other physical or natural capital to draw from. Their main strategy for survival is to engage in full time wage labour in sesame growing areas. This group opts for a more secure income by migrating to sesame areas.
- The third group could be considered the most vulnerable group in the source area (Linger 2018). They can be characterised as families with very small plots of land, whereby the head of household is not able to grant his/her children access to their land as it is needed to grow food for the other family members. These households are food insecure for at least a few months per year, and their diets are less diverse (they lack animal protein and fruit, mostly). Within those households, the adolescent sons and daughters face a challenging situation of not being able to use land, and not

having many other options for employment in their district. They often migrate to sesame growing areas, either to perform casual labour in sesame production (often working for the first category or other sesame producers), or to perform other casual work without any fixed contract. The sesame labourers live in camps or travel from place to place. Their reason to migrate is firstly to reduce the burden of their family back home. They are the least likely to bring home cash.

It becomes clear that these three groups have **different starting situations**, and due to their access to support (e.g. PSNP) and other coping strategies, and subsequent type of labour engagement, they are also affected by **different types of shocks** and stressors, and in case of the same shocks **different vulnerabilities are affected**. For instance, migrant sesame growers are prone to risks related to climatic conditions (erratic rainfall or drought), and international price fluctuations. These shocks are recurring. Particularly in the case of climatic conditions, the effects are severe: the harvest fails and all investment is lost, risking the ability of this group to expand their financial assets. In turn, migrant sesame farmers are not able to pay their labourers (i.e. the 2nd or 3rd category of migrants). This results in a difficult situation both for the farmer and the labourer. The group of migrants who perform casual labour is thus indirectly also affected by climate-related shocks in the sesame area. On top of this, this group of migrants is also prone to other shocks and stressors, such as ethnic violence/armed attacks and health shocks related to the work and living conditions in sesame areas. This group is more vulnerable to violence because they travel from place to place, are on the move, and lack the safety of people they know around them. Those shocks, if they occur, have a devastating effect on the migrants most basic aspects of life: their lives are threatened (in case of violence), they get seriously ill, and they often do not have money to pay for medical treatment. Migrants often help each other out while being in the sesame growing area. They support each other in times of need, and borrow money to each other. Back home, they often sell livestock to pay back their debts. This reduces their asset base and the diversity of their assets, which, in turn makes it difficult to escape from the desperate situation (except by engaging in migration...).

Furthermore, the migrants do not have many attractive options to choose from given the **context** in which they operate. This is related to the **limited availability of natural and physical capitals in the source area**. Due to population growth, land has been used more and more intensively, resulting in land degradation, decreased soil fertility. The FGD showed that households in the study areas are not able to think beyond migration and agriculture (that is what they know and that is what exists in their world).

Thus, migration is one of the few options to survive (most vulnerable), maintain the status quo (full time labour migrants) or – if lucky – improve their asset base (sesame migrant farmers). In all cases, not migrating is the least attractive option at hand. Casual wage labours indicated (in FGD) that without migration, they would be starved to death, indicating that earning from migration is a crucial means of achieving food security for households who engage in casual wage labour migration.

Despite the risks and likelihood of being affected by different shocks, migration is generally still preferred over other livelihood options. At the same time migration may reinforce vulnerability to certain types of shocks/stressors. For instance, some households send more migrants away, leaving agricultural activities to the elderly and females. Some sesame farming migrants argue that they would have been able to increase assets or at least maintain what they had if they properly managed and invested in home agriculture. This would suggest that the coping strategy of migration is not really making migrant households more resilient. Also, price and weather shocks have become more severe and frequent in the past few years. If these shocks continue to impact sesame production, this may result in migrants opting for other options (e.g. engage in casual labour or shift to other agricultural sectors).

External support has always been present in this area. The PSNP programme has been around for 20 years, as people in these district have been dependent on food aid for a long time (for certain periods in the year). Besides external support, which is not sufficient to reach all who need it, and which has also been criticised for being politicised (Cochrane and Tamiru 2016), households have their own internal support systems to draw upon in case of need.

It is clear that the most vulnerable groups in the target districts are not helped by solutions that focus on a single cause or problem. The root causes of the current situation are multiple, complex, and interrelated. Any attempt to change the current situation will have to take into account the context, the vulnerabilities and resilience basis, as well as the on-going coping strategies that the different households are already applying. Such attempts would need to take the following aspects seriously:

- Strong and narrow dependence on agriculture-based livelihoods is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain (with degraded land as most pressing problem, worsened by effects of climate change);
- Limited other options to get out of agriculture, which leaves migration to sesame areas as the most 'attractive' option (or best of unattractive options) for desperate households;
- Complex relationships between government and citizens which has been characterised by both distrust and interdependence (whereby the government needs citizens as support base to remain in power, and citizens have become dependent on structural aid from the government).
- Limited asset base, and high likelihood of and impact from shocks. This makes it difficult to escape from poverty, and more likely that households will live 'from one shock to another'. External support programmes that promote longer term resilience (e.g. saving, asset building) will likely face (implicit) resistance because people will have the habit of living from one shock to another. Changing the outlook from "will I survive tomorrow" to "saving for later" is a shift in mindset which will not come natural to most of the households in this group.
- Strong social cohesion among households to help each other out, both in source areas and destination areas. This is an asset that could be built on, but it is also an asset that makes it difficult for people to increase their own asset base, as this social cohesion also 'forces' people to help each other.

Overall, the strategies that would have highest likelihood of success to support the most vulnerable would be a combination of:

- Direct and structural financial support to manage shocks on the short term, combined with support to reduce the dependence on agriculture for livelihoods;
- Improved education opportunities combined with job creation for the young generation to escape from agriculture and engage in other economic sectors;
- Migration to areas with better natural and economic conditions and opportunities. The government of Ethiopia has resettlement programmes in place already (with varied levels of success and prone to criticism by human rights organisations). The key is to offer a substantial livelihood in the resettlement area, and that it is on voluntary basis.
- A combination of government and non-government support (private or nongovernmental organisations), whereby the non-governmental support could be complementary to what the government offers already (e.g. PSNP is quite big but lacks certain elements such as a component focusing on catalysing local economic development in combination with vocational training).

Specifically looking at the most vulnerable group (who engages in casual wage labour), who generally has less land and livestock to draw from, may be more open towards other economic opportunities than migrant crop farmers.

4 Case 2 - unemployed migrant youth from pastoralist communities in Eastern Somaliland

4.1 Introduction of the case

Situation sketch

Boerema et al. (2020) characterize the case study area of Sool and Sanaag district in Somaliland as follows (see Box 1 for basic info on the region): "Agriculture is considered the most important sector for Somaliland's economy and particularly for Sool and Sanaag regions. In 2012 (most recent estimate), agriculture contributed to more than 40% of the GDP, with the livestock sub-sector contributing 29.5%, crops and forestry 13.4%, and fisheries 0.2% (MoNDP, 2017). The agricultural sector is also the most important employer, with livestock production and related activities employing around 27% of women and 20% of men (Pfeifer, et al., 2018). In Sool and Sanaag, crop cultivation remains very limited, and mainly focusses on the production of animal fodder. Production of small quantities of beans and maize for household consumption exists, but the most important agricultural activity remains livestock production. Furthermore, the region is characterized by a high dependency on food imports, and typically income generated (through agricultural activities) is spent on buying (imported) food.

Box 1. Somaliland facts at a glance

- Population Somaliland 3.85M, Sanaag 511,000, Sool 115,000 (Wikipedia)
- Over 70 per cent of Somalia's population is under the age of 30
- The unemployment rate for youth aged 14 to 29 is 67 per cent—one of the highest rates in the world. Among young women it is even estimated at 74 per cent
- It is estimated that 4.4 million children and youth aged 6-18 years are out of school
- Early marriages and teenage pregnancies are common; an estimated 45 per cent of women aged 20-24 were married by the age of 18.

Source: UNCT Somalia, s.y.

Several socio-economic drivers influence these dynamics: 1) there is a strong connection between the GDP and the livestock market, giving food a rather more commercial frame than a 'basic need' perspective; 2) very limited enforced land tenure systems or local authorities exist in rural areas and existing informal land tenure systems are increasingly being challenged, due to increased pressure on farmland and rangelands, influenced by socio-economic drivers, including a lack of formal employment opportunities and a loss of soil productivity (due to a changing climate, recurring shocks and stressors and unsustainable land use practices), all of which result in increased competition over land, making it difficult to create a more formal business chain. As such, the described dynamics influence the food system towards livestock rather than agriculture.

Regarding food system outcomes, the food security outcomes are rather poor, with current IPC level 2² and predictions towards IPC 3, embedded in a long food insecurity history. Socio-economic outcomes include the increasing urbanisation trends, which could provide better income for some, but as there is a lack of (formal) employment opportunities, particularly youth risk unemployment.

² The IPC Acute Food Insecurity (IPC AFI) classification provides differentiation between different levels of severity of acute food insecurity, classifying units of analysis in five distinct phases: (1) Minimal/None, (2) Stressed, (3) Crisis, (4) Emergency, (5) Catastrophe/Famine. See <http://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/ipc-overview-and-classification-system/en/>

Furthermore, it makes elderly more dependent on remittance payments since they often cannot herd alone. Most significantly seems to be the environmental outcomes since overgrazing and deforestation led to soil and land degradation. This degradation resulted in the loss of many natural livestock fodder sources like grasses and shrubs, which further leads to increased flood risks. Attempts were made to counter these issues by introducing (edible) invasive species that became a source of soil degradation themselves" (page iii).

And: "Protracted crisis situations, such as in Sool and Sanaag, pose particular programming challenges. In Sool and Sanaag, food insecurity levels have been high over prolonged periods of time (Waithanji, et al., 2020). While violence and insecurity because of competition over land, land disputes and particular tribal tensions remain key driving forces characterizing the protracted crisis, other factors contributing to unsustainable livelihoods include environmental degradation, climate change and unsustainable livelihood practices. International actors, development donors and private sector actors are hesitant to intervene in complex and dynamic situations such as in Sool and Sanaag, further limiting potential pathways out of a complex situation of prolonged food insecurity. As a consequence, humanitarian agencies are the predominant actors in Sool and Sanaag and while addressing the unsafe conditions (e.g. providing basic need items and food) created by the crisis, they are not able to address the crisis' root causes. Furthermore, building resilience in such a protracted crisis area is a challenge as it requires a certain level of social cohesion as well as it assumes stable institutions and governance systems to rely on long-term – which are less predictable in such a context" (Boerema et al. (2020), page 5).

Sool and Sanaag districts cover the Eastern part of Somaliland. Of the nineteen livelihood zones distinguished by FSNAU for Somalia (Figure2), five are distinguished in Sool and Sanaag, of which four are pastoralist zones and one, the coastal zone, is agro-pastoral with frankincense as the main crop. In other words: in the two districts, pastoralism is the major livelihood activity, with sale and export of livestock as most important commodity.

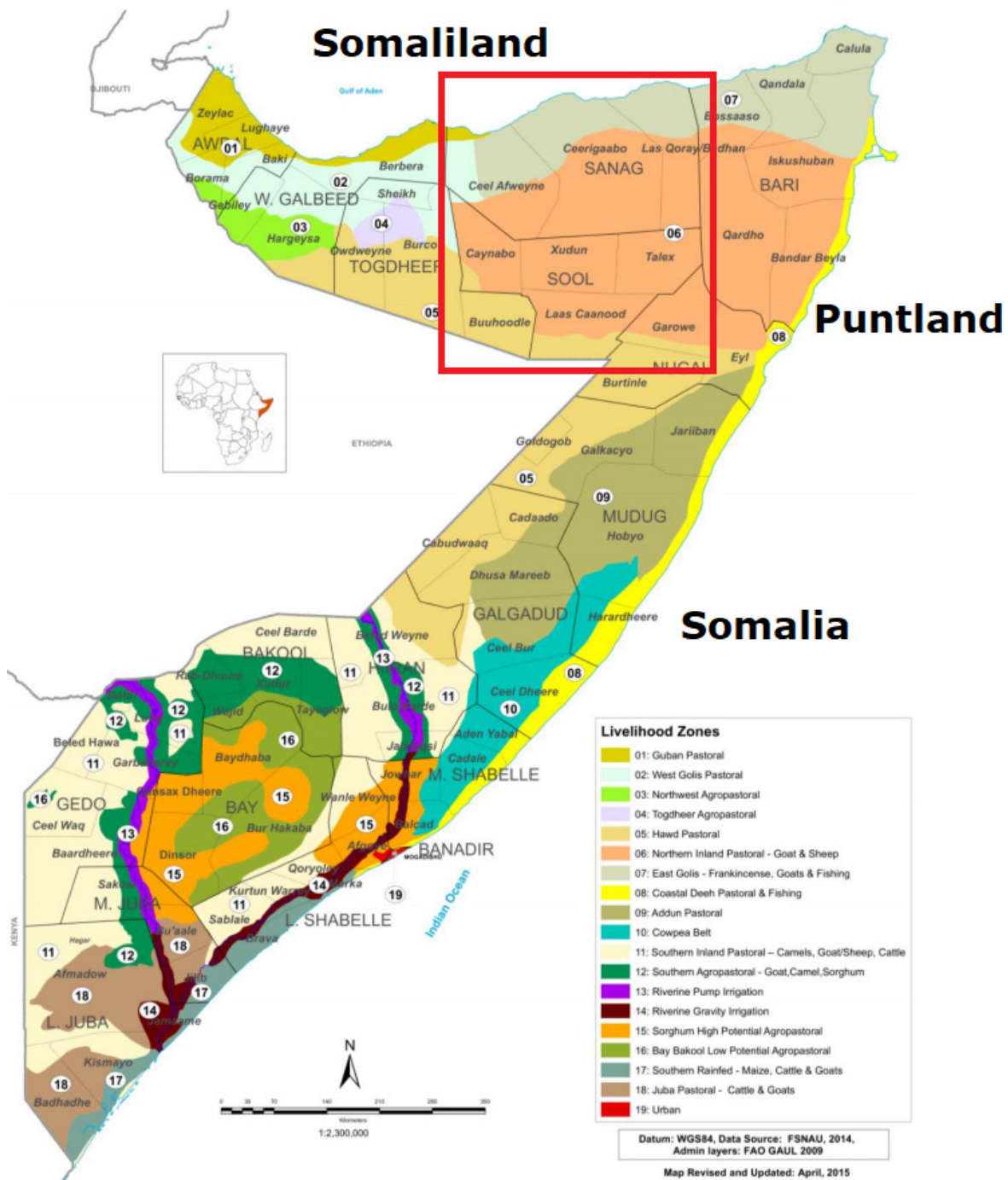


Figure 2 Livelihood zones of Sool and Sanaag regions in Eastern Somaliland
Source: Adapted from FSNAU (2014)

Selection of the most vulnerable group in terms of focus of the appraisal

Waithanji et al. (2020) indicated three candidate groups that could be considered to be the most vulnerable within the Somali (agro-)pastoralist society (see Table 7). The poorest wealth group (defined as having few camels and a few dozen sheep & goats only; actual thresholds differ per livelihood zone), women, and unemployed migrant youth (who are forced to migrate to the towns and cities to look for work, but fail to find decent employment). Workshop discussions indicated that the cross-section of these two groups could be considered the most vulnerable: Unemployed youth can be divided into youth who have relatives that can cover their needs, and youth without such support from relatives. Both subgroups do suffer from stress, which endangers them to be drawn into begging, criminal activities, or drafting into armed groups.

We thus identified as most vulnerable group 'unemployed youth from poor families, who do not receive (significant) support from their (extended) family due to those families' poverty' (below abbreviated to

UMYWSR – unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives). These youth cannot build up a livelihood in the countryside, as family assets are insufficient. They migrate to the cities in search of work, but lack of skills, lack of network, and lack of investment resources make it difficult for them to compete for work, be it in employment or through an own business (Yusuf et al. 2019).

Table 7 Two reported divisions of target society for identification of the most vulnerable group for Sool and Sanaag

a. Wealth groups	Indicators *)	Thresholds in different livelihood zones
Poor (~30%)	Few camels, few dozen sheep and goats Very small frankincense field (agro-pastoral zone) 'Kob' land (agro-pastoral zone)	Guban pastoral zone: < 6 camels, < 4 dozen sheep and goats West-Golis pastoral zone: < 6 camels, < 7 dozen sheep and goats Hawd pastoral zone: < 10 camels, < 5 dozen sheep and goats Northern Inland pastoral zone: no camels, < 5 dozen sheep and goats East Golis agro-pastoral zone: no camels, < 5 dozen sheep and goats; <i>kob</i> land (very small, access difficult)
Middle (~50%)	Few dozen camels, number of dozens sheep and goats 'Jaan' land (agro-pastoral zone)	Guban pastoral zone: 7-15 camels, 4-7 dozen sheep and goats West-Golis pastoral zone: 7-20 camels, 8-15 dozen sheep and goats Hawd pastoral zone: 20-60 camels, 5-12 dozen sheep and goats Northern Inland pastoral zone: < 1 dozen camels, 10 dozen sheep and goats East Golis agro-pastoral zone: < 1 dozen camels, 5-8 dozen sheep and goats; Jaan land (larger land, with better access to road and water)
Better-off (~20%)	Many dozen camels, many dozen sheep and goats 'Jaan weyn' land (agro-pastoral zone)	Guban pastoral zone: > 20 camels, > 7 dozen sheep and goats West-Golis pastoral zone: > 2 dozen camels, > 15 dozen sheep and goats Hawd pastoral zone: > 5 dozen camels, > 12 dozen sheep and goats Northern Inland pastoral zone: > 1 dozen camels, > 15 dozen sheep and goats East Golis agro pastoral zone: > 1 dozen camels, > 8 dozen sheep and goats; Jaan weyn land (largest field, most fertile, best access)
b. Migrant youth	Indicators	
Unemployed	No employment or employed in basic jobs (car wash, shoe polishing, cleaning). Live hand-to-mouth.	
Employed	Employed in proper jobs or have stable business. Providers for relatives.	

Source: Waithanji et al. (2020) and workshop.

To create sufficient context and contrast for the most vulnerable group that this case study focuses on, where necessary we contrast this group with two other groups: employed migrant youth who have succeeded in finding work (or their own business) and are able to send remittances back home; and unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives (UMYWSR), either from their source community or in their destination community. As indicated above in section 1.2.3, profiles were based on literature sources Boerema et al. 2020; Kaut 2020abc; Waithanji et al. 2020, and discussion in the workshops.

The data in Box 1 suggest that unemployed migrant youth is a sizeable group. Roughly a quarter of the population being youth is between 14 and 29 years old, of which two-thirds is unemployed. However, from these data it is not clear what percentage of pastoralist youth is migrating to the towns and cities, what percentage of that group is unemployed, and whether the poorest wealth group is over-represented in this unemployed migrant youth category. Internal migration from Sool/Sanaag to the capital city is significant, because of lack of jobs in the rural area, and services being concentrated in the capital city. From the capital, youth looks for migration options abroad. International migration is going down because Europe is limiting immigration, and because the route via Libya is becoming more difficult.

Some effects that this unemployed youth does have on society are captured in the following statements (workshop notes):

- Youth 'live like parasites', using resources of employed persons in the family.
- They marry without having anything, this could affect the nutrition of the pregnant wife or mother, potentially resulting in underweight babies.
- They are putting themselves or others at risk of addiction and violence.
- The 75% unemployed hate 'everyone with a car or whoever is eating well'.

4.2 Context profile

Table 8 lists the relevant context characteristics that (potentially) affect vulnerability and resilience of the source community and the unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives.

Table 8 Relevant context profile

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)	Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives
What relevant characteristics of the context (e.g. food system) (potentially) affect their VULNERABILITY? What relates to public sector conditions and what to private sector conditions? How do the context conditions differ between local, national, and global?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rampant conflict in the local area, country and region, among others caused by a turbulent political past and clan structure. • Low economic development, with low diversification and strong dependence on pastoralism in a fragile environment. • Weak state with few policies and regulations, and very low levels of service provision, e.g. for water management and social protection. Unsustainable practices by farmers and companies go virtually unchecked. • Context conditions are characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Natural capital:</i> drought prone, fragile environment <i>Physical capital:</i> poor infrastructure; poor animal health services. <i>Financial capital:</i> dependent on livestock trade, primarily for export market <i>Human capital:</i> Very few functioning schools in rural areas <i>Social capital:</i> clan-based society with traditional social protection mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General causes of unemployment include poverty, a defective education system, and rapid population increase. The unemployed outnumber the employed, as jobs are very limited. • There are no factories that hire people, also not in Hargeisa and Burao, and much less in Sool and Sanaag. Only the communication sector offers some employment. Traders do buy agricultural produce, but no local processing occurs. • Important specific causes of youth unemployment are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Absence of governmental institutions with a mandate for job creation 2. Lack of vocational skills and training for Somali youth 3. Lack of skills, capacities and resources needed to qualify for a job 4. Improper empowerment on job vacancies. • The population size of unemployed youth varies from city to city. Largest numbers are in Hargeisa, the Somaliland capital. These include refugees from Ethiopia, Yemen and Southern Somalia, as a result of wars in the region. • In Sool and Sanaag, the migrant youth communities are smaller than in the cities. Over the past three years, the number of migrant youths from pastoralist communities into urban areas has risen, in particular as a result of droughts and other shocks and stresses.
What relevant characteristics of the context (potentially) affect their RESILIENCE? How big of a role does it play for the overall resilience of the group?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of economic opportunities results in short term survival strategies at the cost of social cohesion and environmental protection • International concerns about spin-offs of the Somali conflict result in significant and ongoing aid to the area, through UN agencies, bilateral agencies, and NGOs. For example, WFP offers food aid, FAO runs a soil and water management unit with the Somaliland authorities; and a watershed management team with the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture. • Strong community support mechanisms promote solidarity in the (own) community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are migrating from smaller towns to cities and then to Libya and Europe. UMYWSR usually can't follow this path due to lack of skills, finances and networks. • Where possible, they make use of resources of relatives (capital, food, networks), which UMYWSR are less able to do. • Vocational training programs do target better educated and better connected youth, leaving UMYWSR last in line. • Joining armed groups is seen by many as the best opportunity available.

- In both rural and urban Somaliland, food is purchased rather than home-grown. It is mostly imported from outside the area. The means for these imports mainly come from livestock exports.

4.3 Shocks and stresses/risk profile

Table 9 lists shocks and stresses that were considered to have important impact on the target groups. **Droughts, livestock diseases** and other shocks reduce the livelihood options of youth in pastoral areas. They then migrate away from their families to the cities, where they become unemployed due to scarcity of jobs. When there is **conflict**, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) looking for employment will increase, which further decreases the chances of migrant youth to be employed.

Risks that specifically affect (unemployed) youth include **drafting by armed groups**, who target unemployed youth (army, armed groups along border Somaliland-Puntland, Al Shabab (South of Somalia), clan conflicts). These groups offer temporary contracts (2-3 months). Unemployed youth also is at high risk of **addiction to drugs or-alcohol**, of committing **crimes** to get money to eat (thievery, killing).

Table 9A Typical risk profile for source community ((agro-)pastoralists)

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)				
Most important shocks/stresses	Likelihood	Susceptibility	Impact on basic needs	Comments
Droughts & floods	High	High	High	
Deforestation	High	Moderate	Moderate	Deforestation is caused by cutting trees for, a.o., charcoal production (Sanaag) and house building (Nugaal)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensified by village "roads" • Unsustainable harvesting of environmental resources (charcoal, timber) 				Charcoal production causes a short-run problem, but also a long-run problem (climate change).
Livestock diseases	High	High	High	Animals are sensitive to diseases; even a mild disease could cause high mortality.
Armed conflict	High	High	High	Sool and Sanaag geographically are disputed territory in between two Somali administrations: Somaliland and Puntland. Both are claiming territory. UN staff is not allowed to go there, unless under heavy security measures. Risk of armed groups and gangs is significant.
Local community conflict over grazing lands	Moderate	High	High	These conflicts may be due to overgrazing, city expansion, and displaced people's camps.
Desert locust plagues	High	High	High	Occurs approximately three times per year. The last two years it was really high. Before that it was moderate (2x per year, or some years not a problem).
Volatility of markets for input/output/fuel/staples	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Dependency on livestock exports makes local markets sensitive to export fluctuations.
Youth unemployment	High	Moderate	Moderate	Unemployed youth can rely on their relatives, but they have few opportunities and it can cause stress.
What livelihood activities are (expected to be) impacted by these shocks/stresses?				
Pastoralism	Notes			
Agriculture (frankincense).	In Sanaag region, frankincense production has dwindled, due to climate changes.			
Food trade	Food prices have gone up, which increases the living expenses of pastoralists.			
Livestock trade & export	Animal prices sometimes go down, especially when export opportunities are reduced, such as			
Charcoal production	due to the COVID-19 crisis.			

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)	
What are the root causes that underpin the high likelihood of and high susceptibility to these risks?	
Dependence on traded food and fodder.	All mentioned risks increase unemployment and migration. When the community suffers a socio-economic low due to these shocks and stresses, the youth also suffers.
Damage to the environmental resource base.	From 15-16 years onwards, the family can give the youth some animals (camels, cows), provided the family owns sufficient animals and does not have too many children. If they receive animals, they will probably not migrate to the cities, unless they lose the animals due to disease or drought. If a boy is still with the family, he is still protected by them. If he is married (15-18 years old) and loses the animals, he may be forced to migrate and to divorce.
Need for outmigration.	

Table 9B Typical risk profile for unemployed youth without support from relatives from (agro-)pastoralist communities

Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives				
Most important shocks/stresses	Likelihood	Susceptibility	Impact on basic needs	Comments
Droughts & floods	High	High	High	These increase the chances of unemployment and reduce the support their family can give them.
Livestock diseases	Low	High	High	
Desert locust	High	High	High	
Damage to environmental resource base	High	Moderate	Moderate	
Conflict – drafting by armed groups	High	High (UMY, with/ without support). Moderate (employed migrant youth).	Moderate to High	This specifically affects unemployed youth, as armed groups target unemployed youth (army, armed groups along the Somaliland-Puntland border, Al Shabab (South of Somalia), clan conflicts). These groups offer temporary contracts (2-3 months).
Unemployment	High	High	High	Unemployment is very high. Conflict leads to higher number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) looking for employment, decreasing the chances of youth to be employed.
Food price hikes	High	High	High	Leads to committing crimes to get money to eat (thievery, killing).
Addiction to drugs or-alcohol	High	High	High	Addiction to drugs is overwhelming in Somaliland (mainly khat, also tablets/injections (tramadol).
What are the root causes that underpin the high likelihood of and high susceptibility to these risks?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Migration • Addiction to drugs • Recruitment by extremist armed groups. 		<i>The main cause of unemployment of Somali pastoralist youth is inadequate development of the agricultural sector. Approximately 70% of the people directly rely on agriculture as a means of living. □Agriculture can reduce the high rate of unemployment in developing countries caused by the fast growing population like us.</i>		

4.4 Vulnerability and resilience profiles

The following Table 10 combines the vulnerability and resilience profiles (Figure 1) for the pastoralist source community and the UMYWSR. It outlines what assets and practices play a role in them being vulnerable and in what way; what assets and practices enable their resilience responses and in what way. Where appropriate, more detail is provided on the context conditions relevant

Table 10 Typical vulnerability and resilience profile of source community and unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)			Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives	
Capital	Vulnerability – what assets and practices play a role	Resilience – what assets and practices enable resilience responses	Vulnerability – what assets and practices play a role	Resilience – what assets and practices enable resilience responses
Natural	Assets Water - limited rainfall Land - limited access to pasture with water; loss of soil fertility; loss of forest cover; Practices - poor water and land management practices	Forests – used for charcoal production, timber extraction. Seasonal migration of livestock; storage of fodder.	Assets - UMYWSR have very few assets (mostly animals, that are at risk to shocks/stresses as described above) Practices No info available	UMYWSR flock to cities, where employment opportunities are highest.
Physical	Assets - Livestock subject to diseases and malnutrition Practices - Strong dependence on livestock only.	Build up large livestock herds. Shift from camels to sheep and goats. Build enclosures to separate livestock for more intensive feeding and for agricultural production. Grow frankincense trees (agro-pastoral zone only). Water management. Rely on distributed water, food, fodder.	Assets - When they lose animals they are forced to migrate. Practices No info available	Look for employment in cities or in armed groups. Successful youth further migrate to cities/Libya/Europe.

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)			Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives	
<i>Capital</i>	<i>Vulnerability – what assets and practices play a role</i>	<i>Resilience – what assets and practices enable resilience responses</i>	<i>Vulnerability – what assets and practices play a role</i>	<i>Resilience – what assets and practices enable resilience responses</i>
Financial	<p>Assets</p> <p>Food needs to be purchased. Dependence on livestock trade; Low income, unemployment</p> <p>Practices</p> <p>They sell milk, ghee, hides, all as raw material, without value addition.</p>	<p>Herd destocking and restocking / buffering of livestock sales. Rely on stored food, fodder and water; rely on remittances. Purchase food, fodder and water; Market linkages/connect to markets. Livelihood diversification (more agro-pastoralist lifestyle; establishing new businesses for alternative livelihoods, charcoal production; migrant labour). Livestock exports to cater to strong demand from Gulf states.</p>	<p>Assets - UMYWSR have very few assets Practices - Those without means of survival. Will revert to criminality or will join armed groups.</p>	<p>Inherited resources and finance from relatives help migrant youth to start business. When they can't find (self-)employment, joining armed groups and criminality seem to be the only options.</p>
Human	<p>Assets</p> <p>Low education levels</p> <p>Practices</p> <p>No info available</p> <p>Conditions</p> <p>Skills & preparedness gaps</p>	<p>Lowering food intake.</p>	<p>Assets - UMYWSR skill levels typically are not adequate to get employment. Practices - UMY are disadvantaged compared to city youth. Desperation makes them vulnerable to addictions and mental problems. These may affect their health. Involvement in criminality or armed conflict may put their life at risk.</p>	<p>Intelligence, skills and personal attitudes help youth to have better chances in town. Only the ones with technical skills get a job. In some sectors, there are jobs, but it is difficult to find the right people.</p>
Social	<p>Assets - perceived poor community organisation Practices - clannism – village committees could create tensions with clan organisation. Conditions</p> <p>Protracted conflicts Overall moral frustration</p>	<p>Political connection (aid distribution). Community structures - Somalis are part of extended families, with strong social support customs. Communal land use rights. Traditional Muslim social support mechanisms (see section 1.4.6) Establishment of village committees.</p>	<p>Assets - When relatives are not able to support, UMY become very vulnerable. Practices - Some UMY from richer pastoralist families will not accept lower-level jobs. E.g. hairdresser charging \$ 5. If they cannot set up their own business, this could prevent them from getting a job.</p>	<p>Network of relatives help youth to have better chances in town. Relatives in the city accommodate them, send them to school. UMYWSR are likely to lack such options.</p>

Capacities and capabilities

In the text below we analyse how resilience capacities are activated through responses to shocks that vulnerable groups are faced with. We do this by distinguishing three types of capacities: absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities.

Absorptive capacity:

Redundancy: Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists communities have strong absorptive mechanisms. Partly these show redundancy: The build-up of the livestock herd, frankincense trees, communal grazing lands and forests all create buffers that can be used in adverse times of shocks or heavy stresses. Moreover, households store food, fodder, and water for times of scarcity. In a sense, food aid can be considered as a buffer as well. For the poorer wealth group, asset scarcity leads to lack of buffers. This is particularly acute for the UMYWSR.

Flexibility: Seasonal migration of livestock allows pastoralists to 'follow the rains' in search of forage. Herds can be destocked and restocked by buffering of livestock sales. Livestock sales are geared to cater to strong demand for sheep and goats from the Gulf states. Where necessary, food intake in the household can be lowered. Asset scarcity of the poorer wealth group reduces this flexibility. For UMYWSR, options are basically limited to undesirable alternatives.

Adaptive capacity

Diversification: Households diversify their income by increasing remittances from migrant relatives in town or abroad, that augment livestock sales for the purchase of food, fodder and water. Household may also seek new connections to livestock markets. The formation of food aid distribution mechanisms across clan structures is an adaptation to secure access to food aid. The poor wealth groups typically lack access to remittances and are more limited in marketing through novel channels, which need time to identify and cultivate. Lack of assets makes diversification near impossible for UMYWSR.

Flexibility: Where communal land risks overgrazing, households increase volume of stored fodder and increase the construction of enclosures to separate livestock for more intensive feeding and for agricultural production. Herd composition can be shifted from camels to sheep and goats for easier sale and facing stronger demand. Water management methods can be adapted as well. Flexibility requires assets of various kinds, making it less of a strategy for poor wealth groups and UMYWSR. They are more likely to end up with harmful alternatives (to themselves or the environment, such as charcoal production).

Transformative capacity

Over time, multiple adaptations show a shift towards a more agro-pastoralist lifestyle with more crop production, more intensive livestock keeping (enclosures), and towards more non-pastoralist livelihood activities, such as establishment of new businesses (charcoal production and timber extraction). This includes the need to improve livestock practices, such as feeding practices, how animals are kept, and the way milk is stored and marketed. It assumes the time and assets to innovate, which is most feasible for medium and better-off wealth groups.

4.5 Function-at-risk/basic needs profile

Table 11 lists the basic needs that are or may be under pressure as a result of the shocks and stresses listed above.

Table 11 *Typical Basic needs profile*

Source community ((agro-)pastoralists)	Unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives
What basic needs are already under pressure? Because of what?	
Food: High IPC levels ² (2, even 3) - food availability - food access - food quality - food stability Food is purchased, prices fluctuate.	Food: Unemployed without support from relatives: no income means no food. Unemployed with support from relatives: can depend somewhat on provision from relatives.
Land: user rights, soil fertility, deforestation, erosion – due to lack of policies and overgrazing.	
Water: shortages for people and livestock – climate change	
Security: conflicts over land, water, terrorism, (inter)national conflict.	Security: drafting by armed groups/conflicts; drawn to criminality.
Livelihood opportunities: few	Livelihood opportunities: very few
Health: high infectious disease rate and child mortality (90/1000), life expectancy 54 year; drinking water shortages affect hygiene and health.	Health: drug and alcohol addiction.
Education: < 50% formal education.	Education: very limited access to vocational training, further education.

4.6 Support profile

The support profile for *unemployed youth without support from relatives* seems to be very limited, as they appear to miss out on most of the ongoing support mechanisms. With reference to Figure 3, and mainly in response to shocks that already occurred, these include:

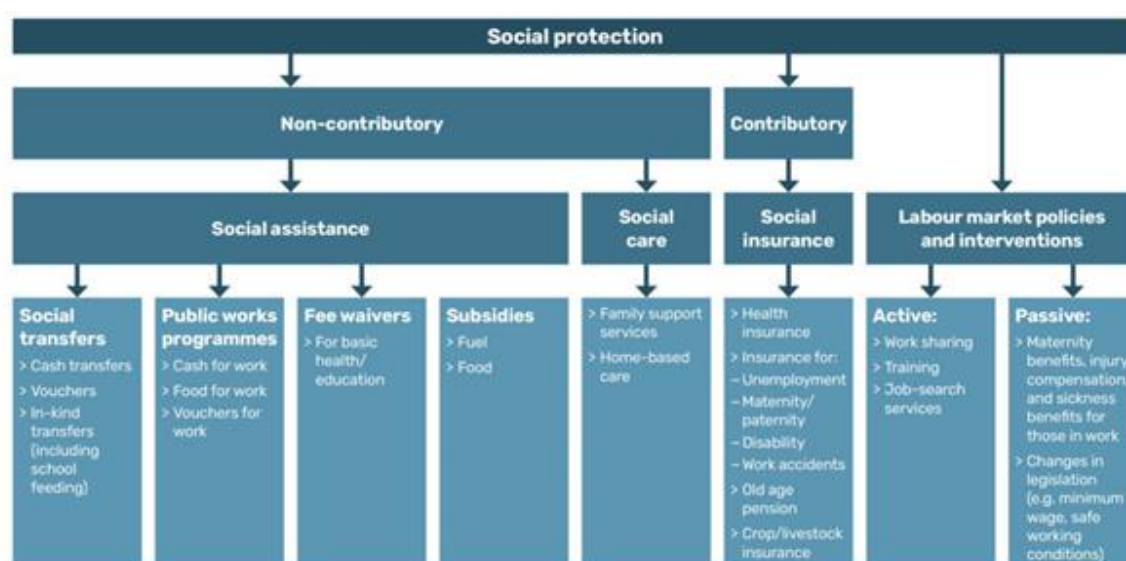


Figure 3 *Typology of social protection instruments. Source: Worldbank (2018)*

-
- a. *Social care - Traditional community support mechanisms* - In traditional Muslim culture that is prominent in Somaliland, a variety of social protection mechanism cushion the impact of shocks and stresses on the poor. Majoka (2017) describes fifteen of traditional cash and in-kind safety net mechanisms, such as *zaqat (alms)*, *quaraan (social security fund)*, and *afur (food donations)*. These mechanisms, to the extent observed, may improve resilience of poor pastoralist households, but is unlikely to do much for unemployed migrant youth from such households.
 - b. *Social assistance - Aid distributions and public work programmes* - Handouts of food, water, and fodder by governmental and/or aid organizations through village relief committees may offer temporary relief – if reaching unemployed youth – but due to its unreliable planning is not likely to build resilience of unemployed youth. Government is financially weak and busy with security and infrastructure, and does not have much resources for education and basic services. Assistance to IDPs (for food, fodder, water, and security in camps) primarily is organized by international organizations.
 - c. *Contributory - social insurance* - These are barely in place and generally not accessible to UMYWSR. See also Wattel, C.J., M. Sopov and M.A.J.M. van Asseldonk (2021). *Responsible finance for vulnerable groups under COVID-19* on risk finance mechanisms.
 - d. *Labour market policies and interventions - Vocational training programs* - Development organizations such as ILO (UNCT, s.y.) do run vocational training programs for youth in the major cities (Hargeisa and Burao). Due to their lack of secondary education and networks, unemployed migrant youth from poor pastoralist household can be expected to be last in line and unlikely to benefit.

4.7 Discussion and conclusions on this case

This case clearly shows how vulnerability and resilience of the selected most vulnerable group in Somaliland society – unemployed migrant youth without support from relatives – is connected to the situation in both their source community (pastoralists) and their host-community (in towns and cities). Due to prevailing shocks, due to asset scarcity and lack of livelihood opportunities in their host community (specifically due to the poor wealth stratum they originate from), and due to the scarcity of livelihood opportunities in the host-community, UMYWSR are particularly vulnerable. The few remaining resilience strategies at their disposal only deepen their vulnerability: The strategy of criminality puts their security at risk, the strategy of joining armed groups even threatens their very lives.

The general malaise Somaliland society is in, puts the UMYWSR into a dire situation. Assets and livelihood opportunities are under stress due to droughts, floods, and locusts (pastoral communities), prolonged conflicts, and economic (Kaut 2020b). This leads to scarcity of assets and livelihood opportunities for the general population, and in an extreme way for the UMYWSR as most vulnerable group. Available resources are already utilized in unsustainable ways, leading to environmental degradation, deforestation and heightened conflict. Access of UMYWSR to support mechanisms – such as social safety nets (both from within the community and from external actors) and employment-enhancing programs – is very limited indeed, leading to very low resilience. Morale understandably is very low. It is no wonder that the situation of the UMYWSR – without assets, support mechanisms, or sustainable livelihood opportunities – is labelled as ‘desperate’, that addiction and criminality are rife, and that they are willing subjects for recruitment into armed groups.

To increase the resilience of UMYWSR, two main strategies may be explored:

1. Job creation in the cities, which would prevent them from recruitment by armed groups and from further migration to the capital or abroad (Borino and Sage, 2019).
2. Improve opportunities and resilience in the pastoralist communities. In this domain, the most promising strategies may be to intensify livestock production through fodder system development, or to extend agriculture and horticulture (agro-pastoralism), including specialties such as frankincense and apiculture (Sanaag). These would diversify pastoralist livelihood activities with the intention to spread their risks. This requires extension to other livelihood possibilities (knowledge, inputs/seeds, resources, infrastructure, agricultural extension) for pastoralist communities. Agriculture/crop production could be an alternative to be less dependent on livestock

and to increase food security. However, this requires institutional safeguarding against ecological overexploitation³.

"In Sanaag, beekeeping is an important potential source of income. Sanaag is famous for honey production, but not all people are aware of this" (workshop)

Both sets of strategies require investment, extension/ knowledge dissemination, education & training, and rehabilitation centres to motivate and train youth to take care of themselves.

³ FNS-REPRO looks at the importance of improving availability of fodder, also in lean periods, but how to achieve this? Currently this is still in the idea stage; informing and mobilizing the target population would be a first step, and find out why they do not use fodder. Market research is required on fodder markets, origins, prices, where to get affordable fodder etc.
FAO practices group formation in villages (farmers, pastoralists), with training on leadership. Village committee is combining representatives from multiple groups.

5 Reflection on the two case studies

How the framework helps to understand vulnerability

The profiles in the previous paragraphs offered a good way to identify context, shocks & stresses, vulnerability, resilience, basic needs at risk, and available support. The profiles, and the various questions outlined in *Wigboldus, S. and J. Jacobs (March 2021). Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Towards a sense-making framework and assessment methodology* that formed the basis for these two case studies, stimulate a systematic analysis of the target group's situations. As a framework, it offers considerable depth and nuance to what is still a quick assessment.

It is striking to see that in both cases, migrant labourers were identified as most vulnerable group in society, both in the source community and in the host community. This is not strange when one considers that only those with insufficient livelihood opportunities leave home to search for work elsewhere. In both cases, shocks and stresses in the source community were both persistent and severe, eroding assets and social safety nets, increasing vulnerability and reducing resilience options.

In both case studies a clear distinction of migrants into various segments could be made. In the Ethiopia case, this concerned three distinct groups with varying starting situations (in terms of land, livestock, social networks and financial means to invest), varying motivations for migration (to seek better economic opportunities or to reduce the number of mouths to feed back home), and various labour engagements (sesame farming, casual labourer, full time labourer). In the Somaliland case, migrant youth could be divided in those with and those without assets in the form of capital, networks, and support from relatives. Youths with assets clearly had better chances of finding decent employment or starting their own ventures. Next to scarcity of assets and livelihood opportunities, both cases also tell of social and mental stress, with frustration, addictions, criminality, and participation in armed groups as common outcomes.

Some differences were evident as well. In the case of Somaliland, most opportunities were found in urban areas, while in the case of Ethiopia, opportunities seemed better in commercial agricultural areas (although we have not compared those opportunities in detail with urban opportunities).

Through this exercise we learned that identifying the most vulnerable group is difficult to do beforehand, as groups are mostly defined in broad terms. Part of the implementation of the case study was actually to identify and distinguish multiple groups and contrast them in terms of their assets, the shocks and stressors that affect them, their coping mechanisms, and their basic needs. The framework could be improved by making this 'search for the most vulnerable group' more explicit.

To what extent the framework helps to get a better view on what the most vulnerable need

In the profiles, we have chosen to contrast the most vulnerable group with either the entire community or with other (migrant) groups in similar predicaments (but being less vulnerable). Contrasting offers more insight into what the most vulnerable groups are missing in terms of assets and opportunities. This gives more insights in how different shocks affect different groups, what the different groups can build upon in terms of assets, and what they would need in terms of support.

This brought to the foreground that even within migrant communities there are differences in terms of sources of vulnerability, types of shocks, etc. In the case of Ethiopia, migrants who engage in sesame farming actually hire the other categories of migrants. Breach of contract, an often mentioned risk among all three categories of migrants, affects these groups differently, and sometimes places them opposite each other. Perceiving such sub-groups as one group with similar support needs is not helpful. I.e., supporting 'the most vulnerable' would need different strategies than supporting those migrants who have the assets to hire land in sesame areas.

To what extent the focus on shocks & stresses is useful for the most vulnerable group

For the Ethiopia case, the shocks and stressors profile was of added value because it made clear that the different groups not only face different shocks, they also are affected in a different way by similar shocks (e.g. COVID-19 and ethnic violence).

Aspects of vulnerability and resilience that are easy/difficult to grasp in a relatively quick assessment

In both cases, politics – in the sense of the relationships between local government and citizens – and ethnic tensions are quite influential in the daily lives of people. As this is a sensitive topic, it is not easy to capture this through a quick assessment, particularly when the local researchers are part of the system and/or are not trained in this type of sensitive inquiry work.

In the conceptual framework we used many different aspects and dimensions of vulnerability and resilience were addressed that could potentially be assessed in the case study. While applying the framework, at times it was difficult to strike the right balance between the need for nuance and doing justice to all dimensions of vulnerability and resilience on the one hand, and keeping in mind that this is a quick scan on the other. This made us decide to mention resilience capabilities but not to go in much detail in discussing how aspects such as flexibility, redundancy, and diversification relate to each other and what this implies for the resilience of the most vulnerable groups.

Insights that application of the framework provided

- Identification of most vulnerable group requires a layered stratification exercise – in our cases, wealth ranking of source and host community, combined with stratification of migrant community;
- The most vulnerable group is at the receiving end of community / society / food system / farming system – identified pathways for strengthening of resilience show that with most pathways, the community at large needs strengthening before resilience of the most vulnerable group can be strengthened and
- The profiles are useful to understand the complexity of the food system in which vulnerable groups operate. They are faced with a myriad of shocks and stressors, which in most cases strongly relate to their coping mechanisms (i.e. migration in this case). The exercise gave us the insight that it is not useful to focus on one particular shock or stressor, because it is impossible to disentangle the effects of one particular shock from others as the vulnerable groups in this case are more or less 'living from one shock to another'. Literally, the local researcher from SBN who was responsible for conducting the FGD said: "I don't know how to translate this [shocks] and I don't know if they will understand the question as their life is full of constant shocks; they don't consider them as shocks but their daily reality".

For external support programmes that do not have an eye for specific groups within their general target group, this exercise of developing profiles for the most vulnerable groups could be very useful. It enables aid organisations to identify specific vulnerabilities, resilience strategies, and needs of specific groups. It helps to avoid falling in the trap of helping those who are relatively better off.

Required adaptations to the current framework

A number of difficulties were encountered in applying the profiles:

- Not all questions listed in *Wigboldus, S. and J. Jacobs (March 2021). Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to (food) system shocks – Towards a sense-making framework and assessment methodology* that we used as basis for the case studies could be answered, either because the information was not available or because some questions were hard to translate to actual practice.
- We chose to start rather than end with the 'Context' profile – this presents the reader with a broad picture of the system under study, before diving into detail. For the Ethiopia case, the context is also very influential in terms of the space to manoeuvre that the different migrant groups experience.
- 'Shocks & stresses' (or 'Risk') profile: The column "most important shocks" already includes a preselection of shocks and stresses, i.e. shocks with higher impact. This makes the categories "Susceptibility to shocks" and "Impact of shocks when they occur" more difficult to distinguish.
- It is also difficult to distinguish what are external and what are internal shocks and stresses, as well as resilience strategies, an issue that is also apparent in Kaut (2020c)'s analysis of "internal and external coping strategies".

- We structured the 'shocks & stresses' (or 'risk') profile according to the categories common in risk assessment, where impact is considered to be the product of 'likelihood for the shock (or stress) to occur' and 'susceptibility to being impacted by the shock (or stress) once it occurs. This set-up enveloped quite a number of questions.
- We found it more meaningful to combine 'vulnerability' and 'resilience' profiles into one profile, as the two are much related.
- The basic needs profile was difficult to interpret and fill. Many items under that profile were already covered in the other profiles. And these people are facing such hardship that I don't know what to write under freedom, etc.
- The cause and effect relations between the different profiles are very difficult to disentangle, as well as determining 'the starting point'. What was there first, migration or the degraded lands? Is migration a strategy, or a cause of vulnerabilities? These questions are difficult to answer.

How the framework helps to understand the extent to which existing support is effective in reaching the most vulnerable groups

It is difficult to make general statements about the targeting of the PSNP programme but it seems to be the case that PSNP beneficiaries, if they use migration as strategy, send migrants away as crop farmers. Households who send migrants away to perform casual labour and full time wage labour seem to be less likely to receive cash funds from PSNP. This would suggest that PSNP supports those households who are *relatively* better off, given the limits of this area where poverty is omni-present.



Credits: Khadar Mohamed (@FAO Somalia)

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Appendix 1 Participants in expert workshops Somaliland

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*) Attending all three workshops

**) Attending part of the workshops

***) Consulted outside workshops

1. Nugaal University was founded in 2002, initiative of diaspora, by community for community, little government support;

2. Sanaag University was founded in 2009, started operations in 2011.

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Report WCDI-21-143

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation supports value creation by strengthening capacities for sustainable development. As the international expertise and capacity building institute of Wageningen University & Research we bring knowledge into action, with the aim to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. With approximately 30 locations, 6,500 members (5,500 fte) of staff and 12,500 students, Wageningen University & Research is a world leader in its domain. An integral way of working, and cooperation between the exact sciences and the technological and social disciplines are key to its approach.



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