Unit Four: Marginalized, Minorities, and Vulnerable Groups

4.1 Definition of concepts

a. *What is marginalization? Marginalization is defined as* **a treatment of a person or social group as minor, insignificant or peripheral**

➢ It involves **exclusion of certain groups** from social interactions, marriage relations, sharing food and drinks, and working and living together.

➢ **Women, children, older people, and people with disabilities** are among marginalized groups across the world

➢ **Religious, ethnic, and racial minorities** are also among social groups marginalized in different societies and cultures.

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➢ **Crafts workers** such as tanners, potters, and ironsmiths are marginalized in many parts of Ethiopia.

*b. What is vulnerability? Vulnerability refers to **the state of being exposed to physical or emotional injuries.***

▸ Vulnerable groups are people exposed to **possibilities of attack, harms or mistreatment**.

▸ As a result, vulnerable persons/groups **need special attention, protection** and **support** (Eg.aged and disabled people)

c. What is Minority groups? The phrase 'minority group' refers to **a small group of people within a community, region, or country**

- In most cases, minority groups **are different from the majority population** in terms of *race, religion, ethnicity, and language.*

- **4.2 Gender-based marginalization**

- Gender **inequality** involves discrimination on a group of people based on their gender.

- Girls and women face **negative discrimination** in societies across the world.

- Women are exposed to social and economic inequalities involving **unfair distribution of wealth, income and job opportunities**.

- Gender **disparities in education** is a good example.

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- Women and girls **are also vulnerable to gender-based violence** such as *rape, early/child marriage, abduction/forced marriage, domestic violence and female genital cutting/mutilation*.

- FGC is practiced in most countries :In Ethiopia, Somali (99%)…in Tigray (24%) and Gambella (33%),relatively low practice (UNICEF, 2017)

Health impacts of female genital cutting

- **There are four major types of FGC**. They are Type I (clitoridectomy),TypeII(excision),TypeIII (infibulation), and Type IV (all the rest).
- The first three types of FGC are practiced in Ethiopia.

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Factors that encourage female genital cutting

▸ The prevalence of FGC **has been declining in Ethiopia**. However, it is still practiced in most of the regions in the country.

The following are some of the beliefs related to the practice:

⬚ FGC is considered as a process of **purifying girls**.

⬚ **Uncircumcised girls would be disobedient**, powerful and ill-mannered(mekbexbex).

⬚ There is also a belief that uncircumcised girls are promiscuous because they **have high sexual drive**.

.FGC is also **considered as a means of preserving girls' virginity**, which is considered as a precondition for marriage in some cultures.

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Girls and parents who decide to abandon the practice would be subject to social sanctions.

The following are examples:

 Social exclusion and marginalization

. Gossip and insult

. In some parts of Ethiopia, men do not marry uncircumcised girls.

. In some parts of the country, people do not eat food cooked by uncircumcised girls.

➢ **4.3 Marginalized occupational groups (Eg.craft workers in Ethiopia)**

➢ Types of marginalization: *spatial, economic, social and cultural*

Source*: Alula Pankhurst and Getachew Assefa (2008)*

4.4 Age-based vulnerability

▸ What is age-based vulnerability? Age-based vulnerability is susceptibility of people, especially *children and older people*

4.4.1 Children: Discrimination/vulnerability

▸ Children are among vulnerable groups exposed to harm because of their age:

Harmful concequences of Early marriage:

. Early marriage **inhibits girls' personal development**; it **hinders** *girls' chance to education* and *future professional development.*

 Early marriage exposes young girls to **sexual abuse by their older husbands.**

 Early marriage leads to **early pregnancies**, which increases risks of diseases and complications during delivery, fistula, and **death of the mother or**

Factors encouraging early marriage:

Social norms and *economic factors* are the two major drivers of the practice.

4.4.2 Marginalization of older persons

- **Age-based** marginalization also affects older people. The phrase 'older people' refers to *adults with the age of 60 and above*.
- **Ageism** is a widely observed social problem in the world. Ageism refer to **stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination** against people based on their age

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4.5. Religious and ethnic minorities

There are several examples of marginalization and discrimination targeting religious and ethnic minorities in the world:

- **The Jewish** people suffered from discrimination and persecution in different parts of the world.

. **Muslim Rohingyas** are among the most marginalized and persecuted people in the world

- As people living **in refugee camps**, the Rohingyas are *vulnerable to problems such as malnutrition and physical and sexual abuse*.

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4.6. Human right approaches and inclusiveness: Anthropological perspectives

- The major *human rights conventions* **denounce discrimination against** women, children, people with disability, older people and other minority and vulnerable groups.
- People with disabilities *have the right to inclusive services and equal opportunities*.
- The human rights of women and girls *include* *right to be free from harmful traditional practices* such as forced marriage, early marriage, and female genital cutting.

N.B. Anthropology appreciates **cultural diversity, commonality and cultural relativism** but this does not mean that we need to appreciate every custom and practice.

Unit Five: Identity, Inter-Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism in Ethiopia

5.1. Identity, Ethnicity and Race: *Identification and Social Categorization*

5.1.1. Ethnicity: *What's in a name?*

➤ After the end of the second world war, words like "**ethnicity", "ethnic groups" "ethnic conflict" and "nationalism**" *have become quite common terms in the English language*

➤ **Ethnic and national identities** also become strongly pertinent following the continuous influx of labour migrants and refugees to Europe and North America

➤ **The same is true for Ethiopia,** where issue of ethnic and national identities is contested and ethnicity has become the official organizing principle of the state since 1991.

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5.1.2. The term itself –Ethnicity

➢The word is derived from the Greek term '*ethnos' (which in turn, derived from the Latin word 'ethnikos'), which literally means* "**a group of people bound together by the same manners, customs or other distinctive features**"

➢**Which is typically translated today as** '*people' or 'nation*' :group of people with shared communality

➢Before World War II, "**tribe**" was the term of choice **for "pre-modern" societies** and the term "**race**" was used to refer **modern societies**

➢**The North American tradition** adopted '**ethnic**' as a substitute for *minority groups*

➢**The European tradition** regularly opted to use '**ethnic group**' as a synonym for *nationhood (Territory)*

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- On the other hand has been *a **synonym for** tribal, primitive, barbaric and backward.*

- **5.2. Conceptualizing Ethnicity –*What's it?***

- There are **different titles** dealing with **Ethnicity**: *ethnic groups, ethnic identity, ethnic boundaries, ethnic conflict, ethnic cooperation or competition, ethnic politics, ethnic stratification, and so on*

- According to Weber, an "ethnic group" is based on **the belief in common descent shared by its members, and common customs, language, religion, values, morality, and etiquette**.

- It does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists

- In its most general notion, **ethnicity** is seen as a '***social organization of culture difference'.***

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5.3. Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Identity

- The concept of **ethnic group** is the most basic, from which the others are derivative. It refers to ethnicity as the collective phenomenon.
- **Ethnic identity** refers to ethnicity as an individually experienced phenomenon

5.4. Race –The Social Construction of Racial Identity

- **Race** is an elusive concept **like ethnicity** –used in a variety of contexts and meanings; **sometimes interchangeably** with ethnicity, where the relationship between the two concept remain complex.

Racial Classification:

It was common to divide **humanity into four main races**, which recognized both on the **scientific and**

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 Europeaeus: *White; muscular; hair – long, flowing; eyes blue – Acute, inventive, gentle, and governed by laws.*

 Americanus: *Reddish; erect; hair – black, straight, thick; wide nostrils – Obstinate, merry, free, and regulated by custom.*

 Asiaticus: *Sallow (yellow); hair black; eyes dark – Haughty, avaricious, severe, and ruled by opinions.*

 Africanus: *Black; hair –black, frizzled; skin silky; nose flat; lips tumid – Crafty, indolent, negligent, and governed by caprice or the will of their masters.*

5.5.Theories of Ethnicity: *Primordialism, Instrumentalism and Social Constructivism*

. **Primordialist Approach :E**thnicity is fixed at birth. Ethnic identification is based on deep, 'primordial' attachments to a group or culture

.Instrumentalist(situational)Approach: *Ethnicity is based on people's "historical" and "symbolic" memory*

.Constructivist Approach : Ethnic identity is not something people "possess" but something they "construct" in specific social and historical contexts

Unit Six: Customary and Local Governance Systems and Peace Making

6.1 Indigenous and local governance

➢ Indigenous systems of governance **have been used to maintain social order** across Ethiopian regions.

➢ Its role was indispensable **before the advent of the modern state system.**

➢ Understanding of indigenous systems of governance **helps us know our cultures.**

➢ Let us take and see **some examples** of indigenous systems of governance.

The Oromo Gadaa

▸ The Gaada of the Oromo **is one of the well-studied indigenous systems of governance**.

▸ Scholars have been studying the Oromo Gaada since the 1950s.

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➤ Prof.Asmerom, a **famous anthropologist**, is widely known for his ethnographic studies on the Oromo political system.

➤ **He published a lot** on the Gaada system, particularly focusing on the Borena Oromo:
Gadaa(1973) and **Oromo Democracy(2000)**

➤ The *Gadaa system* ***is an age grading institution of the Oromo***

➤ It has a complex system of administration, **law making** and **dispute settlement**' (Pankhurst and Getachew 2008, xiv).

➤ *Gadaa is widely mentioned as **an egalitarian (democratic) system** of governance.*

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- In the Gadaa system, political power is **transferred from one generation set (*Luuba) to another** *every eight years.*

- Gaada officials such as the ***Abba Gadaa and Abba Seeraa(father of law)*** *serve for eight years and leave their position to the new generation of Gadaa officials.*

- The *Gaada system involves* ***a continuous process of law making*** *and* ***revision***.

- The law making process **has rooms for wider participation of the people**.

- ***Gumi gaayo****, a law making* assembly of the Borana Oromo, is a good example.

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- *Gumi gaayo **is held every eight years** to revising, adapting, making and publicizing the customary law (seera) and custom (aadaa) of the Oromo.*

- The Waliso Oromo **have a law making assembly** known as *yaa'ii haraa*

- The indigenous system of governance among the Oromo **also include institutions of conflict resolution** such as the *Jaarsa Biyyaa (literally: elders of the soil/land) institution.*

The Gedeo Baalle

- The Gedeo of southern Ethiopia have **an indigenous system of governance** called *Baalle*

- *The Baalle and the Gaada system of the Oromo have some similarities:*

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➤ **Both have grading system and exercise periodic transfer of power** (i.e., every eight years).

➤ The **customary law** of the Gedeo is called *Seera.*

➤ The Ya'a, **the general assembly, is the highest body** of the Gedeo indigenous system of governance.

▸ The **Baalle** is a complex system which **has three administrative hierarchies**: Abba Gada, Roga (traditional leader next the *Abba Gada), and two levels of council of elders known as Hulla Hayyicha and Songo Hayyicha.*

▸ The *Abba Gada is the leader of the Baalle.*

▸ **Conflicts are resolved** by the ***Songo hayyicha*** *at village level.*

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When disputes are not settled at the village level, cases can be referred to first to the Hulla Hayyicha and finally to the *Abba Gada.*

In general, the Gedeo system of governance has the following major institutions: the *ya'a (general assembly), the Seera (customary law), the Abba Gada, and council of elders.*

Dere Woga of the Gamo

➤ Unlike their neighboring people such as Wolayta and Dawro, the Gamo **did not have a centralized political system**.

➤ The Gamo people were **organized into several local administrations** locally known as *deres.*

➢ According to anthropological findings, **there were more than 40 *deres across the Gamo highlands*.**

➢ Each *dere had its own ka'o (king) and halaqa (elected leader).*

➢ The indigenous system of governance embraces the ***dere woga (customary law)*** *and* **the dubusha assemblies**.

➤ The highest body of the indigenous governance is the **dere dubusha**, *a general assembly that is* **responsible to make and revise customary laws, resolve major disputes**

➤ The *dubushas assembly* **has three hierarchies**: *1) the dere dubusha (**at the top**), sub-dere dubusha (**at the middle**), and guta/neighborhood dubusha (**at the village level**).*

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➢ Like the Oromo Gada and the Gedeo Baalle, the indigenous governance of the Gamo **is embedded in the Gamo belief system.**

➢It is believed that **telling a lie and hiding the truth are considered as violation of taboo**

2.Intra and inter-ethnic **conflict resolution institutions**

➢Conflicts and disputes exist in every society and community.

➢Conflicts may arise between individuals, groups and communities within the same ethnic group.

➢Ethiopian regions have indigenous institutions and mechanisms of conflict resolution and peacemaking.

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➤These institutions are parts of indigenous/customary systems of governance.

➤There are **different indigenous institutions of conflict resolution and peacemaking**

➤Some of them are: *customary dispute resolution mechanisms; traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution; grassroots justice systems; and customary justice institutions*.

▸ in Ethiopia. Indigenous justice institutions and mechanisms **share several common aspects** including the following:

. **High involvement of elders** at different stages
. **Preference and respect for elders** known for their qualities including experience in dispute resolution

Continued…

. **VIP**. **Knowledge** of customary laws, procedures, norms and values of the society; *impartiality, respect* for rules and people; the *ability of listening* and *speaking politely; honesty and tolerance*.

. **VIP**. Indigenous dispute resolution practices focus on **restoring social relationships, harmony, and peaceful coe**xistence.

Indigenous justice systems also have **differences**. For example,

- In some cultural settings, conflict resolution mechanisms involve several **hierarchies and complicated procedures;**
- **The compositions and responsibilities** of council of elders also vary from society to society (level of complexity)

Continued…

➤Indigenous/customary justice institutions **have been widely used across Ethiopian regions and cultures**.

➤ With some exceptions, customary justice institutions **include three major components**.

▸ The three components are 1**) customary laws, 2) council of elders,** and **3) customary courts or assemblies.**

*a. Customary law: it refers to a body of rules, norms, and a set of moral values that **serve as a wider framework for human conduct and social interactions.***

▸ The Sera of the Sidama, the dere woga of the Gamo, the Seera Addaa of the Oromo; Gordena Sera of Kestane Gurage are examples of customary laws.

b. ***Council of elders:*** *It is the second important institution of customary justice systems.*

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- It embraces **highly respected and well-experienced community members** who have a detail knowledge of the customary laws.

- Members of the elder's council **are also known for their personal qualities** such as truthfulness and experience in settling conflicts.

- Elders often **serve their communities on voluntary basis without any payment**.

- The institution of council of elders **has different names in various ethnic groups:** *Yehager Shimagile (Amhara), Jaarsaa Biyyaa (Oromo), Hayyicha (Gedeo), Guurtii (Somali), Dere Cima (Gamo), Deira Cimma (Wolayita), and Cimuma (Burji).*

C.Customary courts *are public assemblies that serve two major purposes: (a) hearing, discussing and settling disputes, and (b) revising, adapting,*

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Strengths and limitations of customary justice systems/institutions

▶ Study findings indicate that indigenous institutions of dispute resolution have strengths and limitations.

Strengths of customary justice institutions

 Incur limited cost in terms of time and resources/money; elders do not request payment for their services; fines and compensation are relatively small;

. Conflict resolution process **are held in public spaces in the community**; different parties (victims, offenders and community members) participate in the process

. **Decisions are easily enforced** through community-based sanctions

. Aimed at **restoring community cohesion, social relations, collective spirit and social solidarity**

.**The tradition** of forgiveness, transferring compensations, **embedded in indigenous beliefs**

Continued...

Limitations of customary justice institutions

- Indigenous justice institutions **are dominated by men.** For example, the council of elders are not open to elderly women.
- **Their potential in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts** and restoring long-lasting peace is very limited.

6.3 Inter-ethnic conflict resolution

- There are **some example of inter-ethnic conflict resolution institutions in some parts of Ethiopia**
- Conflict between the two groups **often arise because of dispute over grazing land or water** resources, particularly in dry season
- When conflict arises between parties from two ethnic groups, **notable elders from the ethnic groups come together** to resolve the dispute and restore peaceful relations.
- Most of the **elders** involved in inter-ethnic conflict resolutions **are bilingual: speaking both lan**guage

6.4 Women's role in conflict resolution and peacemaking

- women are not completely excluded for indigenous systems of governance, conflict resolution, and peacemaking activities.

- In some societies, women use their own institutions to exercisepower, protect their rights, and actively participate in peacemaking activities.

- **Women's peacemaking sticks**

- *Sidama women have two instruments of power: the Yakka and the Siqqo. The Yakka is women's association or unity group. The Siqqo is a stick that symbolizes peace and women honor …* **Agnuak women , Raya-Azebo, Tigray ,Oromo's Sinqe**

Continued...

- **6.5 Legal pluralism: interrelations between customary, religious and state legal systems**
- **Legal pluralism** refers to the existence of two or more legal or justice systems in a given society or country.
- Legal pluralism indicates the co-existence of multiple legal systems working side-by-side in the same society.
- The FDRE Constitution provides ample space for religious and customary laws and courts to address personal and family cases.
- Legal pluralism is a pervasive phenomenon in Ethiopia. This is because a single legal system does not have a capability to address all legal cases and maintaining peace and order.
- Religious law and court(Eg.Sheria law): which is very important in regions such as Afar, Somali, and Harari.

Unit Seven : Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and Practices

- **7.1. Definition of concepts**
- **7.1.1. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)**
- IKS is defined as technical insight of wisdom gained and developed by people in a particular locality through years of careful observation
- IKS is embodied in culture and is described as an integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs and behavior.
- This culture is passed down from one generation to the next generation
- It provides a holistic view of how to use natural resources based on traditional ethical perspectives

Continued…

- In sum, IKS refers to " a total of knowledge and practices, whether explicit or implicit, used in the management of socioeconomic, ecological and spiritual facets of life
- **7.1.2. Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous Knowledge**
- **Indigenous peoples**
- In international context, while the term 'indigenous' is understood (mostly by Europeans) as being similar or synonym to 'traditional', 'aboriginal', 'vernacular', 'African', 'Black', and 'native American'
- The phrase 'indigenous people' refers to a specific group of people occupying a certain geographic area for many generations
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The **World Bank's** definition of indigenous peoples includes:

. Close attachment to ancestral territories and the natural resources in them

. Presence of customary social and political institutions; economic systems; an indigenous language and self-identification

Academic definitions focus on *the following elements* of indigenous identity**:**

. Living in tradition-based cultures

. Having political autonomy prior to colonialism

. And seeking to preserve cultural integrity in the present

Continiued...

▸ Despite the lack of formal universal definition for the concept of indigenous peoples, the United Nations sets outs distinguishing features as follows:

. Self- identification as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member

. Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies

. Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;

 Distinct social, economic or political systems;

 Distinct language, culture and beliefs;

 Formation of non-dominant groups of society

Continiued…

- Regarding their number, it is **estimated** that there are approximately 370 million indigenous peoples live in some 90 countries across the world
- In the world, it is **estimated** that more than 4,000 languages are spoken by the indigenous peoples
- Generally, indigenous people retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics which are distinct and different from those of the larger societies in which they live

Indigenous Knowledge (IK)

- According to **Warren**, indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge – knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society

Continued…

- IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms.
- It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management etc
- The World Bank refers IK as a large body of knowledge and skills which is developed outside the formal system
- IK has different but closely related names such as 'folk knowledge', 'local knowledge or wisdom', 'non-formal knowledge', 'culture', 'indigenous technical knowledge', 'traditional ecological knowledge', 'traditional knowledge', and others.
- All these terms have similar concepts and refer to how members of a community perceive and understand their environment and resources

Continued…

- In sum, indigenous knowledge is the knowledge that people in a given community have developed over time, and that continues to develop

7.1.3. Special Features of Indigenous Knowledge

1. Local, in that it is rooted in a particular community
2. Tacit knowledge and, therefore, not easily codifiable
3. Transmitted orally, or through imitation and demonstration
4. Experiential rather than theoretical knowledge.
5. Learned through repetition
6. Constantly changing

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7.2 Significance of indigenous knowledge

- Today, the importance of various local or culture-based knowledge systems have got recognition in addressing the pressing problems of development and the environment

- Indigenous knowledge system enable people to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities

- For example in Ethiopia *Debo and Jige are an important uniting forces in communal activities.*

- Over the years, IKS authorities (elders) make local rules to protect important resources such as useful plants, water bodies, stone terracing, agro-forestry, watersheds and rivers, food preservations, conflict management, calendar, fallowing as a soil regeneration practice, etc.

Continued…

- In general, indigenous knowledge is an important part of the lives of the poor. IK is a key element of the "social capital" of the poor
- On the otherhand, it is their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter

7.3. Indigenous knowledge and development

- Indigenous knowledge enables indigenous people to survive, manage their natural resources and the ecosystems surrounding them like animals, plants, rivers, seas, natural environment, economic, cultural and political organization
- In other words, ''IK is relevant to development process such as agriculture, animal husbandry, traditional medicine, saving and credit, community development, poverty alleviation, and peaceful coexistence

Continiued...

7.4. Preservation, Challenges and Limitations of IK

Preservation

- IK is in danger of being lost unless it is formally documented and preserved
- Since IK is essential to development, it must be gathered, organized and disseminated, just like Western knowledge

Challenges and limitation

- Modernization has an impact on indigenous traditional spread and threatens the preservation and continued development of IK systems
- sometimes the knowledge which local people rely on is wrong or even harmful.
- individuals are not always willing to share knowledge among themselves, or with outsiders.
- there is also an evidence that indigenous peoples have also committed environmental sins' through over-grazing, over-hunting, or over-cultivation of the land.

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7.5. The Erosion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems(IKS)

- The recent and current rate of loss of IK is accelerating because of rapid population growth, growth of international markets, educational systems, environmental degradation(eg.Deforestation, chemical input etc), and development processes — pressures related to rapid modernization and cultural homogenization
- As IK is transmitted orally, it is vulnerable to rapid change
- In the past, outsiders ignored or maligned IK, depicting it as primitive, simple, static, "not knowledge," or folklore.
- So that it has contributed to the decline of IK systems
- Despite their cultural differences, the diverse indigenous peoples share common problems also related to the protection of their rights.