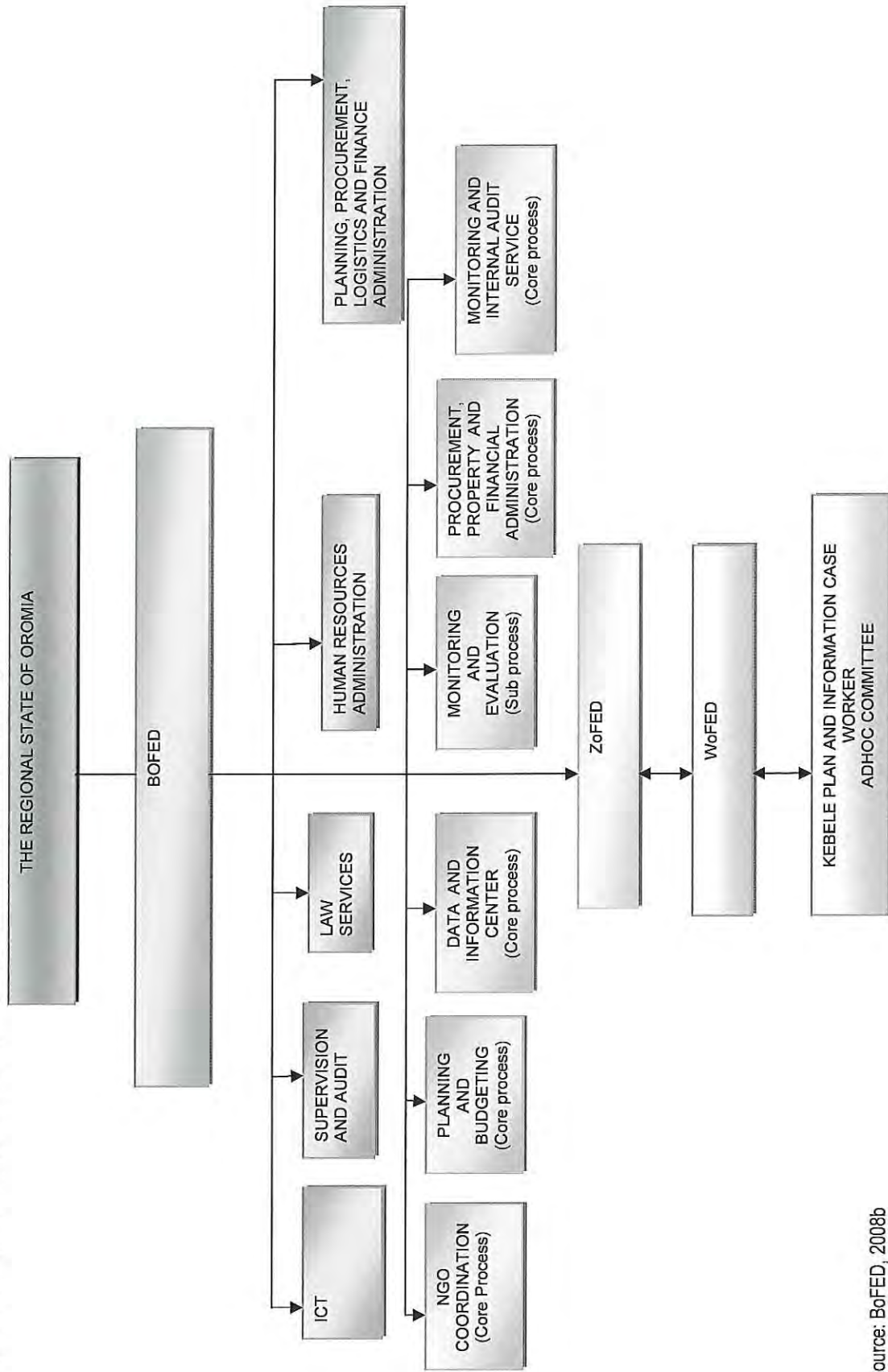


Chart 2: Functional level of Development Planning in Oromia Region



Source: BoFED, 2008b

As indicated above development planning starts at kebele level. The kebele plan is prepared by the planning and information worker and the *adhoc* committee organized from government institutions active in the kebele, community based organization and kebele administration. This committee organizes general consultation meeting with community, and identifies major development problems and prioritizes them in logical manner based on community needed. In addition, local resources (human and financial contribution) identified and estimated to finance the planned interventions. Together with the *adhoc* committee, the planning and information worker analyzes and organizes the planning information and data, and submit to the kebele cabinet for approval. The data collection and planning formats are the major tools forwarded from BoFED and used by the wereda Finance and Economic Development Bureau. The sector offices at kebele level (DAs, Health Extension Workers, School Teachers) also prepare their own plan and submit to their sector offices at wereda level. The kebele level planning in general includes 15 procedures and processes⁵ from the inception to the implementation of the plan (BoFED, 2008b).

At wereda level, the Finance and Economic Development Office have a dominant role in the preparation, coordination, appraisals of plan, compiling data, drawing core plan targets and indicators and coordinating the planning sector offices and the kebele planning *adhoc* organs. The major tools of planning at this level are various data collection formats, plan targets for the wereda and others sent through the ZoFED. The WoFED reproduces and disseminates these formats to sector offices. Two sets of channels of planning data flow are observed at this level. First, the planning data and documents prepared by the sector offices at the wereda level and second those from the kebele committees (a plan approved by the kebele council). The Finance and Economic Development Office, prior to the planning, prepares the budget ceilings and basic plan target and indicators. The sectors should prepare their plans within these limiting parameters. The office further analyzes, compiles and checks whether the plans are consistent with the predetermined ceilings, targets and goals. The finalized plan is submitted the wereda council for approval. The approved plan further aggregated into two main parts. Core targets above the budget of wereda (own sources) will be submitted to the zonal Finance And Economic Development Office where the plan is collated with zonal sector offices' plans and submitted to the BoFED. The minor activity within the capacity and internal revenue of the wereda further disaggregated and submitted to the sector offices for implementation. According to the same source indicated above, the wereda level planning covers about 15 steps. The wereda budget will be allocated based on certain criteria at regional level, which will be discussed in the next section. The wereda block grant is shared among sectors by the Wereda Finance and Economic Development Office. Furthermore, the approved kebele plans are edited, analyzed, compiled, and incorporated in the overall development plans. This wereda and kebele level planning is foundation for participatory planning, empowerment, institutional capacity building, resource mobilization and a common ground for grassroots development approach for NGOs and CBOs.

There is however, doubt that the community needs assessment is inadequate to ensure participation and priority setting consistent with the processes and procedures listed in the BPR of the Bureau. With better understanding of the principles and practices, capacities, potentials

⁵ Include organizing *adhoc*, committee, dissemination of data collection formats, data collection and analysis, organize community discussion forum (identification and prioritization of needs), identify development targets, prepare draft physical plan, estimate required budget, organize comprehensive budget and physical plan, facilitate approval of the draft report, prepare final report, facilitate amending of the budget by the council, prepare action plan, disseminate kebele development plan document.

and constraints, planning at this level will lead to the desired level of self-reliance, sustainability, efficiency and gradual graduation of weredas from grant allocation in the long-run. The linkages between communities and community institutions, government grassroots organizations, as well as structures from the wereda to the regional level determine the efficacy of participatory development planning. With weak horizontal and vertical relations between all stakeholders, institutions and direct beneficiaries participatory planning will contribute to misuse of scarce resources, cripple capacities and expansion of unsustainable, too many very small costly projects.

Zonal level development planning and procedures are almost similar with that of the wereda level planning. Two channels of planning are still active at this level. Like in wereda level development planning, two types of plans will be submitted to the ZoFED. The first channel of flow of planning information and plan documents is from the WoFED with main input of approved wereda level annual, mid term and long-term plans. The second channel from the zonal sector offices (such as agriculture and rural development, health, water resources and irrigation, education, etc). The sector office plans incorporated also plans of the wereda sector offices already submitted to the WoFED and approved by the wereda council. The ZoFED organizes both plans, check for consistencies, compliance with plan target indicators, budget ceilings and other criteria already established by the region and the zones. The finalized plan document will be approved by the zonal cabinets and submitted to the BoFED.

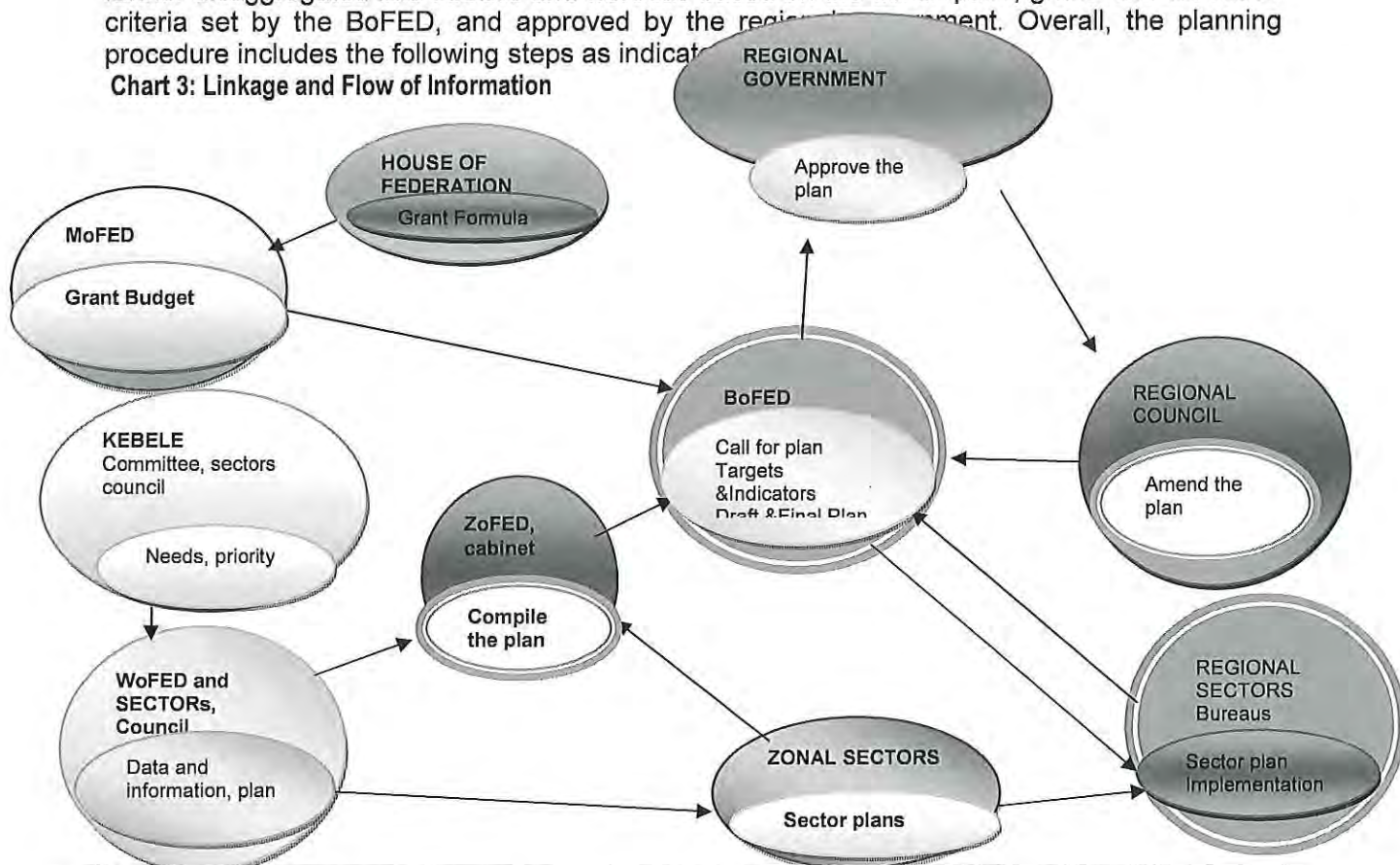
Though there are vertical and horizontal hierarchies in planning (all forms plans) from the kebele to the regional level, both approved projects and programmes by the wereda councils and zonal cabinets, the BoFED of the region plays determinant role in annual , medium and long term development planning. Modifications and rejections of the plan is the mandate of this institution. Like in the zones and weredas, development planning information is channeled through two routes. The major planning channel is horizontally from the regional sector offices. This plan incorporates the needs of the community, wereda, zones and programmes, which are mandated to the regional sector bureaus. Thus, these plans are relatively comprehensive and include all programmes and projects. As such, activity plans of projects and programmes are linked both with capital and recurrent expenditure need, and some incorporate wereda requests. The plans of the weredas, which will be incorporated in the regional sectoral plans, are those, which need more budgets (outside the wereda grants) from the regional government. Those, which could be accomplished by the weredas are not included in the planning process of the regional sectors and that of the BoFED. The second channel is those, which are arriving from the ZoFED, plans organized by weredas and zones. Due to the above reasons however, most of the plans from the zonal offices were not strictly attended by the bureau.

The planning process, at the bureau level, is a year round activity from data collection, preparation of indicators and building indices, budget calls and preparation of annual planning guidelines and formats, to awareness creation, technical backstopping, appraisal of programmes and projects (new) to actual preparation of the plan, plan appraisals, and submission to the regional government, discussion on the draft regional plan and approval of the plan by the regional council and finally implementation and follow up of the plans. This long process takes almost a year. But with the current business process reengineering and civil service reforms some important changes have been made to make the planning process more transparent, reliable, and focus on very selected indicators. Furthermore, the creation of the Finance and Economic Development Offices at wereda level and the emergence of grass roots or kebele level community planning is a new introduction that believed to add participatory approach to the development planning processes. The civil service reform within the bureau also linked two different sectors (finance and planning) as a unified planning and budgeting

team (core process) that enable easy harmonization of physical activity plan with budgets. The separation of monitoring and evaluation functions from the economic planning also reduced the time taking and arduous planning procedures and improved efficiency of planning (BoFED, 2008c).

The planning procedures have eight major procedures and steps as related to the actors involved in the planning processes. The actual planning process starts with block grant and/or budget ceiling estimated either by BoFED or announced by MoFED. At sub zonal level, based on established planning schedule, weredas prepare their plan, identify needs, collect relevant information, and submit horizontally to sector bureaus at zonal levels and vertically to zonal Finance and Economic Development (transition institution). Prior to this period, however BoFED calls for submission of their plans to sector offices, zonal Finance and Economic Development and also to weredas through its planning linkages. The wereda plan is incorporated in both the zonal and sector plans and the draft plans are submitted to the BoFED. At zonal level, similar procedures are adopted. ZoFED, dissemination targets, annual planning indicators, budget ceiling and planning formats horizontally to zonal sector offices and vertically to the WoFED. Upon submission, the plan from the WoFED and sector offices are compiled and submitted to the BoFED. After series of discussions, with sector bureaus, the planning and budgeting team within the BoFED finalizes the draft development plan (comprehensive in content including detail physical activity plan of regular programmes, capital budget projects, expenditure plan linked with programmes and projects, targets, strategies and indicators). The draft plan is submitted to the regional government and finally the Regional Council approves the plan. Once the council approved the plan, BoFED is responsible for reproduction and dissemination as well as disaggregating the wereda grant budget. Following this procedure, the planned budget further disaggregated into sectors and weredas based on the assumption, grant fund allocation criteria set by the BoFED, and approved by the regional government. Overall, the planning procedure includes the following steps as indicated in the flow chart below.

Chart 3: Linkage and Flow of Information



The processes and the procedures of medium term planning are almost similar with that of annual plans. However, the BoFED has the highest responsibility. The process starts with collection of data, review of previous years achievements, developing indicators, targets, constraints and capacities, setting priorities, strategies and developing planning guidelines. The bureau also calls the sector bureaus, weredas and zones to prepare the medium term plans based on the indicators, targets, priority areas already set by the bureau. The remaining procedure follows the same method of annual planning. Since the fiscal decentralization of 2002, one strategic plan was prepared and the second is on process.

The relationships between MoFED and BoFED, unlike in the previous periods, is limited to allocation of block grants and information related to the accomplishments and setting of major targets and indicators of relevance. Beside this, MoFED provides technical advice particularly in budget allocation, implementation and planning of multilateral and bilateral projects and programmes. In most cases, the guidelines and manuals produced by MoFED are used for planning, budgeting, budget allocation, monitoring and evaluation of plans and programmes.

socio-economic data, baseline indicators, spatial distribution of existing infrastructure, basic socio-economic indicators, reports and reviews, field reports and studies, assessments, various manuals and guidelines, inputs from the information management center of the bureau are inputs that feed into the planning system from the weredas, zones and sector bureaus.

Eventhough there are some structural changes in the planning and budgeting system, the planning system has still a number of problems.

First, the planning system was not participatory, particularly at wereda and kebele levels in line with the power vested to the weredas (to plan, administer and manage their resources);

Second, the planning system as a whole was not compatible with the needs for achieving development priorities and resources available for its implementation,

Third, the monitoring and evaluation system that ensures both reliable planning and implementation of development programmes was weak. Considering these major constraints to development planning, the bureau conducted the study to enhance the civil service reform within the structures of the bureau, and weredas in 2008. Depending on this study, significant procedural reforms were made by restructuring the former teams and departments into relevant functional groups. The study further details the major problems, duties and responsibilities, linkages within the bureau and external stakeholders, work standards, procedures of planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation and information management. The study also recommends the importance of the planning and information worker responsible for planning, conducting need assessment and identifying problems by collecting information at kebele level. The aim is to improve participation in planning, create awareness, empower the community, and improve monitoring and to focus on solving basic development constraints at wereda and kebele levels.

5.1.3 Expectations and Gaps in Development planning

According to the objectives and goals of the study and civil service reform within the Bureau and its vertical and horizontal structures, the expectations of the planning and budgeting processes are the following:

- Coordinated participatory planning that enables sustainable development ,
- Adoption of bottom up and top down approaches in view of the weak capacity at kebele and wereda levels and gradual adoption of the bottom up participatory planning with capacity building,
- Separate monitoring and evaluation team from planning to enable efficient and continuous planning process throughout the year,
- Clear and institutionalized information flow from all levels and standardized management of planning, data and information,
- Development planning that address socio-economic problems and focus on priorities ,
- Laying the organizational and structural foundation of participatory planning at kebele level so that the fundamental problems of the population, their development needs be addressed and capacities be tapped,
- Strengthening the capacity of planning system in sector bureaus and offices and improving linkages with their vertical structures (down to the kebele) and with BoFED at all levels. These capacity building (including that of the structures of the BoFED at all levels) include training and skill development (participatory planning, project cycle management, monitoring and evaluation, incentives, etc),
- Transparent procedures, accountability and responsibility within the planning and plan implementing institutions,
- Adequate and timely support (administrative, technical, management, decision and logistic) for those who are in need ,particularly for those institutions at wereda and kebele levels,
- Finally, the study documents worked out all routine steps, procedures and processes for all core, major and minor activities mandated to a team, sub team and individual expert, set time frame for every activity, standards, and inputs needed to accomplish the tasks.

Furthermore, the civil service reform determined the number of support and professional staff needed, transport and other logistics necessary to accomplish the targeted activities and also structures necessary to improve the performance of the staff.

Some of the civil service reform activities have been completed in 2003 while that of planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and information management functions of the bureau were in 2008. The establishment of the WoFEDs was completed in 2003 with decentralization of some powers and functions of the region to the weredas. Yet, there are a number of issues that should be resolved to achieve the stated goal of civil service reform, participatory planning, efficient monitoring and evaluation and information management function of the planning institutions. Some of the gaps are highlighted below.

First, the objective of decentralization of the planning and financing functions to the weredas is to promote participatory planning, to improve information flow, to develop the planning system that address the needs and priorities of the population, to tap local resources and develop self-reliance, ensure efficiency in resource utilization and others. As indicated above, there are two features of wereda level planning. The first feature is that all needs arising from the kebeles and sector wereda offices compiled and linked with the available local revenues and expected

grants from the region. This plan is not submitted through planning ladders though submitted to the zonal and regional offices for information purposes. The other feature is those, which are above the implementation, management or technical capacities of the weredas and sent up wards to the regional sector bureaus. These two features of planning at wereda level make the regional development planning deficient of vital development activities undertaken at grass roots level. In addition, development activities undertaken through participation and mobilization of local resources such as local materials, labor and contribution of money are not included in the regional plan.

Second, the poor capacities at wereda level (for all sector offices, and WOFED) is inadequate and most of them suffer from critical shortage of skills, experience, lack of transport facilities, weak communication either with the zones or the region. Technical support is also poor from the higher structures. In most weredas, implementation capacities further erode with volatile natural conditions and their vulnerability. Others have poor access to infrastructure and markets to accomplish their annual plan targets.

Third, the stated allocation of the planning and information worker at kebele level is not completed in most weredas and kebeles. The accountability and answerability of the workers is not clear. Participatory planning approaches are also new let alone for the kebeles and weredas, but even to the Bureau's planning experts. Methodologies and procedures how to incorporate and compile participatory planning at the grass roots level with conventional development planning is not justified and transparent. Participation of communities in need identification, project formulation, financing and other aspects of planning is also constrained by inadequate skills and experience, inadequate training and capacity building and the traditional experience of reliance on kebele committees and administration machineries. Thus, there is no connection and communication between the regional planners and the kebele plan and information worker. The WoFEDs have no transport facilities to support the kebeles and/or inadequate IT for planning and data management.

Fourth, capacities are also limited at zonal and regional levels particularly shortage of transport facilities which lead to weak technical support, planning and data collection. At the regional level almost all experts, teams and sub teams have computers, access to telephone, and internet services. Planning at this level is relatively easy. At zonal level, such facilities are lacking and at wereda level almost none.

Fifth, the number of professional staff in planning and budgeting is adequate and their professional composition and educational level is satisfactory. Yet, the skill and experience in more advanced method of planning, technical studies, and the aspired participatory integrated development planning is limited.

Sixth, the development planning of the region (same for other regions also) is not linked with poverty reduction, food insecurity reduction strategies and other millennium development goals. This arises from lack of experience in linking these indicators with annual plans. Neither the wereda nor sector plans have such indicators. Outcome indicators arising from the construction, rehabilitation or modification of infrastructure constitutes the regional macro-economic framework and annual plan targets. The planning system is not substantiated with evaluation inputs, which are vital in resource allocation, decision-making, development of relevant programmes and projects. The increasing volume of agricultural production is not linked with poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, income, revenue and expenditure capacities. Number of extension workers should be linked with productivity and adoption of new technologies and working practices, yet the yardstick in the planning targets is ratios. Health

infrastructure, water and sanitation facility expansion should bring some change to mortality, morbidity rates and incidence of diseases as well as improved income and productivity.

Seventh, capacities for adequate project identification, preparation and appraisal is also inadequate both in the planning and sector bureaus. Appraisals are limited and not critical to encourage viable and discourage weak proposals.

Eight, the capacity of planning and budgeting team of the bureau depends on the efficiency of similar planning and programming teams in sector/implementing institutions. Linkages and capacity building in these institutions is inadequate and not to expectations.

Ninth, decentralization expands structures; induce the development of various and, endless needs, and problems. With decentralization to lower levels, there must be sufficient funds and capacity building activities to address emerging problems. Currently, though budget allocation is improved to some extent it is inadequate to address major development problems arising from the grass roots level. This may develop into hopelessness, resource use inefficiency and complicated socio-economic problems. Thus, lack of adequate resources is one of the many problems of planning to achieve goals. Increasing number of weredas and zones (division and splitting) expand institutions, financial, administrative and management costs. Some structures also seem redundant in view of fiscal decentralization and significant delegation of powers and duties to wereda level. The economy of scale of smaller units, their implication on planning, and their cost must be considered.

Tenth, sectoral planning is still dominating the planning system of the region. Planning institution plays an allocative role than real development planning that integrate the overall economy, the existing potentials and constraints and that lead to sustainable development. Research on planning and policy is inadequate and in most cases non-existent. Though attempts to address the problems of some critical spatial areas (such as the 59 food insecure safety net weredas, the pastoral areas, etc) the resource flow to these areas, projects and programmes designed to address their problems are not as such vary from the relatively less vulnerable areas. Regional development planning should focus on such depressed areas while promoting accelerated growth in dynamic parts of the region.

5.1.4 Technical Supports to Other Sector Offices

Among the routine supports provided by the planning and budgeting team of the bureau there are development of planning formats, orientation on planning indicators, schedules, budgeting, project appraisal techniques, prioritization of targets and others. However, this support is limited to regional sector bureaus, because of limited mobility, shortage of manpower, limited access to networking, communication and transport services. Technical capacities are also limited in more advanced subjects of development planning, concepts, applications, practices and methods. At wereda level, capacity limitations are critical and in most areas, WOFEDs have no role in provision of technical or material support to other sector offices at wereda and kebele levels.

5.2 Budgeting

5.2.1 Methods and Levels

Budgeting is an integral component of the physical activity plan as well as regular programmes conducted every year. In previous periods, two different institutions prepare capital budgets and recurrent budgets separately. The capital budget components are linked with capital projects and programmes with fixed starting and termination periods and mainly focuses on the construction, rehabilitation, expansion and major maintenance of infrastructures as well as projects funded by bilateral and multi-lateral donor agencies. Such programmes and projects are budgeted based on the scope of the work on annual basis by the BoFED. The recurrent budget is linked with regular programmes, includes operating costs of major activities, salaries and allowances, and other vital expenditure elements, and was mainly financed from the government treasury. The then regional Finance Bureau planned these costs. However, after the merger of the two Bureaus into unified BoFED the two separate and major functions become one major component of the planning system. Since planning and budgeting are similar functions, its plan include annual, medium and long-term development budget planning. The medium term budget plans are prepared for five years disaggregated by sector, year, source, and implementing agencies, programmes and projects. The recurrent budgets are also prepared in similar manner including sources of revenues and expenditure, expenditure modalities and categories.

Budgeting includes a variety of issues and not the concern of this paper to cover all budgeting processes and procedures, rather the paper focuses on budgeting as related to annual and medium term fiscal planning.

Budgeting process starts, like physical activity plans for programmes and projects, with the collection of data, at different level from the wereda to the region. The wereda level data is collected from both the sectors and kebeles, compiled, and linked with local revenues, which could be collected in a specific planning period. The sector offices submit the plans with the budget requirement to their sector offices at zonal levels. The wereda Finance and Economic Development Office compiles the data⁶ and link with available local revenue, compare with budget ceiling and the fund that will be available as a grant from the regional government. The remaining budget requirement and plans that are beyond the funding and technical capacities as well mandate are sent to the zonal Finance and Economic Development Bureau. The zonal Finance and Economic Development offices in turn compile budgets arriving from zonal sector offices and weredas and send to the Regional Finance and Economic Development Bureau.

At the bureau level, the planning and budgeting team is responsible for the planning and budgeting of all projects and programmes from all levels and relevant sectors. The basis for budget planning is estimation of available local revenues, grants and loans from the bilateral and multi lateral organizations, subsidies from the federal government and other sources (internal sources), sectoral and strategic priorities, basic targets and development indicators for the year. Based on these sources and the estimated amount of fund available from all sources, two budget allocations are made. The first is sectoral budget allocation for the regional sector bureaus for implementation of programmes and projects as well as main activities for the year.

⁶ The data refers to the plans of the sectors and kebeles i.e. detail programs, projects, inputs, outputs and budget requirements.

The sectoral budget planning depends on the priority⁷ given to the sector, the unit costs of known development activities (for example construction and maintenance), the type of programmes and projects planned for financing, level of inflation and the availability of grants and loans whose sources and amount is transparent and known from year to year. It is also affected by the decision of the regional government for cases, which are important in social, economic and political development in a year.

The wereda block grant allocation will cover both capita and recurrent costs of programmes and recurrent expenditure needs. The proportion of the wereda block grant is decided at the bureau and regional government level, and mostly depends on various development needs, population, level of development and revenue generation between 2003-2005. After 2005 however, the criteria was replaced by the unit cost estimation method. Once this budget allocation criteria is established the regional government will approve, modify or change the shares between the weredas and sectors after deducting contingency funds to cover unforeseen circumstances, and to cover gaps occurring during the planning and implementation period. Based on these criteria, the planning and budgeting section of the bureau links each programme and projects with the available budget, together with the staff of the planning, monitoring and evaluation team of sector bureaus and submit the draft report to the regional government for approval. The wereda block grant is also worked out based on the split between the sectors and the weredas and the criteria developed to divide the block grant between 301 weredas and towns in the region. The approved sector and wereda block grant together with contingency fund for the year, after adjustment and some modification, if any, the regional council approves the annual regional budget. Once amended the annual budget is promulgated and distributed to the sectors and weredas for implementation. The sector bureaus at the same time distribute the allocated fund for programmes undertaken at wereda level. The wereda Finance and Economic Development Office on the other hand allocates the grant budget and funds from other sources to sector offices based on the criteria established prior to the budget planning and allocation. The implementation and utilization of the budget is monitored and evaluated by the monitoring and evaluation team of BoFED and similar Sector teams of the zones and weredas. The Finance and Economic Development Bureau is also responsible for justifying and recommending budget transfers from one project to the other and from recurrent to capital budget as well as from one sector to the other as far as the transfer is justifiable and can improve efficiency of implementation. Internal audit services are also part of the overall planning system to ensure proper utilization of funds from all sources. This structure is organized as a separate team from the region to the wereda level unlike other teams, which are merged at sub regional level.

As stated above capital and recurrent, wereda and sector budget are the main types of budget planned annually disaggregated into source (federal government grant, external grants and loans, regional government revenue, internal sources, and others). The regional revenue is used to finance both capital and recurrent budget needs and can be shared between the regional government and the weredas. The budget from external sources (bilateral and multilateral) used only for financing capital projects and earmarked activities and utilized at regional level by sector bureaus and offices. The regional revenue is from various sources such as income tax (direct and indirect), royalties and others. Until 2003, annual revenue collection was the responsibility of the regional government and weredas were obliged to collect their quota. However, with the decentralization of fiscal assignment to the weredas, regional revenue divided into three categories: revenue of weredas, revenue of the region and internal revenue.

⁷ Priority is actually set by the regional government depending on the contribution of the project in alleviating poverty, and materializing the national and regional development policy and strategic goals.

The revenue of the weredas is that revenue which is planned and executed by the weredas themselves to cover their local expenditures and investment projects while that of the region is revenue that is collected by the regional government and that can be shared among the weredas. Internal revenue is that can be collected by sectors mandated to collect revenues for own consumption. Thus, internal revenues are not shared among different levels of government or functions. These revenue sources and percentage in the overall revenue in a particular year forms a foundation for block grant allocations between weredas.

The wereda grant formula has been revised twice in the last five years. The first wereda grant formula adopted similar federal formula and used criteria such as number of population, level of development and revenue collection efficiency. These criteria served between 2003 and 2005 with some modification in level of development⁸. After 2005, the unit cost approach has been adopted to reduce the negative impact of previous allocation criteria. The criteria and weights used for wereda grant budget allocation for the last five years is indicated in table below.

Table 1: Weights and Budget Allocation Criteria in the Region (1995-1997EFY)

Indicators	Weight (%)		
	2003 (1995 EFY)	2004 (1996 EFY)	2005 (1997 EFY)
Number of population	60	60	60
Development level ⁹	25	30	30
Revenue collection efficiency	15	10	10

Source: translated from 2006 budget preparation of Oromia Region, BoFED June 2005, page 26

However due to deficiencies in these criteria the government decided to change these indicators to more transparent and objective criteria after 2006. The major shortcomings of these criteria according to the same document indicated above are the following

1. The criteria did not show expenditure needs of the weredas. There is no clear relationship between number of population and expenditure needs per capita. Some indicators based on population are also misleading.
2. The relationship between the amount of grant budget and its outcome is weak
3. Inefficient utilization of funds because it depends on previous year expenditure and cannot consider the standard budget needs (actual expenditures)
4. The budget allocation has weak relations with development priorities and sectoral needs
5. Allocation is incremental regardless of the level of service provision
6. It does not encourage budget planning due to unclear linkages between planning and budgeting
7. Subjective weighting system (BoFED 2005:31)

To solve these deficiencies of the budget allocation criteria the regional government adopted the unit cost approach since the 1998 EFY. The unit cost approach is in line with the expenditure assignment of the weredas, expenditure needs for vital sectors (both for recurrent and capital budgets). The capital budget is calculated based on the priority sectors such as agriculture (number of farming households, index of vet clinic deficit), education, water supply, health services and distance of the wereda capital from Addis Ababa. These criteria used also for the

⁸ In 2004, indicators of extension services (farmers DA ratio) was added to level of development and in 1998 EFY the unit cost approach was used in allocation of grants

⁹ Development level includes education indicators (student teachers ration, student classroom ratio, primary enrollment rate, secondary enrolment rate), health (clinics and health post per 1000 population, nurse per 1000, and health assistant per 1000 population), road (road density and road efficiency), water supply (% with access to safe water), and per capita revenue in 2003 (1995 EFY). In 2004, DA farmers' ratio and ratio of laboratory technician per 1000 population were added to the 2003 allocation criteria. On the other hand the revenue collection efficiency is calculated based on per capita revenue collected in previous year

budget year of 2002 EFY. In addition to these data, reports of revenues and expenditures of weredas and sectors, performance and audit reports, federal government grant allocation criteria and fund, various government guidelines and manuals, regional and federal government financial proclamations and others are used as inputs in budget planning.

5.2.2 Processes and Procedures

The budgeting processes and procedures are almost similar to that of the physical planning. It starts with the development of data collection formats and dissemination to the sector offices in the second week of December. The sector offices/bureaus and ZoFED as well as WoFED are responsible to collect all relevant data depending on the formats produced and disseminated to them. This information is important mainly to develop criteria for allocation of budgets to the weredas. Depending on the collected data, the bureau establishes budget allocation criteria (for both sectors and weredas) and facilitates discussion and approval of the criteria. Based on estimation of previous years' internal revenue and federal grants and other sources (loans and external grants) develop budget ceilings for each sectors and weredas and call for the preparation of the draft physical and budget plans for each relevant sector bureaus. The sector bureaus, based on the budget ceilings and development targets for will prepare comprehensive medium and short term development plans. This will be followed by critical appraisal of the physical and financial plans submitted by the sector bureaus and offices.

Meanwhile, the federal grant will be announced by MoFED to regions in late April. Thus the draft and appraised physical and financial plans will be re-adjusted based on the final budget and on the final allocation of block grants between sectors and weredas. The final physical and budget plan will be organized by the BoFED and submitted to the regional council for approval. Based on the comments of the council and other stakeholders the final planning document (including budgets) will be prepared and the final budget will be promulgated by the council. The final comprehensive sectoral plan (both medium and short term) will be disseminated to all budget owners and other relevant bodies up to the second week of August. Budget allocation for the weredas follows similar procedures except its comprehensive requirement for detail data, reaching agreement on the budget allocation criteria and a sequence of procedures following the approval of the wereda budgets. Once the planning phase and approval is over, the mandate of the BoFED is follow up, monitoring and evaluation of the execution of the budget on monthly and quarterly basis as well as follow up and implementation of budget transfers between intra and inter-budget owners.

5.2.3 Expectations and Gaps

The expected level for budgeting is similar to that of planning activities. The desired level of budgeting and planning is detailed in the BPR studies including the skill, experience and education level of the staff, the staff incentives, structural organization, the capacities and constraints, the processes and procedures in planning and budgeting.

The constraints in budgeting are also highly related to planning functions of the bureau. The following are some of the potential problems in need of future attention:

- the efficiency of current unit cost approach, fiscal and project assignment to the weredas,

- the efficiency of some indicators used in approximation of budgets and aggregated indicators,
- the gap between the need for self reliance and expanding expenditure need,
- the implication of capital budget in expanding recurrent budget needs,
- The need for separate financing criteria for weredas with different potentials and constraints,
- the inflexible nature of priorities and criteria,
- the strategies and need for expanding revenue base and its impact on poverty reduction,
- the problem of weak linkage in budget planning and achieving millennium development goals and core development targets and indicators of the region
- the increasing number of self governing weredas and towns and their implication on budgets and other regular budgetary constraints have to be considered to improve the pace of development, to reduce inequalities and poverty.

5.2.4 Technical Supports

The linkage between BoFED, ZoFED, and WoFED is that of hierarchical administrative relationships than the technical collaboration in planning. The weak coordination and access to modern fast and efficient communication technologies especially at wereda level further handicapped the technical support supposed to be provided by the bureau and the ZoFED. Eventhough, the technical support of the BoFED and ZoFED is inadequate for collaborative action, the Bureau provides support in provision of data collection formats, technical guidelines (on annual budget preparation), occasional in service training, group monitoring and evaluation and budget control and management awareness creation and supervision.

The technical support to sector offices is also explained in terms of provision of data collection formats, budget target and setting procedures, budget appraisals, briefing and orientation on annual budgeting and joint monitoring and evaluation of budget execution on quarterly basis.

The BoFED on the other hand obtained periodical support from MoFED, projects and programs of bilateral and multi-lateral organizations active in the region, and other capacity building supports including short-term trainings and workshops, formats and guidelines, materials and others.

In general, however, technical support both between vertical and horizontal structure of planning (with regard to budgeting) is inadequate particularly at sub regional level.

5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation, as integral part of the planning and implementation processes of development projects and programmes, established as a separate team unlike the integrated planning, monitoring and evaluation tasks in the previous periods. The team is responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the annual and medium term plans. Prior to the decentralization, monitoring and evaluation functions were the responsibilities of the planners themselves. Currently, the monitoring and evaluation team has two main sub teams. The economic sector monitoring and evaluation team responsible for the follow up,

supervision and monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects of economic sectors such as agriculture and rural development, industry and other construction activities, while the social team is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of social sector programmes and projects. The team is accountable and answerable to the process owner (the team leader) who in turn is directly answerable to the head of the Bureau.

The main reason for the separation of the monitoring and evaluation sub process from the planning sub process¹ is:

- To ensure the continuity of planning activities over the year period which leads the efficient utilization of time,
- To reduce work load of the planners,
- The overlapping of the planning and monitoring and evaluation functions,
- To ensure efficient and responsive monitoring and evaluation system that has the capacity to supervise, monitor and evaluate programmes and projects.

5.3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Methods and Levels

The planning method of the bureau as a whole, according to the BPR document of the bureau, is participatory and hence monitoring and evaluation system has to be participatory consistent with the planning structure laid down from the kebele to the regional level.

An efficient and modern monitoring and evaluation system, which is result based, should have a clear work procedures, guiding principles, monitoring and evaluation indicators, manuals and guidelines, and responsibilities of stakeholders. To improve the monitoring and evaluation system of the bureau, attempts were made to develop detailed processes and procedures as to how and when monitoring and evaluation should take place. Some standards were also indicated for each activity, with responsibilities and approximate time required to complete the task, as well as overall and specific tasks of monitoring and evaluation. Apart from this, the monitoring and evaluation system of the bureau has no technical guidelines and manuals (either on the conventional or the participatory monitoring and evaluation). Currently, the guidelines used for monitoring and evaluation are that of MoFED which is more of principles of the M&E than practical guidelines that can be used at all levels. The availability of these guidelines improve the knowledge gap, shortage of skilled human resources, and saves time.

The structure of the monitoring and evaluation extends from the regional bureau to the wereda offices, while at kebele level the *ad hoc* committees and the planning and information worker are responsible for follow up, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. Yet, the monitoring and evaluation function suffers from various problems as highlighted in part of this paper.

Two types of monitoring are currently exercised in the bureau. First, the monitoring and evaluation undertaken at field level by a group of teams organized from the team of the bureau and planning and programming sections of sector offices. This field observation and monitoring is arranged every quarter before the completion of quarter progress reports. The main objective of this field monitoring is to observe and monitor some specific projects and programmes planned for the year and draw some critical problems and to forward solutions in due time.

This field observation and monitoring of projects involve many stakeholders including sector bureaus, zonal and wereda offices (project owners), communities (though rarely), contractors,

key informants and monitoring and evaluation teams of the bureau. This field monitoring is arranged four times a year. The discussion, group observations, the data and information collection and the recommendations and other results of this monitoring is an input to flexible implementation modalities, adherence and/or change to schedules, identification of resource and planning gaps as well as a lesson for future planning. The findings of this monitoring report is an input for the project owners, the decision makers and the planners to consider vital issues in planning, implementation of projects and programmes, and enable fast feedbacks and other technical, and management decisions for improving the progress of the activities planned for the year.

The strategies of field monitoring activities are the following:

1. On site field observation of critical projects and programs (both constraints and good achievements);
2. Analysis of reports of the sector wereda and zonal progress and field reports conducted by the planning and budgeting as well as virtual teams at both levels;
3. Short survey;
4. Discussion with relevant stakeholders;
5. Meetings with communities and implementing agencies or bodies;
6. Questionnaire and secondary data collection formats and analysis of information obtained through these tools;
7. Inquiry of all concerned and relevant bodies involved in planning, budgeting and implementation;
8. Occasional follow up in case of suspicious projects and programs, and finally
9. Provision of supports wherever needed though capacities were not developed at all levels. (BoFED, 2008c).

The second monitoring and evaluation report or type is the regular and formal monitoring reports submitted by the regional sector bureaus and ZoFED. These reports are prepared on quarterly basis, and they are basically progress reports that show the planned and accomplished tasks expressed in percentages. They cover only inputs, activities and to some extent outputs, except the final annual report which evaluates the overall achievements in the planning period. Four quarter reports and one annual progress reports are prepared each year by the team.

However, both types of monitoring are constrained by shortage of transport facilities, skilled human resources in the team (engineers for monitoring of construction activities, hydrologists, economists, water engineers and others), inadequate attention for monitoring and evaluation and weak feedback, delayance in flow of reports, inadequate linkages with the sector bureau monitoring and evaluation sections and weak capacities at sub regional levels. In view of the vast area of the region and increasing number of weredas and townships, four round field monitoring is inadequate to capture the overall performances, problems and other constraints. Similarly, the weak capacities at sub regional levels and sector offices, the low attention to monitoring of projects further exacerbate the implementation problems.

In both cases, the main inputs used for monitoring purposes are reports of previous years, annual plan documents of the year, action plans of the sector offices and guidelines (if any). Up-to date monitoring and evaluation guidelines (whether conventional or participatory) consistent with the nature of projects, the targets and development indicators of the planning period, guidance and clear division of monitoring and evaluation tasks between levels, and technical documents that show the logical flow of inputs, activities and outputs that link to the desired outcome and impacts are not available and used by the team. Similarly, participatory

planning requires participatory monitoring and evaluation and tangible and objective training and other capacity building at regional and sub regional levels particularly at wereda and kebele. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a learning process and not fault finding. People learn from their mistakes and apply new ideas and working procedures from what they learn. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is new to the bureau and all structures from the kebele upwards to the regional level. According to the discussions with some staff of the team, training has been given twice last year for the weredas. Nevertheless, the training was inadequate to inculcate and apply the basic principles and actual practices of project monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation requires understanding and knowledge of project cycle management, planning and planning methodologies and related subject matter. Considering the complicated nature of planning, social and economic activities, it is difficult to assume that the monitoring and evaluation system equipped its staff with important practical professions. As a result, the monitoring and evaluation function of the bureau follow similar procedures and methods applied in pre-civil service reform periods. In similar vein, such gap is even critical at sub regional level and monitoring and evaluation takes the form of auditing, fault finding which leads to degradation of morale of implementing agencies, erode self reliance and confidence which cumulated to the poor performance of projects and programmes. Technical backstopping, frequent field visits, teamwork, and up to date indicators and manuals are important for sub regional levels. Mobility of staff should be adequate to enable these technical support at all levels.

Monitoring and evaluation, most of the time, focus on physical activities which could be measured, and observed such as construction activities (schools, health posts and centers, vet clinics, irrigation infrastructures, etc). Monitoring and evaluation incorporate, in principle, all the processes from planning of the activities to its completion, procedures, accountabilities, material and financial inputs that constitute a development project. Exclusion of these issues in monitoring leads to incomplete, wrong decision-making and unreliable future planning.

Despite such potential constraints, the monitoring and evaluation team, conduct periodical supervision on both programmes and projects financed through capital budget and regular programmes financed by recurrent budget. Capital budget projects are those planned for the year, funded from the capital budget, and implemented by the sector institutions from the kebele to the regional level. The regular programmes are too many and as a result the monitoring and evaluation system considers only strategic sectors that are believed to contributing to poverty reduction such as extension system, water supply and irrigation activities, education and health services. However, the attention given to these programmes in periodical monitoring is less than that for the capital budget projects.

5.3.2 Procedures and processes of M&E

The processes and procedures of the monitoring and evaluation activities for all levels, duties and responsibilities, the horizontal and vertical linkages with various institutions, and other issues relevant in effective monitoring and evaluation were studied in the 2008.

According to this study, the monitoring and evaluation cycle starts with the preparation and dissemination of various formats (monitoring formats) in early August at bureau level and in the production of the final annual progress report. This inception cycle ends with the dissemination of the formats to the kebele level up to the end of August via zones and weredas. The structure at wereda and zone levels plays a role of disseminating the formats from the bureau down to

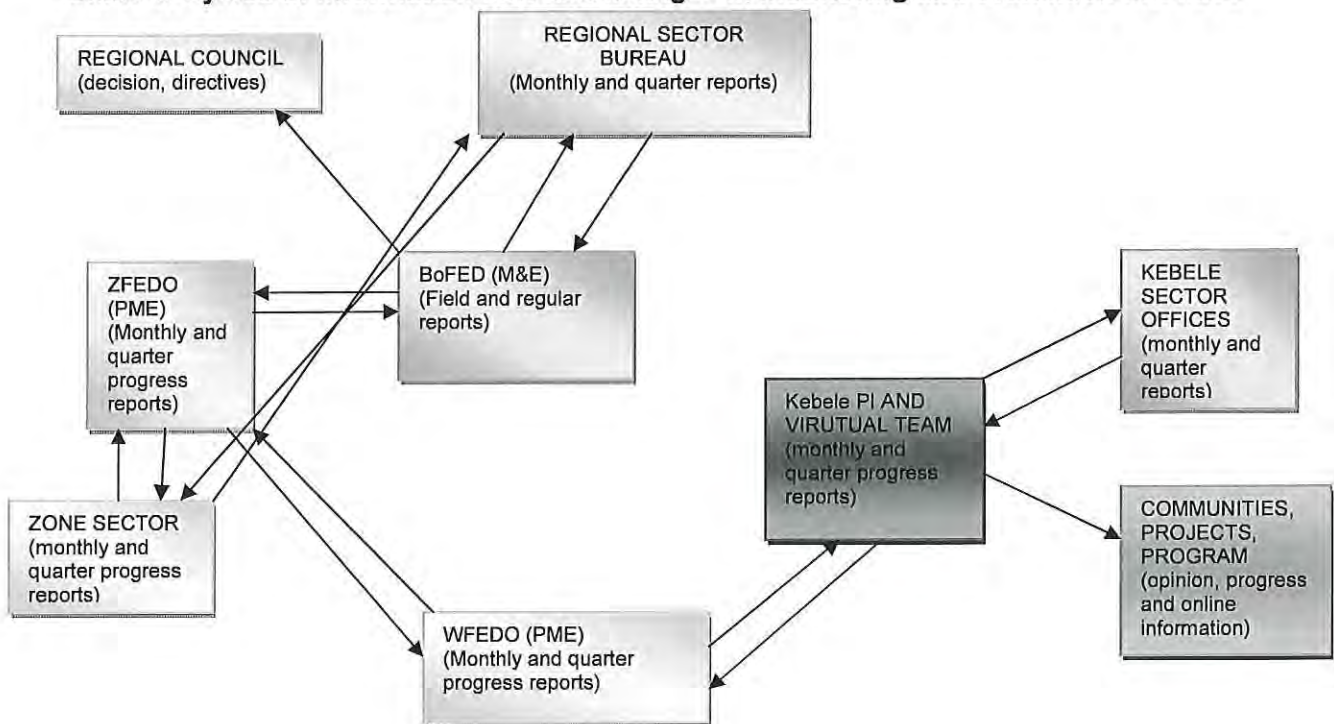
the next level. The monitoring formats are used for collecting monitoring information each month and returned to the bureau following similar flow channel indicated above. The wereda and zone level Finance and Economic Development Offices (mainly the planning, monitoring and evaluation team at both levels) are mandated to compile the monitoring information from the lower level and return to the BoFED. The monitoring and evaluation team at the bureau level should compile these data from zonal planning and budgeting team each month and complete the report within 2-7 days in the preceding month. However, because of capacities the bureau did not start preparation of monthly progress reports.

The third stage is preparation of quarterly report enriched sometimes with the findings of field observation. The quarterly reports cover all structures from the kebele to the wereda following similar flow channels from the kebele to the regional level. Quarterly progress reports are prepared and submitted every three months from 5-10 days of the preceding months or the end of specific quarter planning period at bureau level. The time lag between the kebele and the region is about 15 to 20 days. However, the poor communication infrastructure and capacities at kebele and wereda level, the time lag between these two extreme structures is more than a month. Similarly, due to aggregation of monitoring data from the kebele to the zonal level, detailed data, problems and other potential achievements of the kebeles and weredas will not reach the regional monitoring and evaluation team. The field monitoring, as indicated above, is accomplished up-to the end of the quarter planning period at regional level. The details for other levels of field monitoring could be referred in table below. Bi- annual and annual monitoring and evaluation progress report is scheduled for the month of January and May each year when the regional government and council, the representatives of the people, sector implementing bureaus, and zonal planning offices participate to evaluate the achievements of the plan. This evaluation workshop will make critical discussion, and decision-making how to enhance the lagging projects, how to solve critical and core problems. This decision lay a foundation for the next year planning.

Table 2: Monitoring and Evaluation programme of the team

	Activity	Duration	Monitoring and Evaluation levels, and schedules			
			Kebele	Wereda/town	Zone	Region
1	Prepare, modify and disseminate reporting formats	July 1-August 30	Until 30 th of August	Up to 25 th of August	Up to 20 th of August	Up to 10 th of August
2	Prepare monthly progress report on capital, regular and programme good governance package	Monthly, 1-10 days of next month	Monthly, 1 day of next month	Each month from 2-7 th day	Every month from 2-7 days	Every month from 2-7 days
3	Prepare and submit plan and regular program progress report	Quarterly	3 rd month between 20-25	3 rd month between 25-30	preceding month from 1-5 days	preceding month from 5-10 days
4	Field monitoring	Quarterly	End of the quarter up to 30 th day	30 th of end of the quarter	Up to 30 th of the end of the quarter	Up to 30 th of the end of the quarter
5	Biannual and annual progress report (preparation and submission (2x/year)	January and May	January and may up to 10 days of the month	January and May up to 20 th	January and May up to 25 th of the month	January and May up to 25 th of the month

Source: Translated from BoFED, Business Process Re-engineering, 2008, pp. 80

Chart 4: Cycles of information flow and linkages in monitoring and evaluation interface

5.3.3 Expectations and Gaps in M&E

Monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process and a foundation for success of programs. The objective of monitoring and evaluation is to follow up, supervise, continuous gathering of information on what has been planned and achieved (done), and decision making based on its findings. It answers questions such as what has been planned and achieved (inputs, outputs), how things have been done (processes and methods), and in addition questions such as where, when, who, why to link every process, input, activities, out puts to outcome (objective) and changes (impacts) to goals. Monitoring varies from evaluation in that it focuses on routine undertakings and what and by how much what has been planned is achieved. Evaluation is not a routine activity. It focuses on outcomes and impacts and can be conducted on annual basis (for short implementation cycle projects), mid-term (half the cycle of the project), final evaluation (end of the project) and ex-post (after the completion of the project). Each evaluation type has its own objectives and purpose. Mid-term evaluation is a tool for major decision to terminate, modify, relocate or expand particular project under investigation. Ex-post evaluation and final evaluations are tools for further learning for future actions. Thus, monitoring and evaluation, though they are on the same continuum vary in their objective, purpose, scope and importance for details and decision. Furthermore, it also worth noting that plan monitoring and project monitoring are not the same though they share some technical and management aspects. Monitoring and evaluation as stated in the above section is either conventional (more of economic, detail quantitative investigation, less participatory) or participatory monitoring with objective of learning by doing (qualitative, more participatory, result based, teamwork). Whether one or more of the above methods and meanings are considered or not, in decentralized system of planning and project management, monitoring and evaluation requires skill,

system of planning and project management, monitoring and evaluation requires skill, experience and capacity, meaningful organizational objective, and focus on practical aspects of program and project management. The procedural document of the BoFED (BoFED, 2008c) laid the monitoring and evaluation procedures, organizational capacity and goals, etc. Eventhough the implementation of the study to evaluate for efficiency, the overall monitoring and evaluation system from the regional to the kebele level has the following weaknesses:

First, there is no evaluation of projects, whether mid-term or ex-post, despite too many projects completed in the last one decade. The evaluation of some projects, particularly those that have significant problems as well as potential impacts is an input for future planning and program design.

Second, monitoring and evaluation needs adequate transportation facilities for supervision and technical support. However, the teams, at all levels, have inadequate transport facilities.

Third, the function of planning and monitoring and evaluation are not well integrated. The outputs of the monitoring and evaluation function is a determinant input for planning functions particularly in project appraisals, planning and budgeting of programmes. Similarly the participation of monitoring and evaluation staff during planning contributes to fruitful dialogue between sectors and planning staff, for adjusting, rejection, modifications, relocation of plans and projects based on their practical field experience and technical expertise. However, the participation of monitoring and evaluation staff in planning and project appraisal is limited and so that of planning and budgeting staff in monitoring and evaluation. The complete separation of the two teams into different but related functions should not hurdle the healthy and positive relations and sharing of experience.

Fourth, inadequate planning and budgeting staff at wereda level, inadequate training and other capacity building at wereda level have also significant negative impact on the viability, and efficacy of monitoring and evaluation of planned programmes and projects. The linkage and relationship of sector offices at wereda level is weak and inadequate. The lack of adequate computers and communication technologies further hamper the relationship and information flow from the wereda to the regional bureaus. Lack of transport facilities at this level also constrains the frequent monitoring and supervision as well technical support at wereda level. The performance of the virtual (*ad hoc*) committees also depends on their skills and experience, the type and adequacy of training they received. There is no expectation that the staff at this level have adequate knowledge about the project planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as the methods and procedures how to link all resources available to achieve objectives (outputs and outcome) and goals (changes and impacts).

Fifth, the efficiency and result of monitoring and evaluation depends on the type, amount and management decisions and commitment. The planning team at each level supposed to monitor performances at field level each quarter. The number of days for this monitoring and evaluation is limited and monitors are expected to cover as many projects and weredas as possible. The shortage of transport facilities at wereda, zone and regional level for monitoring and evaluation purpose further cripple and sometimes lead to termination of field visits. Communication between weredas and regions, weredas and zones is limited even to cover tasks with timely communications. Thus, in general the results of such monitoring and supervision method and procedure will not be reliable and efficient to capture the problems faced and positive achievements for future learning. Untimely solutions and decisions also hamper progress through time and create fatigue and hopelessness.

Sixth, for efficient and adequate monitoring and evaluation clear and detail guidelines, manuals, indicators, checklists, user-friendly software (PME) are essential pre-requisites. Their importance is substantial particularly when the monitoring and evaluation functions are decentralized to weredas and kebeles and where shortage of manpower is significant, skills and experiences are limited. Currently, the monitoring and evaluation functions have no such valuable guidelines, indicators, clear and workable formats, manuals and software. As a result, except the decentralization and emergence of the two sub zonal structures monitoring and evaluation is almost similar to the pre-civil service reform periods.

Seventh, though the zonal structure as planning, monitoring, and evaluation organ is not resolved, it is meaningless to constrain the direct relationship and information flow between the weredas and the bureaus. There is no adequate justification for why weredas cannot provide information directly both for the zones and region at the same time. There is no technical, managerial and administrative hurdle with the adoption of such system. The system saves time, provides opportunities to obtain detail and adequate information, enable to build wereda and kebele level database, which can also be used for planning and data management system at the regional level. Similar problems appear in sectoral bureaus as well.

5.3.4 Technical Support to Sector Institution

The team, as indicated above, has inadequate capacity to provide sufficient and timely technical support for other sector institutions. The lack of skilled and adequate human resources in the team, inadequate transport and communication services, limited periodical technical backstopping, relevant training, and other technical inputs relevant to capacitate the sub zonal level staff of the bureau and other sectors. However, with available resources, some training was given in the last one year, eventhough inadequate and not need based. Developing and distributing monitoring and evaluation as well as data collection formats is the other type of technical support of the team

5.4 Information Management

The information management section is one of the major responsibilities of the bureau. The aim of this function include:

- To collect, analyze and organize data in manageable and usable forms such as profiles (of weredas, zones and the region), production of atlases, maps, statistical abstracts , and others;
- To feed into the planning system data and information that can be used in regional planning;
- Relevant data that indicate the details of development potentials and constraints, as well as resource distribution; and
- Other socio-economic data, research outputs, etc.

Since the establishment of the BoPED (now BoFED) in early 1990s, the data and information function, was organized under the department of physical planning and statistics. However, the then organization of the data management system of the bureau was inadequate in both scope and coverage of the necessary information for comprehensive regional planning. The data collected and compiled in various forms for various purposes are unreliable, inconsistent,

untimely and as a result their utilization was limited to only certain purposes instead of planning. The vertical and horizontal linkages between the data sources and customers were also inadequate. The data and information management was also not organized into a single unified system of flow, organization, production and dissemination channel. Experiences show that almost all sector bureaus, zones and weredas, even teams within the BoFED produce their own data for their own consumption. All data from all sources are inconsistent and unreliable.

The current BPR study of the BoFED aimed to solve the data and information management system of the region and to mandate the older physical planning and statistics department with the coordination of all data collection, organization, production and dissemination. With the recommendation of this study, this department has changed its former position and responsibilities into the regional data and information management core process with two major versions (Atlas, Geographic research, GIS, and socio-economic study team; Regional statistics and Income account team) with additional extensions of four sub teams and library at the regional level. The study further proposes the importance of the zonal, wereda and kebele level statistics and information sections within the respective zone and wereda planning offices having at least three, two and one staff at each level respectively. Refer the following chart for details

According to this study, the center is the focal point charged with coordination of all data and information related tasks and supply source almost similar to the functions of the Central Statistical Agency.

5.4.1 Methods and Levels of Information Management

The data collection, analysis and organization as well as dissemination processes, procedures and methods are detailed also in the stated study. The regional center of information and data management is responsible for the production of data collection formats, interpretation of satellite images, analysis of arial photographs, and organizing secondary data and finally production and dissemination of data and information in the form of regional and zonal atlases, regional and wereda profiles, regional statistical abstracts, geo-information soft data, maps and others. At the zonal level, except the interpretation of the satellite images all forms of data and final output are produced with major emphasis on the weredas (the level of detail is wereda).

Like in planning, the data and information flow has two channels. The first is the data from the vertical structure of the Finance and Economic Development offices (at kebele, wereda and zonal level) which is the aggregate of data from horizontal linkages and the second is the data from the sector offices at similar levels.

The linkages between the federal ministries and the bureau are information sharing and data collection. The BoFED send the secondary data collection formats to relevant federal government organization and also share completed documents with them. Stakeholders and customers on the other hand express their needs. The kebeles and the wereda finance and economic development offices have both forward and backward linkages. The linkages between different levels of the regional finance and economic development is single chain and hierarchical. There is no direct connection between the kebeles, weredas and the regional finance and economic development and no linkages between kebeles and zones. The linkages between the levels of planning bureaus and that of the regional, zonal and wereda bureaus and

offices are both forward and backward with similar levels. Thus it seems that the data and information management system of the bureau depends more on the levels of the sector offices than its structures and also have weak connections with the levels at which all planned programmes and projects are implemented and the basic units of data and information. Thus the linkages between levels of the data and information center is more of administrative than technical hierarchies.