



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Ethiopian Voluntary Resettlement Programme-Lesson to Learn

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## Abstract

The basic right of people in any society is earning a livelihood, and providing or fulfilling this requirement is a prime duty of the concerned government. Acting towards this end the democratic government of Ethiopia (African continent) has recently launched a resettlement program. The main objective of this study is to provide an overall view of the resettlement program in *Bamluk* and *Sawatamp* settlement sites, Jawi district, Amhara Regional State of Ethiopia. A qualitative method of analysis was employed for conducting this study. The informants at the household level were randomly selected to give the possible representative information. Key informants interviews and focus group discussions with resettlers and government representatives at district and zonal levels were held. The study revealed that there is a gap between the program document and its implementation on the ground. There was no consistency with the pillars, key principles, and approaches in the program document. The resettlement's adverse consequences were the lack of proper preparation. The study indicates that the establishment of infrastructure and social services before the resettlement program are below the minimum standard and the services have not yet been improved in the area. Moreover, small land holdings and the risk of exposure to malaria contributed to the failure of the program. This reveals that the implementation of the resettlement program in the area is very weak.

**Keywords:** Food security, Livelihood, Non-farm activities, On-farm activities, Resettlement.

## Introduction

Ethiopia has been experiencing a long history of drought and famine. The governments have been trying from time to avert the consequent calamities or diminish them from aggravating by formulating different policies and programmes, including relocation of the affected people (NCFE, 2003). Lack of farmland, landlessness, drought and environmental degradation were considered as causes of migration and resettlement (Gebre, 2005). Studies show that the main pushing factor contributing to the movement of people was food insecurity (Dessalegn, 2003). As one of the poorest countries in the world, the country faces a problem of persistent food insecurity and vulnerability to livelihood insecurity. This severe food insecurity problem of the country manifests itself in the lowest calorie intake

in Africa. It is estimated that more than half of the country's population is food-insecure, of which the largest proportion resides in rural areas with insufficient land and capital to produce and purchase food (FAO, 2006). The agricultural sector in Ethiopia is characterized by its poor performance in attaining self-sufficiency. One of the consequences of Ethiopian agriculture's poor performance is the widespread food insecurity problem. Thus, resettlement programs undertaken by different Ethiopian regimes aim to improve the life of the rural people affected by drought-induced famines, among others. The program is assumed to contribute to solve food insecurity indicating the means of solving problems encountered in resettlement areas.

Over the last few decades, resettlement in Ethiopia has been adopted as a strategy to alleviate various socio-economic problems. A number of surveys have shown that resettlement programs launched in all instances were directed towards easing pressing problems related to landlessness and unemployment and as a response to dislocations caused by such hazards as drought and conflict (Belay, 2004; Kassahun, 2005). According to NCFSE (2003), Ethiopia's large-scale resettlement programs under the prior regime were not in general voluntary. Prior to 1991, Derg\* regime's resettlement scheme was a rather highly politicized undertaking, executed using brute force. Tesfaye (2009) holds the view that the resettlement scheme carried out during the Derg regime has been criticized for its large social and environmental impacts. It was shown that the

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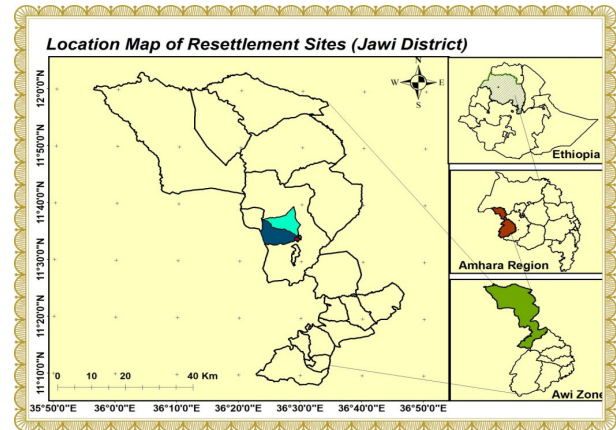
resettlement program that is in progress since 2003 is intended to provide food security for those suffering from a lack of food due to land shortages and the ecological deterioration of their home areas (Belay, 2004).

The recent program is implemented at the regional level to draw on the underlying social capital inherent in a shared language, customs, and ethnicity. This intra-regional resettlement program is based on four major pillars such as voluntarism, availability of underutilized land, consultation with the host communities, and proper preparation (NCFSE, 2004). Ethiopia has been practicing planned or spontaneous population resettlement since the imperial period (Tesfaye, 2009). Fosse (2006) points out that the government of Ethiopia and its development partners created an NCFSE whose main policy document for the resettlement program called "voluntary resettlement program" was written in 2003. The official Derg regime: A regime (1974-1991) that ruled the country aggressively.

Objective of resettlement schemes, both in the past and current regimes, was to prevent famine (or attain food security) by moving people from drought-prone and overcrowded areas to sparsely populated regions and unoccupied virgin lands (Gebre, 2004). The current resettlement program is also intended to enable chronically food-insecure households to attain food security through improved access to land (NCFE, 2003).

Gebre (2005) identified four major types of resettlement: voluntary, involuntary, induced-voluntary and compulsory-voluntary resettlement. The rationale for the voluntary resettlement program is that Ethiopia is facing severe food insecurity due to land degradation, drought, high population pressure, low input subsistence agriculture, small farm size and landlessness. Underutilized lands which are suitable for farming can be used to resettle small farmers (NCFSE, 2003). Thus, the resettlement program is, among others, supposed to improve people's livelihoods and especially their level of food security by providing them access to farmland (NCFSE, 2004).

With this aim, Amhara National Regional State has initiated an organized and voluntary resettlement scheme for the most chronically food-insecure people from most zones of the region. The issue of settlement has received considerable critical attention. Investigating resettlement practice is a continuing concern within the country. This study intends to provide an overall view of the recent resettlement program with respect to the current conditions, opportunities and challenges faced by resettlers of 4562 households (4155 male-headed and 407 female-headed households) in Jawi district, Amhara National Regional State resettled within eleven resettlement sites in between 2001 and 2005. It is hoped that the outcome of the study will contribute its part to the body of knowledge in the concepts and theory of resettlement. The findings might also serve as an input for food security situation, problems



**Figure 1:** Location map of resettlement sites in Jawi district, Ethiopia. encountered, and adaptive mechanisms to mitigate the problems resettlers face.

## Materials and Methods

### Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted during 2016 in the district of Jawi, Awi Zone, Amhara National Regional State of Ethiopia (Figure 1). The geographical position of the study resettlement sites, *Bamluk* and *Sawatamp*, is  $10^{\circ} 57' N$ - $10^{\circ} 58' N$  and  $36^{\circ} 56' E$ - $36^{\circ} 57' E$ , respectively located. These sites are among the selected potential areas of the region for resettlement and there has been continuous resettlement since the year 2003. It is located at a distance of 621 km from the national capital Addis Ababa, 174 km from the capital town of Awi Zone (Kosober), and 38 km from the capital town of Jawi district (Sendeka).

### Physical Characteristics of Sites

According to Awi Zone's Natural Resource and Forest Bureau, topography of the study area is characterized by plain, plateau, hills and valley land features. The topography ranges from 1900 to 2800 meters above sea level. The diverse topographic features of the area result in diverse climatic conditions. The area is humid with 2000 mm of annual rainfall. The major vegetation types in and around the study area include highland forests which include evergreen small-leaved and broad-leaved tall and medium size trees and shrubs. The forest also consists of semi-green trees that fall their leaves during dry season. The forest is also rich in climbers, ferns, herbs and grass species. The area's southern, northern, and western edges are bush grasslands or shrub lands.

### Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

According to CSA (2007), Awi Zone has a total population of 1,018,398; of whom 509,377 are male and 509,021 are female with an increase of 37.07% over the 1994 census. of the total population, 884,927 are rural and 133,471 are urban inhabitants on total area of 8,584.68 km<sup>2</sup> (CSA, 2007).

Population estimation in 2011/12 increased to 1,130,123, and density increased to 131.64 per km<sup>2</sup> (MOFED, 2012).

All of the respondents are engaged in mixed farming, *i.e.* crop and livestock. Agriculture remains the dominant economic sector. It is major source of food, raw materials for local industries and export earnings. The zone has potential for production of a variety of agricultural products both for domestic consumption and export purpose. Crop production is the major agricultural activity in the zone. In this regard, different annual crops (cereals such as teff, barley, wheat, maize, and sorghum; pulses; oil seeds and sesame) are grown in different parts of zone based on agroecological suitability. Even though the bulk of crop production in the zone is during rainy season, efforts have been made to develop water resources for irrigation agriculture in dry season to maximize the total production (MOFED, 2006).

Moreover, livestock husbandry is another source of income practiced in the zone. Cattle, sheep, goat, horse, ass, mule and poultry are main livestock of the zone. Farmers are supported by agricultural extension to improve productivity and household income. Development agents (DAs) who have diploma-level profession give extension services in their respective sites (MOFED, 2006).

#### Data Sources and Methods

Data for this study were mainly collected using qualitative method. Compared to quantitative analysis, data gathered from the quantitative approach is relatively small. The qualitative case study approach was used to investigate respondents' perceptions and the way they make sense of their lived experience in the resettlement. Qualitative method is perceived as direct and simple to administer, analyze and interpret, reflecting the perception of food security and insecurity. Therefore, this method is considered as the most appropriate and was hence applied as the dominant approach in this study for seeking knowledge of households and other responsible government officials and key informants regarding the study objective.

The primary data required for this study have been gathered by employing such instruments as in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and personal observations. In-depth interviews were conducted with purposefully selected households by explaining the purpose and objective of the study in order to get deeper information on the household's food security situation. Key informant interviews were carried out with selected government representatives at district

and zonal levels to get information on the household's food security situation. These informants were selected purposefully, considering their better knowledge about the intended data. An in-depth interview was carried out with the district's Agricultural and Rural Development personnel (administrators of *kebeles*, district and zonal government) on issues such as community livelihoods and food security. In addition to interviews, focus group discussion (FGD) also provides information that is not disclosed in interviews. It aimed at not only gathering details and intensive information about the resettlement sites, but also it intended at identifying potential problems and coping mechanisms by resettlers.

Group discussions were designed to get data on views and opinions of respondents concerning causes and consequences of food insecurity. A total of 6 focus group discussions (3 FGDs for each *kebele*) were conducted, consisting of 8 members in each FGD. The researcher used purposive sampling to access the relevant data from FGDs. In addition to primary data sources, secondary data were collected from different sources such as reports of *kebele*, district and zone.

#### Sampling Technique

The sampling frame was simply taken from the available list of settlers in the Agriculture and Rural Development Bureau district office. Among the eleven resettlement *kebeles*, the two sample *kebeles* were selected on the basis of a lottery, namely *Bamluk* and *Sawatamp*. Simple random samplings among probability sampling techniques have been employed and 102 household heads out of 1628 settlers were selected for survey. Of the 102 households who participated in the survey, 7 (4.5%) were female-headed households, while the rest 95(95%) were male-headed. All of the participants were aged between 24 and 58 years in which most of the respondents are in the productive age group. The survey respondents have an average age of 29 years. Educational characteristics of the study samples indicate 59(58%) illiterate, 33(32%) read and write, 8(8%) elementary school completed and 2(2%) secondary school completed (Table 1).

#### Theoretical Considerations Adopted

The inference and conclusion drawn are based on the definitions and the meaning of livelihood and food security issues suggested by recognized authors and authorities (Frankenberger, 2000; Masefield, 2001; World Bank, 2004;

Table 1: Details of household samples at study sites

Settlement site	Household size			Total	Sample household size		
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Bamluk	908	78	986	57	5	62	
Sawatamp	610	32	642	38	2	40	
Total	1518	110	1628	95	7	102	

Degefa, 2005; FAO, 2008; WFP, 2010). It is pertinent to quote some of the accepted norms of these issues briefly.

Resettlement is defined as the phenomenon of population redistribution either in a planned or spontaneous manner; relocating people in areas other than their own for the purpose of converting transient populations, nomadic, pastoralists, transhumant or shifting cultivators to a new way of life based on sedentary forms of agricultural production (Dessalegn, 2003). It is often conceived as a process by which people are relocated and settled in areas said to possess considerable unutilized or underutilized potential. Masefield (2001) holds the view that livelihood is defined as the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a means of living. According to him, livelihood assets include human capital (education, knowledge, skills and health of household members), physical capital (farm implements, roads, markets, schools, clinics, etc.), social capital (social networks, associations such as family and community), and financial capital (savings, credit, cattle, etc.) and natural capital like natural resource base such as land.

With regard to food security, the most cited definition is a multi-faceted concept, multidimensional in nature and is determined by a whole range of factors such as domestic production of food, import and export of food, purchasing power of people to access food as well as factors that influence absorption of food in the body (WFP, 2010). World Bank (2004) defines food security as "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life". This definition implies that food security comprises four dimensions, i.e. availability of adequate food, sustainability of the supply, physical and economic accessibility of food/ entitlement and quality and safety of food (Frankenberger, 2000).

The United Nations also defines household food security as the ability of household members to ensure sustained access to a sufficient quantity and quality of food for an active and healthy life (Degefa, 2005). Most importantly, FAO (2006, 2008) argues "food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, while household food insecurity is described as the lack of physical and economic access by households to enough food for an active and healthy life." It describes the phenomenon of food deficit at the household level for part or all of the year. WFP (2010) also defines food insecurity as a situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food required for normal growth and development and active and healthy life. In Ethiopian context, Degefa (2005) defined food insecurity as being incapable of sufficiently feeding its members from either its own production or purchase from the market in

return to own cash that might be earned from the exchange of self-endowment.

## Results and Discussion

It is pointed out that, according to the officials of the rural development office of Jawi district. The resettlement program is entirely voluntary and all the resettlers were drawn from three districts such as *Sekota* (Wello), *Banja* (Awi) and *Nebsemidir* (Gojam) of Amhara National Regional State (Table 2). When the resettlers arrived at the sites, they stayed in the temporary shelters until they constructed their own houses. An AZARDD (2007) official mentioned that the resettlers are better off in the resettlement area than they had been at home before 2005. According to him, the resettlement program is generally effective and settlers were provided with food ration, house utensils, farm tools, and oxen.

### *Resettlers Perception on General Situation and Facilities*

As per the study's objectives, the resettlers' views and opinions were heard and recorded. An informant who came from Banja district, Awi Zone in 2005 reported, "We came with full voluntarism and decided to leave home village because the area has a shortage of rainfall and the land was exhausted to produce enough to our family. We came here by bus; at arrival, we received one ha of farmland and 20 kg of wheat flour per month for each household. This place is much hotter than our home, but we cannot expect everything to be good. When we were at home, we have been in problem, now most of us are capable of producing relatively sufficient grain for our consumption."

The resettlement program, however, has totally ignored the natural resource conservation issues. In FGD, participants revealed that deforestation is high due to using natural resources. There is continuous destruction of bamboo trees regardless of the region's deforestation problems. Undeniably, the life of major resettlers seems changed. The evidence from this study suggests that the program is characterized by poor site selection, poor consultation, poor preparation and little regard for the physical environment. The lowland situation and the sites' hot temperature condition are favorable for different lowland diseases. For most of the informants, the risk of exposure to vector-borne diseases such as malaria and water-borne diseases like diarrhea are serious problems for attaining food security at the household level.

**Table 2:** Number of resettled households from source area

Source district	Male	Female	Total
Sekota	815	54	869
Banja	426	37	463
Nebsemidir	277	19	296
Total	1518	110	1628



The other participant pointed out, "I came from Gojam in 2005 due to my farmland there at home was exhausted. Before our departure the government officials told us many things. They told us that there would be excess farmland with a pair of oxen for everyone, but I only got one-and-a-half ha of farm land and only an ox for two households. Even there are many others who got only one ha. I feel that false promises of the government deceive me."

The evidence from this study suggests that the irregularity of rainfall distribution is the major constraint affecting crop yields and this has become a primary problem because of households' dependency on rain-fed farming. According to the resettlement program manual (NCFE, 2003), settlers have land-use right for their holdings in their original homeland for three years but still some of the settlers have lands both here and at their homelands for more than three years. According to the district officials, there is an attempt to make these farmers choose either of the two. In any case, there are a number of farmers who are still surviving on only one hectare and one draught animal.

### Public Health Facilities

Talking about this issue an interviewee said, "When we came to this area, we were expected to get good things but we found illness. We do not know such types of human, animal, or plant diseases before at home, but now we are here where so many diseases are endemic. There are challenges related to the prevalence of *gandii* (*Trypanosomiasis* caused by tsetse fly) and malaria. Due to these conditions, many in the beginning changed their mind and returned to their original home."

A young male farmer further stated, "We found here the physical environment to be harsh. The climate is hot which is very different from our home area. Many of us were exposed for the first time to health hazards caused by endemic diseases such as malaria. Our greatest concern is our health."

### On-Farm Activities

#### Crop Cultivation

Regarding livelihood, the main livelihood activity in study settlement sites is farming, which is totally dependent on rainfall. Farmers produce crops for own consumption once in a year. Diversification in the production pattern is limited, mainly focusing on food crops. The major crops grown in the area are maize, sorghum and sesame. The majority of those who were interviewed (65-75%) accepted the program as an opportunity to improve their livelihoods and wanted to stay despite the problems they encountered, while about 13% of respondents argued that resettlement program did not prove important for better livelihood options of households (Figure 2). The evidence from this study suggests that small land holdings and the problem of diseases in the area are the main factors that are adversely affecting the lives of inhabitants.

With respect to land holding, about 94% of household respondents have plots of land to farm and the rest 6% have reported that they do not have land to farm. These landless households in the community are composed mostly of newcomers to the *kebeles*. Resettlers have been provided with an average of 1.25 hectares per household which was quite less than the land area of two hectares of standard quality per household stated in the program implementation manual (NCFE, 2003). However, the land size for settler community members is not more than two hectares in any case, and such small land holdings were found to be the problem in resettlement sites. Land shortage was complained about as the major challenging issue (Figure 3).

#### Livestock Husbandry

Undoubtedly, crop cultivation and animal production are found to be the dominant on-farm livelihood activities of households, though dominated by crop production. The second important on-farm activity is livestock farming. Livestock has strong linkage in the socio-economic aspects

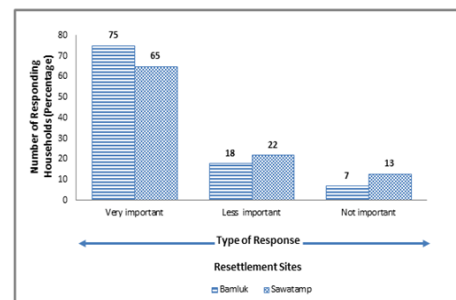


Figure 2: Responses of Households to the Resettlement Programme.

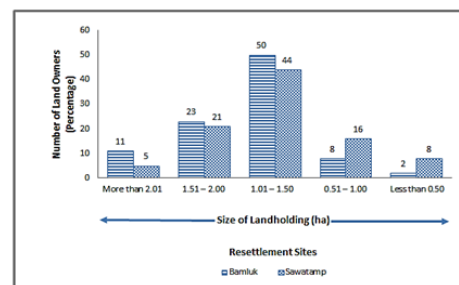


Figure 3: Landholding Size Status of Resettlers

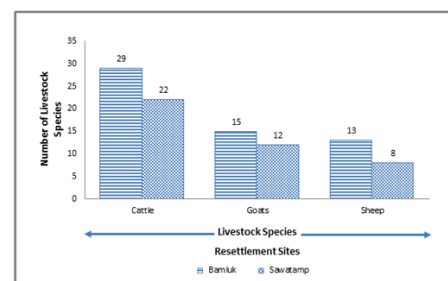


Figure 4: Sample Households with Different Species of Livestock.

of households. They are indicators of wealth, sources of traction power for crop cultivation, used as assets given to newly established households. Cattle, goats, and sheep are predominantly domesticated animals (Figure 4).

As it is revealed in FGD, it is the household that decides and manages the land for the purpose of farming, grazing and residence. Since no common land is allocated to grazing, they face a shortage of grazing land for their cattle. Grazing land was not in the land planning at the beginning because of land shortage. According to the survey results, 66% of the sample households in the study *kebeles*, were reported to have raised some species of livestock. The findings in livestock ownership reveal that about 45% of the sample households kept cattle which implied cattle ownership having paramount importance to the households' livelihood. The findings from this study suggest that shortage of grazing land, lack of additional fodder, animal disease prevalence and lack of sufficient veterinary services were identified as constraints to livestock rearing in the study *kebeles*.

#### *Veterinary Clinic*

The extension workers are important in providing information to the farmers and to tell them what to do on their farms, but the provision of extension services has not been adequate in terms of coverage and quality of service. There is still a problem in providing the necessary facilities such as pesticides, to handle the existing crop and the veterinary service has not yet been established but the resettlers revealed that the death of livestock is increasing from time to time.

Talking about this issue another interviewee said, "Due to the absence of veterinary services, our cattle are affected by livestock diseases because of the prevalence of tsetse fly. We are also exposed to water-borne diseases due to absence of safe drinking water."

#### **Non-Farm Activities**

In addition to the regular activities such as crop cultivation and animal production, there are different activities pursued by the people of the study area to support the livelihoods of their households. Such activities are casual and not practiced in the regular ways. Casual income generating activities are predominantly non-farm activities. Non-agricultural activities (non-farm activities) can be defined as "any work that does not directly involve plant or animal husbandry. According to the survey results of this study, even though the majority (92%) of the sample households reported farming as their main occupation, out of the total samples 51% of the households reported participation in non-farm employment activities. About 35% of respondents said that the land they owned is sufficient to meet the demand of their family, while the majority of the respondents (65%) reported that the land they owned is insufficient to meet their family's needs. This situation has also forced households to search for other

livelihood strategies such as non-farm income-generating activities to meet their household needs. The major income source in the non-farm activities is trading which includes consumer goods petty trading and agricultural produces trading (Figure 5). It is obvious that the resettlement program is a development program designed to assist food-insecure households in attaining food security but there are people who are unable to secure food consistently. A woman household-head, who came from *Sekota* (Wollo), separated from her husband and lives with her three children, was unable to produce sufficient food because she has only half a hectare of farmland and lacked male support. She stated that she produced less than the amount she needed for annual consumption. She therefore concluded, "Farming is a great challenge to me in the new area. It is unable even to secure food for the daily needs, thus I am selling now *tela* (a local beer) to support my family."

That is why, though resettlement program focused mainly on agricultural activities, some settlers involved themselves in different non-farm activities such as small-scale businesses. We observed small tea houses, local *tela* houses and smaller shops along the road. Even some had to do day-labour on other farmers' land to get some money.

Considering all of this, it seems that working on the others' farm for additional income and exercising off-farm income-generating activities are found to be the emerging and increasing activities pursued by households. About 53% of household respondents reported that they are renting additional land to solve the problems associated with land shortage. Renting land as strategy to solve the land shortage varies with host communities and settlers. Settler respondents amounting to 70% said that they rent in land from other households who have excess land to lead their households, while 30% of respondents of the host community members said that they rent in land to compensate the land shortage that they are facing. The land shortage has also forced households to shift to other livelihood activities and to exercise labor-intensive agricultural activities in a given plot of land.

The involvement of household heads in non-farm activities such as food-for-work and labor works can enable

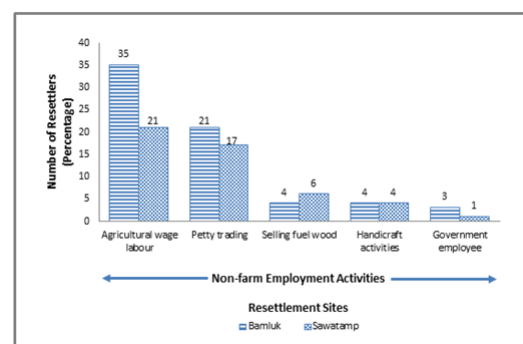


Figure 5: Non-farm employment activities.

households to generate additional income that might assist them during adverse circumstances. The major source of income in non-farm activities are agricultural labor. Most are arranging share-cropping or pair up their animals with another farmer to get sufficient products for their family. Moreover, due to the tenure system of the country, the farmers do not own the farmland, but in fact they have a use-right to it. However, the farmers still felt insecure concerning their right to their land.

Talking about this issue an interviewee said, *"Most of us are leading our life on small plot of land. It is difficult to give, sell and inherit our land and even for this small plot we use, we do not have land certificate so far, thus we felt insecure concerning our land."*

As per survey results, food-for-work is the single most dominant non-farm activity in which about 42% of the sample households had involved themselves (Figure 5). In addition, other non-farm employment activities pursued by sample households include agricultural wage labour (28%), petty trading (19%), selling fuel wood (5%), handicraft activities (4%) and government employee (2%).

#### Social Integration

Social integration and interaction greatly minimize the tension among different groups. Socio-cultural integration includes the relation among resettlers through the institutions like *Senbete*, *Idir*, and *Mahber*. The district officials have stated that there is a strong relation in every social, economic and cultural arrangement among all resettlers living at the sites despite their culture, language and religious differences. However, most respondents revealed that they have strong relations only with resettlers who came from the same areas (Figure 6).

As one interviewee said, *"Resettlers who came from the same villages settled together in the same site. Thus, strong relation in terms of Idir, Mahber and marriages occur only among us who came from the same district."*

As the survey indicates, all respondents answered 'no' to the question addressed to them whether they use *iqub* (financial cooperative of small group of individuals) as a saving mechanism. The basic reason for not being involved

in *iqub* is the micro-finance credit being more advantageous and reliable than *iqub*.

#### Social Services

One of the objectives of resettlement is to make rural people's access easy to basic and essential services. According to the AZARDD (2007), such facilities as water pumps, clinics, schools and roads are well constructed for the resettlement. However, the social service institutions and infrastructure facilities promised by the government were not practical. The provision of infrastructure in resettlement areas is still a problem of resettlement programs. Among other social service institutions and infrastructure facilities, only health post-services and primary schools commonly exist in the *kebeles*. The current program was implemented hastily and without an appropriate feasibility study and poor establishment of minimum infrastructure facilities. The study area is suffering from lack of such services as clean water, health services, school above grade ten and other infrastructures and social facilities like safe potable drinking water, veterinary services, all-weather roads, electricity and telephone services have not yet been established. When most informants were asked about the clinics, they were not satisfied with it even if the site has health posts and each household on average received two malaria nets. It was common for people to get infected by malaria, and the two health stations in the study area did not have the capacity to treat all the sick ones. AZARDD (2007) pointed out that the health personnel and medicines are not enough to treat all the people who are getting sick with malaria, and many have to go to Jawi for treatment.

#### Drinking Water

According to a household survey, water access is a critical problem in the area. It was observed that children and women have to travel two-to-three kilometers in search of drinking water. Otherwise, they are used to drink river water which is not clean.

As one interviewee puts it, *"There is lack of potable water and proper health facilities. The water pump could not function properly to provide us enough water. Our women have to spend most of their time fetching water."*

Participants of focus group discussions from the two sites reported the problem related with safe potable drinking water. They are using river water for drinking because of the absence of safe potable water in the area. This indicates that households from resettlement areas are vulnerable to water-borne diseases that can affect their health. There is lack of coordination among district, zonal and regional government bodies in the supervision of the program. AZARDD (2007) officials pointed out that a water pump was constructed to pump up groundwater for the residents at the beginning of their arrival but it is not working for the time being. Still, it is not known which body/authority should maintain the

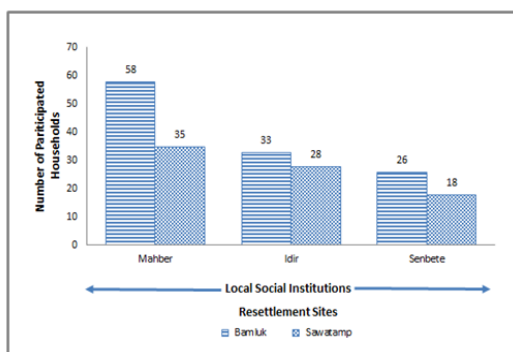


Figure 6: Sample Household Participants in Local Social Institutions.

already-developed water source. But the problem is critical for resettlers, according to their information.

### **Transport and Other Facilities**

Regarding transport facilities, the road that serves during dry season has been constructed but now needs maintenance to provide transportation service. The road constructed due to the sugar project, not because of the resettlement program, can be accessed only when there is no rain. However, accessibility is not easy during rainy time. It is impossible to have access to the resettlement sites at any time when there is rain. People in the study area do not benefit from banking and telecommunication services except Amhara Credit and Saving Institution, which serves as the bank in the settlement sites. A credit of about 1,000 Birr (Ethiopian currency) (USD 31.25) was provided per household for purchase of an ox, but still most cannot repay them.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that settlers were not forced for resettlement by the government or administration, as was true during the resettlement program under the previous regimes. The poorest were targeted for the program and the authorities made the moving process easier by offering free transport to the settlement area and food aid in the beginning before the first harvest. The government's main objective was to enable chronically food-insecure households to be self-sufficient through an interregional resettlement scheme. There are possibilities for the resettlers to be food-secure. Most informants strongly believed that the new resettlement environment is promising to improve their lives compared to the situation in their home of origin. Even if the majority depends on rainfed subsistence agriculture and they are small-scale farmers who grow crops for home consumption, yet most of the farmers still believe the resettlement area is better than the area where they came from.

However, there is a gap between the program document and its implementation on the ground. No consistency with the pillars and key principles and approaches set in the program document was found to exist. The research has revealed that the adverse consequences of the resettlement were the results of lack of proper preparation. The study indicates that social services are below the expectation of newcomers. The establishment of infrastructure and social services before the resettlement program are below the minimum standard and the services have not yet been improved in the area. Access to limited land area is difficult to improve food security. The problem of landlessness is increasing and almost all of the settlers had so little land that could not sustain them. Some settlers are forced on other means of income generation to support their livelihood. In addition to small land holdings, the risk of exposure to malaria contributed to the failure of the program. This reveals that the implementation of the resettlement program in the area is very much unplanned.

The regional government should keenly take responsibility for providing and maintaining infrastructure facilities. Much could be done immediately on health infrastructure expansion and in supply of medical equipment to handle the area's existing animal and crop diseases to help fulfill the food security objectives of the program.

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