



Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms and Access to Justice in Ethiopia: An Analytical Framework

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Abstract

Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms play a significant role in the justice system of Ethiopia, particularly in rural areas where formal legal systems are less accessible. This study employs a qualitative approach, focusing on interviews with community leaders, mediators, and litigants to understand their experiences and perceptions of TDRMs. The analysis reveals that approximately 60% of disputes are resolved through traditional mechanisms, although the proportion varies by region. Community members favour TDRMs for their cultural relevance and quicker resolution times compared to formal courts. Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms significantly contribute to access to justice in Ethiopia, especially in rural areas where they are more accessible than formal legal systems. Policy makers should consider integrating traditional practices into the formal legal system to enhance accessibility and efficiency of conflict resolution processes.

Keywords: *African geography, customary law, indigenous justice, participatory methods, conflict resolution techniques*

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