

De facto Asymmetry and Inter-governmental Relations
in the Ethiopian Federation
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The paper examines de facto asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation as a variable that shapes both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation. In order to assess the relation between inter-governmental relations and de facto asymmetry, the paper uses opinion survey and interview as instruments of data collection. In the survey part, opinions of 110 inter-governmental practitioners from the federal government and four regional states were collected and analyzed using SPSS, and for the interview part 15 practitioners were interviewed and their lived experience in-depth analyzed. Moreover, different governmental data, proclamations and reports were analyzed as part of the study. The study addresses the following questions. Does de facto asymmetry influence the patterns and forms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation, if yes how? What are the forms and patterns of interactions between the different spheres of governments? The study found out that the de facto asymmetry is one of the important variables that shapes the cooperative form, weak institutionalized regional-horizontal and medium institutionalized vertical-national patterns of inter-governmental relations. Moreover, it is the only factor that leads to the establishment of a medium institutionalized inter-governmental forum in the form of Special Support Board, albeit it is not still a full-fledged inter-governmental institution.

Introduction

As a point of departure to the discourse on *de facto* asymmetry and inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation, it is desirable at this juncture to conceptualize what asymmetry means in this study.

In conceptualizing asymmetry, it is fundamentally important to differentiate between *de facto* and *de jure* asymmetry. *De facto* asymmetry refers to the actual practices or relationships arising from the impact of cultural and socio-economic differences among constituent units within a federation (see Agranoff, 1999; Burgess, 2006; Gagnon, 2001; Watts, 1999). It is a common feature of almost all federations. In this case, naturally-given differences are a matter of fact and not of law.

In contrast, *de jure* asymmetry implies a different legal treatment of the constituent units, meaning that asymmetry is embedded in constitutional and legal provisions. In most cases, *de jure* asymmetry refers specifically to differences in the legal status itself or in the legislative and executive powers assigned by the constitution to the diverse constituent units (see Agranoff, 1999; Burgess, 2006;

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Gagnon, 2001; Watts, 1999).

Thus, *de facto* asymmetry-variations in territorial size, population and wealth may affect the relative power and influence of the constituent units of federations and as a result of *de jure* asymmetry, there may be difference in the relative autonomy and jurisdiction powers of units. So, there can be a differentiated distribution of legislative and/or executive powers with a view to addressing local needs such as, the protection of minorities living in an autonomous constituent unit.

Thus, symmetries and asymmetries are features of federations and different scholars of federalism addressed the issue implicitly in their conceptualization of federalism and federations in the long history of the study of federalism (Burgess, 2006). But since the 1960s, asymmetry and symmetry in federations have explicitly become an area of research in federal studies. The article by Tarlton entitled '*Symmetry and Asymmetry as Elements of Federalism: A Theoretical Speculation*', which was published in the Journal of Politics in 1965 was a landmark in this regard (see Agranoff, 1999; Burgess, 2006; Gagnon, 2001; Watts, 1999).

To the historical trajectory of asymmetry in the intellectual discourse on federations and federalism, it is important to cite Burgess (2006:210) at length at this juncture:

The intellectual point of departure for scholars of asymmetry in federations and federalism was a then little-known article published in 1965 that was devoted to the conceptual utility of symmetry and asymmetry in federalism. In that year the article written by Charles D. Tarlton entitled '*Symmetry and Asymmetry as Elements of Federalism: A Theoretical Speculation*' was published in the Journal of Politics. Forty years later, as we have seen, it has acquired an unexpected significance for those scholars studying federalism and federation. Today, then, it has a new relevance. It also has a new audience.

In relation to the contribution of Tarlton's article to the study of federalism and federations, Burgess (2006:211) writes:

In the context of the mid-1960s, his 'theoretical speculation' encouraged scholars to consider, so to speak, the anatomy of federal systems in all of their complex dimensions. In practice, this meant 'a consideration of the diverse ways in which each member state in a federal system is able to relate to the system as a whole, the central authority, and each other member state'.

So, starting from its inception as a concept in federal studies, the notion of asymmetry and symmetry is highly related with the investigation of the relation between the federal government (the centre) and the constituent units of a federation and the constituent units with each other.

Currently, asymmetry and symmetry in federations and its impact on the relation within the constituent units of federation among themselves and the federal centre, the stability of the federation and the merits and demerits of asymmetry and symmetry in federations takes a centre stage in federal studies (Burgess, 2006)

The concept of asymmetry in federation has got different resonances among scholars of federalism. Burgess (2006: 209) points out succinctly the views of scholars regarding asymmetry in the following way:

Asymmetry become Janus-faced, being perceived by some as a positive instrument designed to buttress and sustain federal values and structures while simultaneously inducing fears and anxieties in others who construe it very much as a dangerous threat to the stability and integrity of the state.

The common denominator for all, who perceive asymmetry in deferent ways, is that symmetry and asymmetry are ideal types in political science analysis and there is no perfectly symmetrical or asymmetrical federation in the world.

It is possible to argue that asymmetry in a multi-ethnic federation is used as an instrumental device for accommodating difference in a way that adds to the overall political stability of federations. Both *de facto* and *de jure* asymmetries suggest flexibility in federations in the general search for consensus among political elites (Burgess 2006:222). But, some scholars show also the problem associated with entertaining asymmetry especially in its *de jure variant*. In this regard, Kymlicka (2002:109) writes that,

There are many reasons why federal systems have difficulty adopting asymmetrical arrangements. Indeed, these problems are so severe that some people have claimed that a federal system cannot survive for long if it adopts asymmetry. This is an overstatement, but there are greater limits on the flexibility of federalism than many proponents of federalism admit.

The approach to the study of asymmetry in federation also varies depending on the lens of the researcher, on which form of asymmetry the researcher focuses. Mostly political scientists study the impact of *de facto* asymmetry upon the operation of federal and decentralized systems, whereas the basic question for constitutional lawyers is whether the constitution itself should *de jure* treat the various constituent units differently and, thus, through which mechanisms these arrangements are implemented (see Gagnon, 2001). This paper addresses the issue of *de facto* asymmetry and its operation in the Ethiopian Federation in light of its association with the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations based on a political lens.

Thus, in order to assess the relation between *de facto* asymmetry and inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation, an opinion survey and

interview was conducted with practitioners of inter-governmental relations from the federal government and three regional states, namely Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz and Amhara national regional states. Moreover, for the assessment of the level of institutionalization of inter-governmental forums, the following parameters are adopted from Bolleyer (2009: 25) and contextualized to the Ethiopian context as analytical framework.

Regularity of meetings of Inter-governmental forums

Autonomous institution

- Own secretariat
- Clearly defined formal basis (e.g. statutes)

Weak institutionalization

Medium institutionalization

Majority rule

Internal functional differentiation

- Specification of offices
- Specification of sub-units/bodies

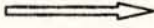
Legal status of agreements

Precision of agreements

Strong institutionalization

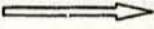
The patterns of interactions are also assessed based on the following conceptual frameworks, which are also adopted from Bolleyer (2009: 69) refined to the Ethiopian context.

Scope of Interaction

Horizontal-regional 

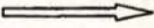
Participating Units

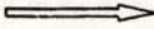
Four or less regional governments

Horizontal-multilateral/
national 

More than half or all regional governments

Vertical-

regional  The federal government with a few regional governments

Vertical-multilateral/
national 

The federal government with more than half or all of the regional governments

The above conceptual frameworks for the analysis of mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation are based on the assumption that in any federation there may be certain forums which act as inter-governmental forums for coordinating and deciding on inter-governmental issues. So, the frameworks are adopted to be used for measuring the level of institutionalization and identifying the patterns of interaction in inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation.

Finally, the paper is structured in such a way that, it first addresses asymmetry in multi-ethnic federations and the nature of inter-governmental relations. Then, the features of asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation and their relation with the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations are discussed. In doing so, socio-economic asymmetry and inter-governmental relation, *de facto* asymmetry and its role in shaping the horizontal-regional inter-governmental relations are assessed. Moreover, the Special Support Board as an inter-governmental institution in the Ethiopian Federation is also described and analyzed. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings of the study.

Asymmetry in Multi-ethnic Federations and the Nature of Inter-governmental Relations

Although multi-ethnic federations are *de facto* asymmetric by their very nature as they take ethnicity as their organizational principle, at the minimum level, in their language policy, population size, territorial dimension, etc., *de facto* asymmetry is not a condition that characterizes only multi-ethnic federation; it is pervasive in every federation. To look at the issue in depth, it is desirable at this juncture to present Duchacek's (1970) view on asymmetry as cited by Burgess (2006:218):

In his own comparative analysis of asymmetrical federalism, first published in 1970, Duchacek referred to the 'disparity of power ingredients' and noted that 'there is no federal system in the world in which all the component units are even approximately equal in size, population, political power, administrative skills, wealth, economic development, climatic conditions, predominance of either urban or rural interests, social structure, traditions, or relative geographic location'.

But multi-ethnic federations especially feature specific forms of asymmetry. In multi-ethnic federations at least one of the component units claims particular sovereignty on linguistic, cultural, ethnic or simply historical grounds and the federation thus ensures at least *de facto* asymmetry. When it gets constitutional expression, the *de facto* asymmetry turns into *de jure* asymmetry. Then, multi-ethnic federations become the embodiment of both *de jure* and *de facto*

asymmetry.

Especially in multi-ethnic federations, where ethnicity gets territorial expression and the sub-national states boundary is in congruence with the ethnic settlement pattern, *de facto* asymmetry is the order of the day, and the push towards *de jure* asymmetry may also be high depending on the party-political constellation and the nature of the interest configuration of the ethno-nationalist political actors.

Thus, due to the insurmountable *de facto* asymmetry nature of multi-ethnic federations, the relation between governments within multi-ethnic federations should manifest theoretically more of institutions of accommodation and hence cooperative mechanisms of inter-governmental relations (Kincaid, 2000:44).

The asymmetric nature of multi-ethnic federations as a consequence of ethnic diversity and cultural-ideological differences may lead to enhanced cooperation schemes and forces actors to continuously seek agreements, if the preference of the political actors is geared towards the stability and maintenance of the federal dispensation.

In all policy fields impacting on language, religion, ethnicity and/or strong territorial identities as key elements, decision-making processes become more complex. Hence, multi-national federations resort to various consociational arrangements, i.e. institutions and procedures that encourage consensus rather than regular majority decision-making. Thus, inter-governmental forums of cooperation as consultative bodies as well as decision-making organs are important mechanisms to arrive at consensual agreements on issues of mutual interests.

So, the Ethiopian Federation as a multi-ethnic federation also uses different mechanisms in order to come to terms with the *de facto* asymmetric nature of federation. These are issues the paper discusses at length hereafter.

Asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federations

In the case of the Ethiopian Federation, even if Article 49/5 and Article 89/4 of the 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (hereafter FDRE), signaled *de jure* asymmetric element, in the case of Oromia National Regional State, special privilege in the Addis Ababa City Administration and a commitment to special assistance for the “emerging” regions, respectively, seem to be at work. The main focus of this part of the discussion will be the *de facto* asymmetry, which is pervasive in the Ethiopian Federation.

In the Ethiopian Federation, the *de facto* asymmetry seems anchored in the very nature of the organization of the constituent units. Article 46/2 of the 1995 FDRE Constitution stipulated that:

States shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity

and consent of the people concerned.

So, the constituent units of the Ethiopian Federation are organized mainly based on cultural markers and hence the *de facto* asymmetry seems insurmountable even with further economic development and economic integration in light of the size of population, area, revenue and expenditure capabilities of the constituent units of the federation. So, the constituent base of the federation - language and identity - is one of the reasons for the *de facto* asymmetry nature of the federation.

Abbink (2011:608) characterized the asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation in the following way:

Asymmetry is found in any kind of federation, but the territorial, economic and demographic imbalances in the Ethiopian one are created on presumed ethno-linguistic grounds and ideologically enforced unity, and have introduced a new hierarchy that will remain a bone of contention.

Though the creation of new hierarchy is not empirically an observable fact in the Ethiopian federal dispensation, as it will be clear from the findings of this study to be presented later, two possible options may explain the future perspectives of *de facto* asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation.

With further democratization and economic development, the first option will be the relative reduction in the *de facto* asymmetric nature of the federation at least in some economic and social indicators and further move towards integration and creation of a viable condition to live as one political and economic community as envisaged in the Preamble of the FDRE Constitution.

The second option will be the possibility that different groups may exhibit more *de facto* asymmetry and that they may also demand some form of *de jure* asymmetry and even formation of new constituent units. It is possible to speculate this scenario from the provisions of the FDRE Constitution and the actual operation of the federation. The FDRE Constitution Article 39/1 and 47/2 read as follows:

Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination including the right to secession. Nations and Nationalities and Peoples within the States enumerated in Sub-Article 1 of this article (which means the nine Regional States) have the right to establish, at any time, their own states.

So, there is a theoretical possibility of the emergence of more than eighty sub-national states, which would have diverse socio-economic capacities.

In the practical operation of the federation, currently based on objectively identifiable *de facto* asymmetry, the Ethiopian government categorizes

some of the regions (Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella and Somali) as emerging regions for the purpose of special assistance (Interview, Addis Ababa, May/2013)

So, the federal government, in cooperation with the regional states, is working on special assistance programme for the emerging regional states to bring about equitable development by setting Special Support Board and assigning the Ministry of Federal Affairs to coordinate the programme. The whole structure and working mechanisms of the Special Support Board is discussed in the forthcoming part of this paper.

Thus, the only way to manage *de facto* asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation is by working on further democratization of the federation and the development of viable mechanisms of inter-governmental relation. Congleton (2006:4) contends that “asymmetries tend to be smaller in democracies with a very mobile population than in authoritarian regimes with a relatively less mobile population.” In the Ethiopian case where mobility is not promising due to language and identity barriers, except on temporary basis in relation with mega projects of the federal government, *de facto* asymmetry will have greater effect on the whole operationalization of the federal system. It seems that cognizant of this fact, the EPRDF government, to address this issue, has also established inter-governmental mechanisms which are discussed later in the paper.

Against this backdrop, the question to be raised is, do the different constellations of the *de facto* asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation have an effect on the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations both in its vertical and horizontal dimensions? Different constellations of *de facto* asymmetry, in the Ethiopian case, connote the practical variations among the constituent units in the Ethiopian Federation in terms of population size, ethnic composition and working language, differences in the mainstay of the regions’ economic activities, relative variations in their own revenue capacity, variations in spending power, and relative differences in their dependence on the federal transfer.

So, a detailed analysis of each variable and finally the relation of the variables with the operational mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation is the next step to be taken. To this end, we first look at the socio-economic asymmetries and inter-governmental relations.

Socio-economic Asymmetry and Inter-governmental Relations

To begin with the discourse on socio-economic asymmetries and inter-governmental relations, it is desirable to look at population and budget transfer data and their association with each other as a reflection of *de facto* asymmetry. The implication of population and budget transfer on the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations needs to be considered. To this end, the following tables are presented.

Table 1. The 2010/11 Ethiopian fiscal year budget transfer to the regions

Regional States	2010/11 block grant in birr	% from the total grant	Population 2007 census (CSA)	% from the total population	Per capita grant in birr
Tigray	1,696,595,204	7.02%	4,314,456	5.83%	393.23
Afar	804,925,976	3.31%	1,411,092	1.90%	570.42
Amhara	5,622,401,905	23.27%	17,214,056	23.28%	326.61
Oromia	7,839,548,028	32.44%	27,158,471	36.74 %	288.65
Somali	2,031,584,372	8.40%	4,439,147	6.00%	457.65
B/Gumz	472,351,495	1.95%	670,847	0.90%	704.11
SNNP	4,795,789,984	19.85%	15,042,531	20.35%	318.81
Gambella	378,361,102	1.56%	306,916	0.41%	1232.78
Harari	214,485,918	0.88%	183,344	0.24%	1169.85
Dire Dawa	243,406,016	1.007%	342,827	0.46%	709.99
Addis Ababa	59,500,000 (from external assistance)	0.0024%	2,738,248	3.70%	21.72
Total	24 158 950 000		73,918,505		326.83 (national average)

Table 2. 2011/ 2012 Ethiopian fiscal year budget transfer to regional states

Regional States	2011/2012 block grant in birr	% from the total grant	Population 2007 census (CSA)	% from the total population	Per capita grant in birr	Support for MDG achievement
Tigray	2,203,516,608	7.01	4,314,456	5.83%	510.72	1,056,000,000
Afar	1,045,418,149	3.30	1,411,092	1.90%	740.85	501,000,000
Amhara	7,302,278,400	23.26	17,214,056	23.28%	424.20	3,499,500,000
Oromia	10,181,874,251	32.43	27,158,471	36.74 %	374.90	4,879,500,000
Somali	2,638,585,870	8.40	4,439,147	6.00%	594.39	1,264,500,000
B/Gumz	613,479,025	1.95	670,847	0.90%	914.48	294,000,000
SNNP	6,228,690,001	19.84	15,042,531	20.35%	414.07	2,985,000,000
Gambella	491,408,863	1.56	306,916	0.41%	1601.11	235,500,000
Harari	278,569,361	0.88	183,344	0.24%	1519.38	133,500,000
Dire Dawa	316,129,472	1.006	342,827	0.46%	922.12	151,500,000
Addis Ababa	93,462,000 (external assistance)	0.29	2,738,248	3.70%	34.13	
Total	31,393,412,000		73,918,505		424.70 (national average)	15,000,000,000

For the Federal government budget a) Recurrent Expenditure
23,341,059,969_

b) Capital Expenditure 48,078,168,086_

Total 71,419,228,055

Source: For the budget of 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 budget-years, budget proclamation to be found at www.mofed.gov.et accessed on 12./9/2012

For the population Central Statistic Agency of Ethiopia (CSA) to be found at www.csa.gov.et accessed on 12/9/2012

As is discernible from Tables 1 and 2, the *de facto* asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation is enormous. In terms of population, the difference between the constituent units ranges from the minimum of 0.24% to the maximum of 36.74% of the country's population inhabiting between *de jure* symmetric regional states. The two most populated regional states - the Oromia National Regional State and the Amhara National Regional State together constitute 60.02% of the country's population. The other seven regional states and the two chartered cities - Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa - house 39.98% of the federal population. The wide variation in population implies that demands for local services also tend to vary widely among these regional governments. This, in turn, has an impact on the spending needs and revenue potential of the regions.

In terms of ethnic composition of the regional states, the Amhara, Oromia, Somali, Tigray and Afar Regional States took their names after the dominant ethnic groups in the region albeit there are minority ethnic groups in these regions. The other regions are settled by a composite of different ethnic groups.

So, the asymmetry in size of population and the settlement pattern of the ethnic groups entail different mechanisms of inter-governmental relations between the constituent units and the federal government, on one hand, and the constituent units with each other, on the other. In terms of relative socio-economic development, there are also variations between the Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples and Tigray National Regional States on the one side, and the Afar, Somali, Gambella and Benshangul Gumuz National Regional States on the other. The case of Harari is special. That is why there is a special support programme for the relatively less developed or emerging regions through the federal government by institutionalizing a Special Support Board and a Federal Ministry Office - the Ministry of Federal Affairs.

One of the main responsibilities of the Ministry of Federal Affairs is providing and coordinating support for the "emerging regions." The proclamation that defines the powers and duties of the Federal Executive Organs, Proclamation No 691/ 2010, Article 14, sub-article 1 (f and g) clearly states that the Ministry of Federal Affairs will provide assistance to regional states, particularly to the emerging ones, and will coordinate and integrate supports of the federal organs to the emerging regional states. So, it is possible to assert that the Ministry of Federal Affairs is a government institution responsible for the coordination of inter-governmental activities geared towards addressing the economic, social and capacity asymmetry between the constituent units of the federation.

So, in the Ethiopian case, the *de facto* asymmetry shows its impact on the establishment of mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in this direction. The survey also identified *de facto* asymmetry in relative development as the main reason for the establishment of mechanisms of inter-governmental rela

tions between the federal government and the regional states, and the regional states with each other.

Table 3. The role of relative difference in development in shaping the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I have no idea	3	2.7	4.2	4.2
	Very low	2	1.8	2.8	6.9
	Low	7	6.4	9.7	16.7
	High	36	32.7	50.0	66.7
	Very high	24	21.8	33.3	100.0
	Total	72	65.5	100	
Missing	System	38	34.5	100.0	
Total		110	100.0		

With regard to the role of relative difference in development in shaping the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations, 50% of the respondents rated it as high and 33% as very high. A total of 83.3% of the respondents, who are active inter-governmental actors, perceive the relative difference in development as the main factor that shapes inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation.

Thus, horizontally, there is a discernible trend of developing a mechanism of multilateral and bilateral relations between relatively developed regional states and the emerging regional states. The bilateral relations between the Amhara and the Afar Regional States, the Amhara and the Benshangul Gumuz Regional States, the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State and the Gambella Regional State are some of the examples for this trend.

Moreover, the impact of *de facto* asymmetry on inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation becomes clearer when one considers the absence of bilateral or multilateral relation among the relatively symmetric regional states in Ethiopia, with the same intensity and depth, except for the annual national forums and conferences organized by the federal ministry offices.

Another aspect to be considered based on Tables 1, 2 and 4 is the issue of budget transfer and the *de facto* asymmetry in revenue and spending capacity of the regional states. The general situation is that the federal subsidy is the major

source of revenue for all regions except Addis Ababa. Apart from Addis Ababa City Administration, there is no other regional government, which generates its own revenue sufficient to cover even its recurrent budget.

However, the feature of own revenue and expenditure disparity is not only the feature of the Ethiopian Federation; almost all sub-national governments are never self-sufficient financially. Their revenue-raising responsibility falls short of their expenditure responsibilities, forcing them to rely on financial transfers from the national government (Shah, 2007; Broadway and Frank, 1982). This becomes more pronounced when the degree of *de facto* asymmetry is high among the sub-national states.

As it is discernible from the data in Tables 1 and 2, 56.71% of the budget transferred from the federal government went to the Amhara National Regional State and the Oromia National Regional State in the 2010/11 Ethiopian fiscal year and 55.69% in the 2011/12 fiscal year. But when we consider the per capita transfer, the two regional states had the lowest per capita transfer, 326.61 birr for the Amhara National Regional State and 288.65 birr for the Oromia National Regional State in the 2010/2011 fiscal year and 424.20 birr and 374.90 birr, respectively, in the 2011/12 fiscal year.

Higher per capita transfer went to jurisdictions with lower fiscal capacities. As Tables 1 and 2 show, higher per capita transfer than the national average in the Ethiopian fiscal years 2010/11 and 2011/12 went to the Regional States of Gambella (1237.48 birr and 1601.11 birr), Benishangul-Gumuz (704.11 birr and 914.48 birr) and Harari (1169.85 birr and 1519.38 birr) respectively.

The significant discrepancy in terms of per capita transfer, ranging between 288.65 birr to 1169.85 birr in the 2010/11 Ethiopian fiscal year and between 424.20 to 1601.11 birr in the 2011/12 fiscal year is to be seen in the context of the prevailing *de facto* asymmetry and the inter-governmental consensus to address the issue in terms of budget transfer. These transfers may have equalization element in their logic.

Table 4. Performance of Regional States in Revenue Collection in 2011/12 and 2012/13 budget-years

Regional States and City Administrations	Revenue collected in 2011/12 budget-year (in million Birr)	% of revenue share of regions from revenues collected by regions (2011/12 budget-year)	% of revenue share of regions from revenues collected as a country (2011/12 budget-year)	Revenue collected in 2012/13 budget-year (in million Birr)	% of revenue share of regions from revenues collected by regions (2012/13 budget-year)	% of revenue share of regions from revenues collected as a country (2012/13 budget-year)
Tigray	1877.02	9.32	2.18	2222.64	7.77	2.07
Afar	197.65	0.98	0.23	215.30	0.75	0.20
Amhara	2632.22	13.07	3.07	3334.07	11.66	3.11
Oromia	3297.49	16.37	3.84	5455.04	19.08	5.09
Somali	397.13	1.97	0.46	627.44	2.19	0.58
Benshangul	192.79	0.95	0.22	268.11	0.93	0.25
SNNP	2061.51	10.23	2.40	3066.58	10.72	2.86
Gambella	113.74	0.56	0.13	140.78	0.49	0.13
Harari	77.39	0.38	0.09	142.50	0.49	0.13
Addis Ababa	9065.42	45.02	10.57	12780.90	44.71	11.94
Dire Dewa	219.60	1.09	0.25	331.18	1.15	0.30
Total regional states and City Administrations	20131.96		23.48	28584.53	26.71	
Federal Government	65608.04		76.51	78425.47	73.28	
General Government Revenue Performance (Cumulative)	85740			107010		

Source: MOFED Microeconomic Policy and Management Directorate
The revenue data and the percentage is self calculation.

As is discernable from Table 4, the asymmetry in revenue collection performance is huge among the constituent units of the Ethiopian Federation. In 2011/12 budget-year, the federal government collected 76.51% of the total government revenue and the constituent units collected only 23.48% of the total government revenue. From all regional states and the two city administrations, the Addis Ababa City Administration collected 10.57% of the revenue followed by Oromia with 3.84%, Amhara with 3.07%, SNNP with 2.40% and Tigray with 2.18% as relatively high contributors. In the same budget-year, the least contributors to the federal pool were Harari (0.09%), Gambella (0.13%), Benishangul-Gumuz (0.22%), Afar (0.23%) and Somali (0.46). Thus, all emerging regions are the least contributors to the federal pool. So, this shows the relative asymmetric performance capacity in revenue collection.

In 2012/13 budget-year, there was a general trend in increasing the government revenue and with that the share of the regional states and the two city administration increased from 23.48% in 2011/12 to 26.74% in 2012/13 budget-year. This relative upsurge is also shown in the regional states' contributions for the general pool. Especially the increase in the shares of Addis Ababa City Administration (11.94%) and Oromia (5.09%) were considerable. Amhara and SNNP also showed some progress by contributing 3.11% and 2.86%, respectively in 2012/13 budget-year to the total revenue of the country. Overall trend shows that asymmetry in revenue collection performance was observable between the relatively developed and emerging regional states. The same is true in their share of the revenue collected by the regional states and the two city administrations.

Asymmetry in revenue generating capacity and the relative capacity difference in covering their expenditure from their own sources as shown in the above three tables (Table 1, 2 and 4) and the need for providing comparable public service at comparable level of taxation have necessitated the issue of equalization in fiscal transfer. Different jurisdictions have different needs and costs of providing public services and different revenue-raising capacities with which to finance themselves.

Though it is not possible to create completely symmetric jurisdictions in terms of self revenue raising capacity, the degree of the need for equalization may depend on the degree of symmetry and asymmetry of the constituent units in their revenue raising potentials and other socio-economic resources. So, in formulating the federal transfer and related fiscal inter-governmental relations, the issue of *de facto* asymmetry looms large.

Though the merit and extent of equalization is a highly debated issue in the literatures of fiscal federalism and inter-governmental relations (see Shah, 2007; Weingast, 2006; Oates, 1972; Broadway and Frank, 1982; Jorge Martinez

et al, 2006), the crucial elements in this context are the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations between the federal and regional governments and between one regional government and the other in shaping the transfer which has some equalization element.

In the Ethiopian case, in addition to the *de facto* asymmetry, the party political constellation becomes an important variable in creating a consensus in the issue of equalization. For example, the constituent units in the Ethiopian Federation have decided in the 2011/2012 fiscal year to allocate one percent from the federal transfer pool to the emerging regions, before the formula-based disbursement of the grant to each constitution units is effected. The incentive and motivation for this form of inter-governmental consensus to transfer budget on top of the agreed formula from the common federal pool to the emerging regions is a result of partisan harmony between the federal and regional governments and feature of cooperative inter-governmental relations. Issues of solidarity, the vision of common destiny and rectifying the historical backlog are other factors for the inter-governmental consensus on some forms of equalization (Interview, Addis Ababa, June, 2013). How the issue of equalization in fiscal transfer will evolve in the future and in which direction the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations will develop is an issue which needs further empirical investigation in relation to *de facto* asymmetry and fiscal transfer in the Ethiopian Federation.

The other point to be considered in relation to *de facto* asymmetry and inter-governmental relations is the pattern of vertical relation between the federal government and different regional states. Theoretically, different regional states may have different interests that explain the nature of their relation to the federal government. Relatively, strong regional governments may have more inclination towards independence and policy innovation and experimentation, whereas relatively weak regional states may have a strong need for policy harmonization. Especially big economically strong governments find it more beneficial to 'fend for themselves' and strive for special deals with the federal government (Bolleyer 2009:9). But, in the case of the Ethiopian Federation, the relatively developed regional states are not as such currently striving for special deal with the federal government; they are rather working with the federal government to assist the relatively less developed regional states. This is because of the party political constellation and the cooperative nature of the inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation.

The other question to be raised is whether or not there is a divisive conflict between the constituent units of federation to get more funds from the federal government. If so, how is it expressed in their inter-governmental relations? In practice, there is low level of distributive conflict, in spite of high level of socio-economic asymmetry (Interview, Addis Ababa, June, 2013). This is also

to be associated with the party political constellation both in the House of People's Representative and the House of Federation and the cooperative nature of the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation. An interviewee (Interview, Addis Ababa, June, 2013) expressed this low level of distribution conflict in the following way:

Any Member of the HoF has the right to give his vote freely on any issue. There are also regulations on how to decide on issues in the HoF meetings and in the Standing Committees. But the main thing is our common concern for the principles of equity and creation of one economic community based on the provisions of the FDRE Constitution. So, there may be debates on issues of grant formula and conflict resolution. But finally we reach a common consensus. There were also occasions, where different regional states supported the interest of other regional states by compromising their interest, when they found that the idea is fair and helpful for the strengthening of the federal dispensation. Thus, most of the decisions are made unanimously. There was no any big division or other conflicts that happened in the House of Federation in its whole history.

Based on the above description and analysis of *de facto* asymmetry and the nature of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation, the next part of this paper delves into the detailed analysis of *de facto* asymmetry and the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federations.

***De facto* Asymmetry and Horizontal-regional Cooperation in the Ethiopian Federation**

One of the important features of mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation is the horizontal-regional cooperation between different constituent units shaped by the *de facto* asymmetric nature of the constituent units.

Opinion survey and interviews conducted also reveal these features of mechanisms of inter-governmental relations.

Table 5. The most important reasons for conducting horizontal-regional interactions

	Asymmetry in capacity	Neigh- bourhood	Overlap in ethnic settlement pattern	Use of the same working language	Direc- tions from the federal govern-	Provision of public ser- vices jointly	Imple- menta- tion of Joint projects	Resolu- tion of border conflicts
	Valid Per- cent	Valid Per- cent	Valid Per- cent	Valid Per- cent	Valid Percent	Valid Per- cent	Valid Percent	Valid Per- cent
I have no idea	2.9			5.7	2.6	2..8		2.7
The fifth most important issue	8..8	19.9	22.2	22.9	5.3	2..8	10.5	8.1
The fourth most important issue	8.8	38.5	47.2	57.1	13.2	33.3	50.0	24.3
The third most important issue	52.9	20.5	22.2	11.4	50.0	44.4	26.3	54.1
The second most important issue	23.5	5.1	2.8		23.7	11.1	7.9	8.1
The first most important issue	2.9	17.9	5.6	2.9	5.3	5.6	5.3	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In order to compare ratings by participants in the survey, what they consider as the first, second and third most important issues leading them to engage in horizontal-regional interactions are listed below in the order of importance.

- 85.4 % of them contend that asymmetry in capacity is the first to the third most important reason for conducting horizontal-regional interactions. But the majority (52.5%) put asymmetry in capacity as the third important reason for conducting horizontal-regional relations.
- 79% consider directions from the federal government as the first to the third most important reason for conducting horizontal-regional interactions. But 50% ranked direction from the federal government as the third important reason.
- 64.9% see resolution of border conflict as the first to the third most important reason.
- 61.1% consider joint provision of public services as the first to the third most important reason.
- 43.5% rank neighborhood or proximity from the first to the third most important reason.
- 39.5% claim that implementation of joint projects is the first to the third most important reason.
- 36.6% consider overlapping ethnic settlement pattern as the first to the third important reason.
- 4.3% take using the same working language as the first to the third important reason.

From these aggregated data, it becomes clear that the main factor that shape horizontal-regional interactions is the asymmetry in capacity - capacity taken as implementation and other socio-economic capacity. The direction of the federal government is also self evident in that it pushes the regional states, both the relatively developed and the emerging ones, towards addressing their capacity gap cooperatively through horizontal-regional interactions.

The main pattern of horizontal relation in the Ethiopian Federation is then the horizontal-regional type of interaction. Thus, the proliferation of horizontal-regional relations in the Ethiopian Federations may be explained by the *de facto* asymmetry between the constituent units of Ethiopian Federation as presented in the forthcoming discussion.

The horizontal-regional relations are mainly practiced between the relatively developed and relatively less developed or emerging regions and between the regions led by the EPRDF member parties and affiliated parties. For the sake of providing special support and due to the clearly observable difference in socio-economic and implementation capacity in four regional states: Afar, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz and Somali, such relations are in operation.

Participants in the interview also mentioned that *de facto* asymmetry between the relatively developed and emerging regions, especially in terms of implementation capacity of different policies and programmes, is the main reason for the development of cooperative mechanisms of horizontal-regional relations (Interview, Bahir Dar and Assosa. January and June, 2013)

The role of *de facto* asymmetry in shaping the horizontal-regional interaction becomes clearer when the current practice of other possible options for horizontal interaction, the horizontal-multilateral-national and the horizontal-regional interaction between the relatively developed regional governments, is assessed.

Though there is some limited form of logistic support in some technical issues such as coordinating purchase of goods by regional bureaus, lending of materials when there is shortage, and experience-sharing visits, it is hardly possible to find horizontal-regional relations between relatively developed regions with the same formality and intensity as that of the relations between emerging and relatively developed regions in the Ethiopian Federations. For example, the horizontal relation between the Amhara and the Oromia National Regional States or between Oromia and South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional States is not as strong as the one between the Amhara and the Benishangul-Gumuz or the Afar Regional State. The same holds true for the relations between the Oromia and the Somali National Regional States and between the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State and the Gambella Regional State.

The main intent in strengthening this pattern of interaction is to minimize the capacity gap by cooperatively supporting the development endeavor of emerging regions, which is also a constitutionally promulgated issue (Interview, Addis Ababa, May/ 2013).

Moreover, as has been identified through the survey, cooperation is the most important form of horizontal-regional interaction. The following tables present the result of the survey on cooperation and competition as a form of horizontal-regional interaction.

Table 6. Existence of horizontal- regional cooperation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	30.9	89.5	89.5
	No	4	3.6	10.5	100.0
	Total	38	34.5	100.0	
Missing	System	72	65.5		
Total		110	100.0		

Respondents in the survey were asked whether or not there existed cooperation in their horizontal-regional relation. As presented in Table 6 above, 89.5% said that cooperation was the main feature of their interaction while 10.5% said there existed no cooperation. Interviewees also highlighted the cooperative nature of their relation and its importance in the following way:

In all our relations with regional bureaus, the prevailing nature of our relation is cooperation expressed in mutual support and exchange of ideas and best practices. There was no time we were engaged in conflict. The main reason for this state of relation is our interest - interdependence and shared goal to come out of poverty (Bahir Dar, January 2013).

Thus, as has been identified through the survey and corroborated by the interview, cooperation is the prevailing form of interaction.

Table 7. Existence of horizontal- competition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	9.1	27.0	27.0
	No	27	24.5	73.0	100.0
	Total	37	33.6	100.0	
Missing	System	73	66.4		
Total		110	100.0		

In the case of existence of competition, while only 27% claimed that there was competition, 73% contended that there was no competition. Prevalence of competition among constituent units is not expected as such and this exhibits *de facto* asymmetry and harmonization of every policy issue through party structure. The units depend on the federal government for much of their expenditure and policy directions.

The Special Support Board as an Inter-governmental Forum

Addressing De facto Asymmetry

As has been discussed, the relative *de facto* asymmetry between the constituent units of the Ethiopia Federation has pushed the federal government to establish a Special Support Board which coordinates the efforts of the federal government in providing special assistance to the four emerging regional states, namely, the Gambella National Regional State, the Somali National Regional State, the Benishangul-Gumuz National Regional State and the Afar National Regional State.

Article 89/4 of the FDRE Constitution which explicitly states that the government shall provide special assistance to Nations, Nationalities and Peo

ples least advantaged in economic and social development serves as a normative framework for the establishment of the Board. Thus, the Board was first established in 2004 through the Council of Ministers' Regulation No.103/2004. This regulation was amended by Regulation No. 128/2006. The latest Council of Ministers' Regulation that repealed Regulation No.128/2006 is Proclamation No.241/2011 which has 16 articles and describes in detail the members of the Board, its objectives, duties and responsibilities.

According to the Regulation, an official to be designated by the Prime Minister leads the Board as Chairperson and the following high officials are members of the Board.

- The Minister of Federal Affairs, deputy Chairperson
- The Minister of Agriculture, Member
- The Minister of Education, Member
- The Minister of Health, Member
- The Minister of Water and Energy, Member
- The Minister of Civil Service, Member
- Other officials to be designated by the Prime Minister, Members

According to Directive No. 1/2011 issued by the Board, the Board has included the following officials as members of the Board.

- With a status of minister, the National Security Advisor of the Prime Minister
- With a status of minister, the River Basin Issues Advisor of the Prime Minister
- With a status of minister, the Public Organization and Participation Issues Advisor of the Prime Minister.

Moreover, the Regulation states the following as objectives of the Board.

- Direct, coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of affirmative support provided by organs of the Federal Government to regions.
- Provide the necessary assistance to regions in their effort to build their implementation capacity for sustainable development and in promoting good governance and democratization.
- Encourage close cooperation between the regions eligible for affirmative support and neighbouring regions.

Under Article 9 of Regulation No. 241/2011, the Board has set the Ministry of Federal Affairs as Secretariat of the Board and also established Affirmative Support Technical Committee. The Ministry was assigned to coordinate federal affirmative support and follow up the implementation of the decisions of the Board.

The Regulation is also explicit in setting the time frame for the meeting of the Board and decision mechanisms. Article 11 states that the Board shall meet once every three months and that the Chairperson has the right to call extraordinary meeting when necessary. Regarding decision mechanisms, it is stated that the attendance of the Board meeting by more than half of its members forms a quorum and majority vote is required to pass a decision.

After its establishment, the Board issued Directive No. 1/2011 and formed a Technical Committee. It also identified detailed focus areas of support. The composition of the Technical Committee is as follows:

- Minister of Federal Affairs – Chair
- Representative from the Ministry of Agriculture - Member
- Representative from the Ministry of Education - Member
- Representative from the Ministry of Health - Member
- Representative from the Ministry of Water and Energy - Member
- Representative from the Ministry of Civil Service - Member
- Representative of the Prime Minister’s Advisor for Public Participation and Organization - Member
- Director for Equitable Development of the Ministry of Federal Affairs - Member and Secretary

Article 8 describes in detail the focus areas of support to be considered by the member offices of the Board, neighbouring regional states and the regions in need of special support. The focus areas encompass capacity building, good governance, agriculture, water resource, education, health, river basin development, public organization and participation and national security issues. Moreover, Board member ministry offices, the neighbouring regions, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and regions in need of special support have detailed duties and responsibilities through the directive, albeit the emerging regional states and their neighbouring regional states are not legal members of the Board.

However, although Regulation No.241/2011 and Directive No.1/2011 do not explicitly outline the four emerging regional states and their neighbouring regional states as members of the Support Board, it has been understood from the interview that they regularly participate in the Board Meeting through the regional presidents and at times through the regional Finance and Economic Development Bureau heads (Interview, Addis Ababa, May 2013).

So, the Board is an inter-governmental body that brings together the regional presidents and officials from key ministry offices albeit the former are not legal members of the Board. In its practical operation, the Board meets twice annually, with the regional presidents in attendance, and evaluates the support activities of the Board member ministry offices and the neighbouring regions.

The Secretariat of the Board, which is responsible for the day to day coordination of the support activities, has also set Directorate General for Equitable Development at the Ministry of Federal Affairs and a Directorate in each of Afar, Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella Regional States.

According to informants from the Ministry of Federal Affairs, in order to identify the focus areas of the support activities, an international consultant conducted a gap assessment study in 2010 in the regions in need of special support. After the gaps were identified, plans of action were developed with the participation of all stakeholders. Implementation of activities was the responsibility of line ministry offices and bureaus of the regional states (Interview, Addis Ababa, May 2013).

To illuminate the activities of the Special Support Board in coordinating special assistance for the four needy regions, it would be helpful to assess the accomplishment report of at least two budget-years as an example. According to the 2010/11 and 2011/2012 (2003 and 2004 E.C.) budget-year-performance report by the Equitable Development Main Directorate, the following main activities were accomplished.

Sedentarization or villagization was one of the core activities implemented in the 2010/11 and 2011/12 budget-years. During these budget-years, out of the 67 *woredas* of the Somali Regional State, sedentarization programme took place in 18 *woredas* and 140 settlement centres where a total of 131,851 households were beneficiaries. In Gambella Regional State, out of the 12 *woredas*, sedentarization programme took place in 11 *woredas* and 82 settlement centres with 31,243 households benefiting from the programme. Out of 20 *woredas* of the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, the programme took place in 18 *woredas* and 183 settlement centres and a total of 57,000 households were beneficiaries.

Moreover, the settlement centres were facilitated with social and economic service providing institutions. According to the report, in Somali Regional State, the centres have 163 water points, 201 health posts, 46 veterinary clinics, 315 primary schools and 154 farmers/pastoralists training centres (FTC). In Gambella Regional State, the settlement centres have 156 water points, 65 health posts, 24 veterinary clinics, 75 primary schools and 50 farmers/pastoralists training centres. In Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, the centres have 422 water points, 143 health posts, 174 veterinary clinics, 142 primary schools and 166 farmers/pastoralists training centres (see the 2010/11 budget-year report of the Equitable Development Main Directorate of the Ministry of Federal Affairs for the data)

The distribution of agricultural inputs and farmland was also part of the 2010/11 (2003 E.C.) budget-year report. In Somali Regional State, 71,795 hectares of farmland, 52,600 farm tools, 2,860 quintals of varieties of selected

seeds and 6,160 water pumps were distributed to 99,300 households. In Gambella Regional State, 36,565 hectares of farmland, 49,450 farm tools, 3,628 quintals of varieties of selected seeds and 27 water pumps were distributed to 26,122 households. In Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, 55,526 hectares of farmland, 78,762 farm tools, 2,350 quintals of varieties of selected seeds, 8,032 quintals of fertilizers and 126 water pumps were handed out to 18,792 beneficiaries. The report document points out that the sedentarization or villagization process in the Afar Regional State was not fully included in the report of the budget-year because of the late commencement of the process in the region.

Moreover, the coordination was not limited only to the sedentarization activities but also included capacity building training, planning and consensus building workshops and monitoring and evaluation visits and assessments in which different officials and experts from the four regional states, representatives from neighbouring regions and members of the Board participated.

In general, these activities which brought all inter-governmental stakeholders together in planning, implementing, coordinating, follow-up and evaluating of the activities show in practice the role of the Special Support Board as a national-multilateral inter-governmental forum.

The next discussion focuses on how to characterize the Special Support Board as an inter-governmental forum in the Ethiopian Federation. As understood from the interviews, the Board and its subsidiary organizations such as the Technical Committee and the Secretariat were engaged with the regions in the spirit of cooperation by respecting the autonomy of the regional states. One of the participants in the interview described their working relation in the following way:

We coordinate the support activities based on the preference of the regional states and they are part of the whole planning and implementation process. We know that the regions are autonomous states under the FDRE Constitution and we respect their autonomy. Everything is done through cooperation and common agreement. They understand the real goal of the special support programme. So the whole relation is based on mutual cooperation (Addis Ababa, May 2013).

This view is also shared by informants from Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State (Interview Assosa, June 2013)

As the Special Support Board operates as an inter-governmental forum which tries to address the *de facto* asymmetry within the Ethiopian Federation, it is appropriate to assess the level of institutionalization of the Board as an inter-governmental institution on the basis of the conceptual framework adopted for analysis as mentioned in the introductory part of this paper. Based on the framework and assessment of the organization and working mechanisms of the Special Support Board, it is possible to portray the Board as an institutionalized in

ter-governmental forum. The Board was formally established as an autonomous institution on the basis of the Council of Ministers Regulation and it developed its own directive which set the duties and responsibilities of each member of the Board and also established a Technical Committee. The Board further assigned its Secretariat which, in fact, is a federal ministry rather than an independent institution. It also set its regular meeting schedules, decision making mechanisms, detailed reporting timelines and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In light of these legally grounded organizational structures and working mechanisms, it is possible to designate the Board as an institutionalized inter-governmental forum.

Thus the Board is the only inter-governmental forum so institutionalized in the Ethiopian Federation. The only shortcomings of the Board that make it less than a full-fledged inter-governmental forum are the place of the regional governments within the Board and the independence of the Secretariat. Without the participation of the regional governments in the Board, it is difficult to denote it as a full-fledged inter-governmental forum. However, practical operation of the Board shows participation of the regional governments through their presidents and bureau heads in the meetings of the Board.

The inclusion of the regional governments in the Board and in the Technical Committee through formal regulation and directive and the setting of an independent Secretariat might help the Board to be a full-fledged and institutionalized inter-governmental forum which is equally responsible for and accountable to the providers, receivers and coordinators of the support.

Conclusion

De facto asymmetry is a fact of life in all federations. In multi-ethnic federations like Ethiopia where constituent units are in congruent with cultural markers, variation in population size, area and socio-economic conditions is *ex ante* determined by the number, size, and settlement pattern of ethnic groups that inhabit the federation. So, *de facto* asymmetry in these federations is related to the genesis of the federation and it impacts the operation and relation of the constituent units with each other and with the federal government.

In the Ethiopian case, the inter-governmental support and coordination system takes into account the difference in the actual capacity of the regional governments. This is practically observable in the horizontal-regional relations pursued between the Amhara and the Afar Regional States, the Amhara and the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional States, the Tigray and the Afar Regional States, the Oromia and the Somali Regional States, and the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples and the Gambella Regional States. There is as such no horizontal-regional cooperation between the relatively developed regional states compared

to the formality and intensity that exist in the relation between the emerging regional states and the relatively developed ones. Moreover, although there are numerous vertical-national sectoral forums of inter-governmental type that bring the whole bureaus of regional states and the federal ministry offices together, there are no horizontal-national, horizontal-regional and vertical-regional forums except those associated with *de facto* asymmetry. This by itself shows the influence of *de facto* asymmetry on the forms and patterns of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation.

Moreover, the establishment of a Special Support Board is a ramification of the *de facto* asymmetric nature of the constituent units reflected in the patterns of inter-governmental relations. In addition, the proclamation that defines the powers and duties of the federal executive organ, Proclamation 691/2010 under Article 10 Sub-article 1(d), gives importance to issues of *de facto* asymmetry by requiring each ministry to provide assistance to regional states eligible for affirmative support as coordinated by the Ministry of Federal Affairs.

Respondents to the survey also indicate difference in the relative capacity of the constituent units as an important reason for engaging in horizontal-regional cooperation. So, the *de facto* asymmetry in the Ethiopian Federation drives the inter-governmental relation in the direction of more cooperation and support that address the needs of the emerging regions.

Thus *de facto* asymmetry is one of the factors that shape mechanisms of inter-governmental relations in the Ethiopian Federation and the changes these mechanisms bring to the emerging regions to create relative equity need a more detailed policy-specific study. However, in light of Article 47/4 of the FDRE Constitution, which entrenched the *de jure* asymmetry nature of the constituent units of the Ethiopian Federation and the possibility of change in relative *de facto* asymmetry nature of the constituent units at least in some variables, the impact of *de facto* asymmetry on the mechanisms of inter-governmental relations may fade away in the future.

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Annex

Table1. Reasons of the establishment of horizontal-regional relations

1.1. Asymmetry in capacity as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I have no idea	1	.9	2.9	2.9
	The fifth most important issue	3	2.7	8.8	11.8
	The fourth most important issue	3	2.7	8.8	20.6
	The third most important issue	18	16.4	52.9	73.5
	The second most important issue	8	7.3	23.5	97.1
	The first most important issue	1	.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	34	30.9	100.0	
Missing	System	76	69.1		
Total		110	100.0		

1.2. Neighbourhood as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	The fifth most important issue	7	6.4	17.9	17.9
	The fourth most important issue	15	13.6	38.5	56.4
	The third most important issue	8	7.3	20.5	76.9
	The second most important issue	2	1.8	5.1	82.1
	The first most important issue	7	6.4	17.9	100.0
	Total	39	35.5	100.0	
Missing	System	71	64.5		
Total		110	100.0		

1.3 .Overlap in ethnic settlement pattern as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
The fifth most important issue	8	7.3	22.2	22.2
The fourth most important issue	17	15.5	47.2	69.4
The third most important issue	8	7.3	22.2	91.7
The second most important issue	1	.9	2.8	94.4
The first most important issue	2	1.8	5.6	100.0
Total	36	32.7	100.0	
Missing System	74	67.3		
Total	110	100.0		

1.4. Use of the same working language as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
I have no idea	2	1.8	5.7	5.7
The fifth most important issue	8	7.3	22.9	28.6
The fourth most important issue	20	18.2	57.1	85.7
The third most important issue	4	3.6	11.4	97.1
The first most important issue	1	.9	2.9	100.0
Total	35	31.8	100.0	
Missing System	75	68.2		
Total	110	100.0		

1.5. Directions from the federal government as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I have no idea	1	.9	2.6	2.6
	The fifth most important issue	2	1.8	5.3	7.9
	The fourth most important issue	5	4.5	13.2	21.1
	The third most important issue	19	17.3	50.0	71.1
	The second most important issue	9	8.2	23.7	94.7
	The first most important issue	2	1.8	5.3	100.0
	Total	38	34.5	100.0	
Missing	System	72	65.5		
Total		110	100.0		

1.6. Joint provision of public services as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I have no idea	1	.9	2.8	2.8
	The fifth most important issue	1	.9	2.8	5.6
	The fourth most important issue	12	10.9	33.3	38.9
	The third most important issue	16	14.5	44.4	83.3
	The second most important issue	4	3.6	11.1	94.4
	The first most important issue	2	1.8	5.6	100.0
	Total	36	32.7	100.0	
Missing	System	74	67.3		
Total		110	100.0		

1.7. Implementation of joint projects as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
The fifth most important issue	4	3.6	10.5	10.5
The fourth most important issue	19	17.3	50.0	60.5
The third most important issue	10	9.1	26.3	86.8
The second most important issue	3	2.7	7.9	94.7
The first most important issue	2	1.8	5.3	100.0
Total	38	34.5	100.0	
Missing System	72	65.5		
Total	110	100.0		

1.8. Resolution of border conflicts as an important factor influencing the patterns of horizontal relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
I have no idea	1	.9	2.7	2.7
The fifth most important issue	3	2.7	8.1	10.8
The fourth most important issue	9	8.2	24.3	35.1
The third most important issue	20	18.2	54.1	89.2
The second most important issue	3	2.7	8.1	97.3
The first most important issue	1	.9	2.7	100.0
Total	37	33.6	100.0	
Missing System	73	66.4		
Total	110	100.0		