

Exploring the Informal Social System of *Iddir*: A Commons Practice

An Abstract of the Thesis by
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In the absence and inadequacy of formal support systems provided by the state or the market, informal support systems play an immense role in supporting the needs of people. The study aims to explore one of the indigenous informal support systems in Ethiopia, *Iddir*. Its role of social and economic support in urban communities, the gender and class dynamics within the institution, and its evolution are explored. The different practices in the institution are analyzed from a commons perspective. Key findings from a thematic analysis of in-depth and key-informant interviews conducted with members, leaders, and stakeholders of three *Iddirs* in Addis Ababa City indicate they are providing solutions to societal problems at the grass-roots level. *Iddirs* evolved and widen their function from being just a burial society into active community development actors. Their function is established on social capital, social networks, self-organization, consensus, solidarity, and resource sharing making *Iddir* a commons practice.