

A STUDY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FLOWER FARMS  
AND LAND – LEASE HOLDING ISSUES IN THE VICINITY  
OF MENAGESHA AND HOLETA

A THESIS SUBMITTED

TO

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE MASTER OF ARTS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MARD)

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February 15/2011

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Dissertation entitled "A STUDY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FLOWER FARMS AND LAND-LEASE HOLDING ISSUES IN THE VICINITY OF MENAGESHA AND HOLETA" submitted by me for the partial fulfillment of the M.A. in Rural Development to Indira Gandhi National Open University, (IGNOU) New Delhi is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier to IGNOU or to any other institution for the fulfillment of the requirement for any course of study. I also declare that no chapter of this manuscript in whole or in parts is lifted and incorporated in this report from any earlier work done by me or others.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to my research supervisor Mulugeta Taye (PhD) who genuinely and without reservations provided me his professional support and guidance through out the preparation of this study.

I appreciate the encouragement of my wife and daughters and particularly thank Gene Work and Miheret Daba for their close support in computer matters.

## **Abstract**

Today the flora industry has become one of the five top foreign exchange earning commodities in Ethiopia. Until March 2011, there were around 91 horticulture farms in the country of which 88 were flower farms. A study under the title” A Study on the Establishment of Flower Farms and Land–Lease Holding Issues in the Vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta” was coined to find out how processes and procedure of land lease arrangement was handled; if land leasing was conducted against the will of farmers and if the land lease made displaced farmers from their holdings and homesteads.

Menagasha and Holeta are towns about 30-40 kilo-meters from Addis Ababa in the Walmera District where there are 21 flower farms in their vicinities in four locations. From other flower growing districts of Oromia Regional State, the Walmera district was sampled using the purposive sampling method. Then, out of the universe of 21 flower farms at four clusters/locations, 16 flower farms were randomly selected using the cluster sampling method. From the universe of the 16 flower farms, out of farmers made to land lease, 39 sampled farmers using the simple random sampling method were interviewed. 16 local elders ,4 elders from each flower farm location, and 12 *Kebele* officials, 3 officials from each flower farm location, sampled using the non-probability sampling method were also interviewed. 32 flower farm representatives, 2 from 16 flower farms each and 4 officers, 2 each from the District Rural Land Administration Office and the District Investment Office filled questionnaires. In totality, 103 persons were involved in the study as proposed.

Data collecting tools, *viz.* interview schedules and questionnaires were developed in such a way that they increase the possibility of generating responses to the basic research questions. Pre-testing of instruments was done with 19.4 per cent of the sampled. Data collection was given sufficient time to take place at each location at a time. Then, gathered data was checked, verified, edited, ordered sequentially and coded. It was then analyzed using both descriptive and simple statistical methods like tables, percentages, frequencies etc. supported by the pertinent interpretations.

Due to the limited age of the flora industry in Ethiopia, no profound work has been done on its different aspects like access to land, water, energy; environmental protection, labor, protective measures and provisions for those who lose resources to flower farms thus limiting the existence of written information. On top of this, there was generally a suspicious attitude from flower farm field offices to give information. Some farmers were also afraid to give information related to land lease to people who are unknown to them.

Results of the study indicate that processes and procedures used to handle the land lease made in the study area were defective, ignored the presence of farmers and carried authoritative attitude. Land lease was also done against the will of the majority of farmers that further generated farmer's displacement. A case study is recommended to propose solutions on provisions that can be planned for those farmers who are made to lease all plots of land they owned and should not slip into poverty which is not the intention of growth and planned development.

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## **Abbreviations /Acronyms**

APEDA: Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development

EHPEA: Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association

PDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

ILO: International Labor Organization

KFC: Kenyan Flower Council

Plc: Private limited company

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

PROEXPO: Promotion of Exports

SNNPR: Southern Nations Nationalities Peoples Region

## **Glossary**

Asocolflore: Association of Colombian Flower Exporters

Derg: Military Government that headed Ethiopia from 1974-1991

Kebele: The smallest administrative division

Negarit Gazeta: Proclamation and order gazette of the Ethiopian Government

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Both land and flowers are free gifts of nature which man have been developing, protecting and cultivating for wider personal and societal use. Land has been the main source of man's livelihood ever since he began life on this earth. At the beginning when man was at a primitive stage, he selectively used what naturally grew in his surrounding and gradually tamed animals and others to his taste.

Nature is bountiful. Flowers are one of these generous gifts that depend on land and other elements for growth and existence. Flowers are attractive nature's endowment which almost all people admire. In many cultures, they are highly adored and appreciated. They are frequently used on many happy and unhappy occasions, like domestic consumption, festive celebrations, funerals, etc. They are often used as symbol of love, respect, appreciation and deep expression of sorrow. In the words of Goethe, *"Flowers are the beautiful words and hieroglyphs of nature with which she shows us how much she loves us"* (Watkins: 2011).

Floriculture is a discipline of horticulture that deals with the study of growing and marketing flowers and foliage plants. The flora culture as an industry has a history of about two centuries. *"Flora culture as an industry began in the late 1800's in England, where flowers were grown on a large scale on the vast states"*(The Floral industry, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)).

Sources of Colombian experience, the second largest flower producing country show that *"thirty years ago flower growing was merely a household activity...Small enterprises produced flowers whose market was exclusively domestic. Only after mid-*

*1960s commercial expansion of flower-growing was initiated with an emphasis on overseas markets (ILO: 2000).*

In Ethiopia, varieties of attractive flowers grow in different parts of the country as an endowment of nature. Some people also grow popular flowers, exotic species and funeral flowers for small scale sell but never for wider scale of commercial type through growth on large hectares of land with labors of thousands of workers using the green house, expert knowledge and modern technology until recently.

Existing experiences indicate that investors with capital look for investment opportunities in the developing world that promise substantial financial pay back; guarantee secured investment; peaceful working conditions; cheap labor and optimal environment suitable for growing flowers. On the other hand, many developing countries offer broad opportunities in virgin spheres of development sectors for investment. Thus, one may safely place current Ethiopia in this group of developing countries for its strong will and for opening up the country to investors.

### **1.2 Some Plausible Conditions that Attracted the Flora Industry to Ethiopia**

Ethiopia joined the rush of the flower industry only in the 1990s. In the 1990s; the country designed an attractive development policy and strong direction to support different investments. It designed a decisive direction how to increase foreign earning, diversify development efforts and export markets and also products increase; employment opportunities and promote supportive industries for sustainable growth and development.



Haile (2009:10) cites that, "*The export promotive strategy lists five sectors to be supported through improved access to land and credit. These are agriculture and agro-processing, horticulture including cut-flowers, leather and leather products*"

New government policy specifying areas of support for those who wish to invest capital in any sector has been encouraging. The incentives according to Kassa (2006:28.) are "*Duty free importation of capital goods, spare parts and raw materials; exemptions from payment of export customs duties..., tax holiday to five years and loss carry forward for enterprises that suffer losses during tax holiday; access to finance...and investment protection; export promotion service and EHPEA and land reserve in highland areas.*"

The fast growth of the flora industry in Ethiopia seems to be partly related to conditions in flower growing Kenya; the growing world flower market besides Ethiopia's new investment policy initiatives. It has been commented that flower farms in Kenya were not only facing disapproval but were also criticized and often met oppositions on issues of labor, land and water etc. These persistent conditions in Kenya, the growing world experiences in the floral industry and new welcoming situations offered by Ethiopia seem to have gradually attracted flower growers into the country. Hence, the following paragraphs try to highlight some unfavorable events of the flower farm industry in Kenya that partly seem to have given a gradual attraction for the quick rise of the flora industry in Ethiopian. But as world business experiences do not reasonably depend on limited happenings, the events in Kenya should not be taken as the only major cause.

Based on a work of Zawadi Nyong'o, who researched the flora industry in Naivasha, a town where the majority of Kenya's flower growers are located," *All sixty-three women interviewed complained and talked about basic human right abuses they had experienced involving sexual harassment and violence*"( Diaz :2004).

According to the Jimma Times (2008), a lady in the flower business in Kenya before she moved to Ethiopia for a similar business also commented,"...*You bring and take lots of experiences from one country to another. We look for potential advantages where to grow and develop regarding labor and market. We came here to do profitable business. We prefer Ethiopia for suitable altitude, soil and water quality and particularly safety.*"

Henshaw,(2006), who quoted one former flower business man in Kenya that later moved to Ethiopia wrote, "*We were living in Naivasha. If you count all the Europeans, you might get 150 to 200 people, and I think within 12 months, there were ten attacks on white people of which 5 were fatal.* "

Henshaw, (2006), who had an interview with a Dutch flower grower who moved from Kenya to Ethiopia on a similar business, had the following to say."*He saw the potential in Ethiopia's new flower market and was sick of the violence that he and his colleagues faced in Kenya, Africa's biggest flower producer where he had worked for eight years.*"

About the growing disfavored conditions of the flora industry around Lake Naivasha in Kenya, Jeremy,(2008) wrote:"...*If the farms had been better planned, the water managed, and the pesticide run off regulated, Kenya could have profited for decades*

*from the lake. Instead Naivasha is no longer viable, production will switch to production in Ethiopia or Ruanda and the cycle will carry on-every body loses in this kind of exploitation of the land; except the flower corporations.”*

Although the Kenyan situation is raised as an instance in relation to the beginning of the flora industry in Ethiopia, experiences of many developing countries in this sector also show presence of negative conditions that combat the positive growth of this industry and as well uphold its positive importance in world economy.

However, despite new arising problems because of the establishment of the flora industry mainly in areas that have sustained ecological conditions and the natural environment, the truth is that countries through introducing codes of business practices attempt to control disfavored situations and keep on the running of industries like the flower farm that add to development, decrease unemployment and bring in substantial foreign revenue. On the other hand, business people in such sectors also easily look around for fresh alternatives in new places equally profitable for their business with less pressure put on their activities. So, this and reasons like the growing world flower market, Ethiopia's new economic and trade policy initiatives including the Kenyan case seem to be indicative of what attracted new flower growers to Ethiopia from many directions.

In Ethiopia, the first two flower firms were established in 1992 which since then began gradually increasing. According to EHPEA,(2011:2) *“By March 2011, their numbers have reached about 88, with an employment of about 50,000 workers bringing a foreign earning of about 160 million US dollars annually.*

About 94 per cent of flower farms are located in Oromia districts relatively nearer to Addis Ababa. Except flower farms here and there in many districts, concentration of nine flower farms employing about 8000 workers is located near Zeway.(Africa news, 2011).There is more concentration of twenty three flower farms in the Walmera district in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta located at four clusters of which two have been currently closed. These farms occupy over 500 hectares of land and employ about 7, 600 workers. Hence, it might be interesting to have a look at these flower farms that seem to be ripe for a study.

### **1.3 The Environs of Menagesha and Holeta**

Menagesha and Holeta are towns on the Ambo road about 30 and 40 kms from Addis Ababa. The area in the environs of both towns is climatically situated in the “*Wina Daga Zone*,” “land between 3,500-2,500 m. above sea level. The area has red loam soil. The rainy season is between June and September; where as the dry season is from October to May. The yearly average annual rain fall is 2000 mm; while the yearly annual average temperature is 16.5 ° C. (MoE: 2005:22-23). There is no scarcity of water in the area as water exists in the form of rivers, small streams, and ground water. A number of rivers and small streams from the Eastern and North Eastern high lands cross the area. Land in this area is endowed with mixed natural forest and exotic tree plantations. It is a rural setting filled with farm plots growing variety of crops and horticulture products.

### **1.4 Mode of Current Land Holding Practices in the Area**

Due to its historic-cultural and economic background, Ethiopia had passed through a complex land tenure system which had been irregular in different parts of the country. In

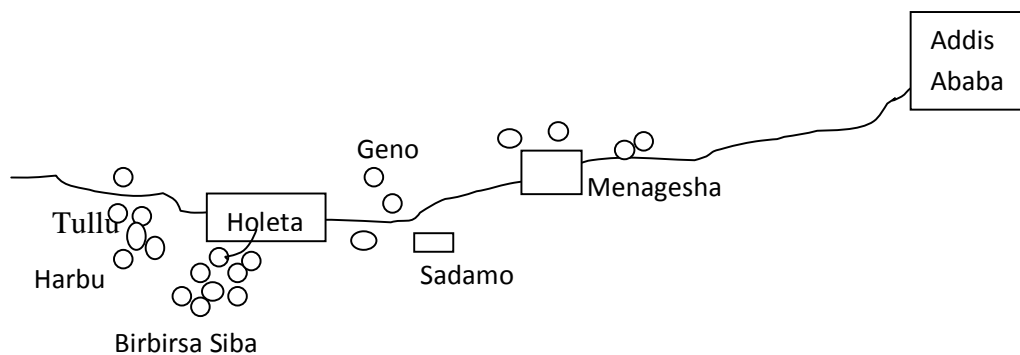
the old Christian Kingdom of the north, the major form of land ownership was the communal type called “*rist*” in which all descendants of a family had a usufruct right. The other was the “*gult*”, an ownership right obtained from a monarch or a regional governor. There was another form of tenure called “*samon*,” land granted to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.”*Mengist*” was land held as government property and while “*maderia*” was land granted to important people for life. Ethiopian rulers like Emperor Haile Selassie and the *Derg* have tried “*to modernize land ownership by giving titles either to the tiller or to large scale-farming programs but with mixed results*”(Land Reform in Ethiopia, *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/*). During the “*Derg*” the proclamation of 1975 has abolished landlordism, tenancy and landlessness and has given usufruct right to peasants.

The current Constitution of the FDRE,(1995:45) vests land ownership exclusively in the State and the peoples of Ethiopia. According to article 40, No.3 “*The right of ownership of Rural and urban land with their natural resources is vested only in the State and in the people of Ethiopia. Land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or to other means of exchange.*”

Currently rural land in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta is owned by individual house holds that in most cases have certificates. Land holding practices in the area like in most places in the country have evolved through inheritance, government free land gifts, leases, purchases and in some cases in fraudulent means.

Ethiopia that welcomed the flora industry in the 1990s allowed flower growers to use farm plots, natural forest areas, land occupied by exotic tree plantations. So, in the

vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta, farm plots; mixed natural forest and exotic tree plantations areas have been cleared for flower farms causing loss of farm plots and homestead by farmers upsetting the existing traditional land ownership system of the area. So, it is an area ripe for a study particularly related to land holding transfer, processes and procedures of land lease arrangement and displacement of farmers. Below is a sketch indicating locations of these flower farms.



### 1.5 Statement of the Problem

The beginning of the flora industry in Ethiopia was in 1992 when two flower farm companies came into being. Golden Rose, became functional in 1999 around Tefki, with 1000 workers, on 14 hectares of land and Ethio-Dream, around Holeta in 2002 on 14 hectares of land, employing about 500 people( Kassa,2006: 6).

Then, in a quick succession, flower farms appeared first in some Oromia districts and then spread in small numbers to the Amhara Regional State and the SNNPR. In Oromia, the Walmera district that currently houses 21 flower farms in bulk and in close proximity to each other makes it the first home of the country’s flora industry.

In 2005, the Ethiopian Government issued new *Rural Land Administration and Land use Proclamation-456* amended in 2007. Article 6(3) states that “Land holders will be

*issued certificates that indicate the size and fertility of their holding as well as borders. Article 8 (5) expresses the rights of family members to inherit rural land”( Haile,2009:8).*

But despite the existence of such legal provision, no farmer can refuse to hand land required for investment as land on a whole belongs to the State. However, farmers complain that, their land ownership rights have been abused exploiting their ignorance of details of procedures and proceedings and about the unfair decision and compensation payment per hectare. People are also of the opinion that, no legal body who can bargain on behalf of farmer's is involved. (Erko and Erana)

The Jimma Times(2008),based on two farmers interviewed report that government officials have convinced and in certain cases threatened farmers to take away government land if they refuse to lease their land to flower farmers. Information also indicates that there is systemic manipulation and persuasion.

On the land transfer issue, Gadaa.com,(2009) observes that, *“There are instances of excessive government pressure on local land owners to sell their plots to the expanding flower companies...Some Ethiopians believe that their government is neglecting its duty to its own people when faced with attractive prospects of cashing in on large profits.”*

In any country, development and growth are what are expected to happen. But the establishment of new industries in rural areas is not readily accepted by people as they disturb the existing status-quo mainly related to local resources like land, water, forest.etc.as these are vital for people's livelihood. In many cases, planned development is beyond people's understanding of what actually it is about. So, newly established

projects receive little support if information that should reach the local community is neglected. But, it is natural that communities have a right to be informed of what is going to affect their lives before they are asked to hand over resources they have relied upon for generations. Thus, people should be approached to be won over to become more supportive and less confrontational.

The Jimma Times (2008), *“The Government seems to be turning a blind eye to the alleged damages that flower farms cause to the environment and to unfair labor issues and land acquisition despite local and international concerns.”*

Opinions of farmers and others like the above reflect concerns about the situation. On the other hand, the growth of the flora industry in the country and its establishment in the Walmera district is a new phenomenon for both farmers and those who handle the related planning, decision making and administrative issues with little prior preparation; well spelt out working details and procedures; above all experiences in the sector. Thus, the situation demands closer investigation and collection of pertinent information to come up with acceptable and reliable opinion.

Hence, the main interest of this study is to find out reliable and correct information how land ownership in the study area is transferred to flower farmers, processes and procedures of land lease arrangement and displacement of local farmers caused.



## **1.6 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.6.1 General Objective**

1.6.1.1 To investigate impacts caused by flower farms on farmers due to land

Lease arrangement made in the area.

### **1.6.2 Specific Objectives**

1.6.2.1 To find out if land holding transfer was against the will of farmers.

1.6.2.2 To identify processes and procedures of land lease arrangement.

1.6.2.3 To investigate if displacement of farmers have been caused.

## **1.7 Research Questions**

1.7.1. Was Land holding transfer done with the will of farmers?

1.7.2. Did processes and procedures on land lease include farmers?

1.7.3. Did the introduction of flower farms cause displacement of farmers?

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

Land is a valuable resource for rural communities for major part of their livelihood. In the view of a Nigerian tribes man”...*land belongs for use to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living and countless members are still unborn*”. Christopher (1999:41).So, investment projects like the flora industry that shows up with no prior planning where they are to be located and accommodation for former land owners are accepted with little preparation. Flower farmers have possible choices but farmers with

no choices except accepting what they are told to do in the name of investment. It should also be noted that farmers do not possess sufficient skills, knowledge and other alternative sources of livelihood that keep them going for years comparable to land with minimum working capacity. It is thus, vital to examine all actions: planning, decision making, execution, etc., under taken to facilitate requests related to land for investment. This study therefore, as a reminding point shall reflect processes and procedures under taken and results recorded in land ownership transfer, lease rent payment and displacements caused which in the researcher's view may support planners, decision makers, and administrators examine past actions and handle future decisions in a generally accepted mode.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study Paper**

The study paper comprised of five parts. Part one is an introductory section on the topic of the study. It traced the historical development of the flora industry world wide in brief and the conditions of its quick spread to Ethiopia in general and that of the study area in particular. It described the socio-economic impacts generated by the flora industry world wide in brief and effects felt by flower producing developing countries. Part two dealt with the conceptual frame of the study and the review of the related literature. It examined how land lease is practiced and managed in land business terms. It also looked at the positive economic growth and development of the flora industry in developing countries and the negative effects generated as a result in relation to the case of Ethiopia in general and that of the study area in particular. Part three dealt with the methodology of the study. It dealt with how the study was designed; what research procedures were used, the samples taken and tools of data collection applied. Part four is the heart of the study. It dealt with the organization, editing, classification and, tabulation of data. More

over, it was in this part where data was analyzed and interpreted (result and discussion part). The final section, part five dealt with the summary, conclusions and recommendations on land holding transfer; processes and procedures of land lease arrangement and displacements of farmers.

### **1.10 IMPORTANT TERMS USED IN THE PROJECT TITLE**

**Establishment** is founding or starting something.

**Flower farms** are farms growing different cut flowers for commercial purposes.

**Land-Lease Holding Issues** is problems involved in land holding transfer from farmers to flower growers through lease rent payment with the participation of local authorities.

**Vicinity** is near by; in the neighborhood; in proximity.

**Menagesha and Holeta** are towns in the Walmera district located on the Ambo road at about 30 and 40 kms from Addis Ababa in whose vicinities are 28 horticulture farms out of which 21 are flower farms.

**Study** is investigation on something to reach conclusion.

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## 2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1. Conceptual Frame of the Study

Many developing countries own untouched virgin resources like land and others that they have been unable to develop due to lack of sufficient capital, technology and absence of domestic investors. Some turn to attracting foreign investors and capital by instituting various expansive development projects to meet their development needs through leaseholds. Land lease practices by governments or individual owners depend on the land tenure system in a country but is a common economic activity although its execution somewhat differ in rural and urban areas.

According to Barta (2011) Emily says that *“A land lease is a type of financial arrangement in which the ground under a structure is leased, rather than sold to the builder, meaning that the land and the structure are owned independently...Land lease contract occurs most commonly when a real estate investor wishes to retain a piece of land, but not necessarily put energy into developing it.”*

Emily indicates that, *“Terms of a land lease usually requires that the property be developed in some way, and that rents for land are paid monthly or quarterly into the accounts of the landlord.”*By some nations, arrangement of land lease for a military base is made with other nations or former military bases in a country is leased to a city with the knowledge that it may be taken back later when required or sold at a lower price.(Barta:2011)

But in most developing countries, the bulk of expansive land lease arrangements with investors occur in rural areas mainly for agricultural production at dirt cheap prices at the beginning taking gradual strong grips with experience and time. Based on the Ethiopian

Investment Office (2009) ,for instance,” *Ethiopia has intended three million hectares of vacant land leased in the next three years; close to the land being farmed today...The government in the past years has instituted an expansive land lease project in hopes to lure foreign investors looking for new markets.*”

But on the growing land lease business awareness, Sisay from information obtained from *newBusinessEthiopian.com*, (2011), reports that “*The Ethiopian government has revised its agricultural land lease price, which has been attracting many investors for the past years. Government believes that agricultural land in the country was not getting proper value and protection...The new lease price takes into consideration the distance of the farm to Djibouti port, Port Sudan and central market –Addis Ababa.*” on the basis of rain-feed and irrigated land.

It is customary for new industries to occupy suitable sites that serve as centers of production. In practice, such suitable sites are only available out side cities in planned industrial zones. The flora industry however, due to its production character requires floriculture-friendly climate. It thus, mainly occurs in rural areas on farmer’s plots or on large agricultural land or on existing natural forest land or exotic tree plantation areas, a condition that usually lead to land loss by farmers and destruction of forest cover increasing a risk to the already fragile eco-system and the natural environment. It also interferes with the often struggling traditional economy of the area since the economic result it generates does not directly reach the local community. Hence, land owners, share croppers, casual agricultural laborers and agricultural workers all equally face problems that they are not ready for. Mainly marginal and small land owners are great losers and easily slide into poverty unless supportive strategies are planned for the aftermath since the

lease rent they are forced to accept against their will is small and do not allow them to start something else. More over, some farmers lose both farm plots and homesteads to flower farmers facing double crisis that accelerate quick glide into rural poverty causing an unexpected negative result of positive development effort.

In parts of the Rift valley in Ethiopia, where there are already expanses of commercial crop cultivation and horticulture farms started through land concession with no compensation and planned provision for those who formerly used the area, the appearance of new flower farms are increasing. These expansive commercial farmers had their own notorious history wrought on the pastoral groups (Karrayu, Afar, Ittu,Isa, Arsi) inhabiting the area. They did not only create resource shortage; they also led to the aggravation of overgrazing with major effects of the reduction of ground cover, the trampling of vegetation and erosion by water and wind. More over, they generated space and resource shortage creating competitions and constant clashes between Afar, Oromo and Somali tribal groups that led to continued loss of large livestock and human life. Gebre,(2001:9) is of the opinion that *“This state of affairs has not only made pastoral lands extremely vulnerable to encroachment and appropriation by outsiders, but also brought about undesirable transformation of resource use accompanied by intense competition for resources...which constitutes the principal cause of increasing interethnic tensions and conflicts as well as the deterioration of the ecology in the region”*.

The history of government concession of peasant land for expansive commercial farms with no compensation and planned provisions for former land holders is not uncommon in most East African countries (Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia etc.).For instance, Ghaffar (2001:175) is of the opinion that *“The Sudan is one of the best cases to*



*illustrate a State playing a major role in the process of transforming the landscape. In the Sudan, the traditional system of land tenure which recognizes the dar (homeland) of each ethnic group was abolished and replaced by a system of tenure granting the government the right to appropriate land as it wishes”.*

The flora industry like many other industries has its roots in the developed worlds which over the last six decades gradually spread to some developing countries due to its positive economic importance. Today many developing countries enjoy millions of foreign earning from flower export. Many are also pleased for the employment generated for thousands of workers in the sector tolerating the often disturbing risks caused to sustained ecosystem and the natural environment. Though today there are technological solutions to reduce risks caused by the flora industry, many countries are not willing to risk the lucrative business and force flower farmers to minimize the danger caused to the sustained ecosystem and the natural environment. So, concerns of global conventions on the issue and national policy pledges of many flower growing developing countries are undermined (The Flower Expert, [www.theflowerexpert.com/flower](http://www.theflowerexpert.com/flower)).

But, Laare (2008:37) citing Murlley says that” *besides... poor pest management and post harvest problems faced by the flora industry,... chemicals and fertilizers that are easily available in many other countries are not simply allowed in India.”*

## **2.2 Some Experiences in the Flora Industry**

It is true that” *Present day floral industry is a dynamic, global, fast-growing industry...In the 1950’s the global flower trade was less than US\$ 3 billion.By1992, it had grown to US\$*

100 billion. In recent years, the floral industry has grown six percent annually, while the global trade volume in 2003 was US\$ 101.84 billion”(Floral industry,[en.wikipedia.org/wiki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki)).

Information indicates that, the flora industry today is one of the major industries. Kassa, (2006:4) gives an overview of the flora industry world wide as below”. *Traditional production centers are the developed worlds (Western Europe with Japan and North America) who were both major producers and consumers. Among the new flower growing countries are Colombia, Ecuador, Kenya, Ethiopia and India; while other centers are Israel, South Africa, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia and New Zealand, etc.*”

Experts comment that the production focus has moved from the traditional growers (Netherlands, Germany, France etc.) to countries with better climate and low labor costs resulting in a change in the traditional business model. The Netherlands has already moved from flower growing to flower trading though the biggest flower market is still the one at Aalsmeer, while flowers are from developing countries like Colombia, Kenya, Ethiopia, India, Israel..., (The Flower Expert, [www.theflowerexpert.com/flower](http://www.theflowerexpert.com/flower)).

Colombian experiences for the beginning and success of the flora industry indicate that:

Bogotá where the first farms began enjoys a number of comparative advantages in the production of flowers: cheap labor, ideal climatic conditions..., good road net work and the presence of an international air port. In addition, business benefits from fiscal incentives provided by the Vallejo Plan in 1967, an introduction of a tax credit, in addition to credit programmes, technical assistance and marketing services offered by the recently created Fund for the Exports (PROEXPO). This enabled the Colombian floriculture industry to be highly competitive from the beginning in international markets to increase its exports orientation and obtain high profitability. (Mendez:1991, <http://www.ilo.org>)

Kenya, one of the largest exporters of flowers to Europe had been in the industry for decades. *Learning African Case Study (n.d)* confirms that, ” *Kenya’s flower industry is the*

*oldest and the largest in Africa. There are around 150 flower farms of which 90 per cent is owned by foreign companies and white Kenyans and 10 per cent by Asian Kenyans. In 2003, a sale of flowers was 77 million pounds... 8 per cent of Kenya's export earnings."*

However, existing conditions show that no one single model or course exists for the beginning and flourishing of the flora industry in different countries as each country differ in many aspects of its own although some general similarities might be there.

Laare (2008:37) citing Subramaniam says that "*Floriculture first gained prominence in Tamil Nadu in the late 1990s and the early part of the new millennium when a tea crisis forced growers to find new crops... One of the incentives for getting into flora culture is the amount of financial support from the government... Every grower is given 400,000 rupees when he starts his farm, only half of which needs to repaid*".

Concerning the flower occupation, Wagar (2011) indicates that, "*there are three branches that make up the back ground of the flora industry, namely, the grower, the wholesaler and the retailer which are often intermingled*" with no clear demarcation but depended on objective conditions like where the business is located, who owns the business; who does the work and the set up how it is done.

However, to promote the flower business as well as combat problems that encounter the sector and to meet basic codes of conduct of the trade, most flower growers have associations. For instance, there is KFC in Kenya; Asocolflores, in Colombia, APEDA in India and EHPEA in Ethiopia etc. which play promotive, protective and positive business roles of the flora industry. But despite the growing number of their members and increase in strength of business code of conduct in the flower trade as well as economic importance of the flower business and strong grip of flower producing countries, they have not so far been able to minimize environmental concerns; conditions of labor and worker's health;

land and water use issues that are headaches of both the sector and flower producing countries to the minimum degree aspired.

### ***2.3 Concerns of Flower Growing Countries Related to the Flora Industry***

*The Jimma Times*(2008) feels that the flora industry uses pesticides and chemical fertilizers which can damage the environment. It also uses too much water which may lead to conflict with the community and may also cause depletion of ground water. But flower growers argue that most flower farmers abide by international rules and regulations; protect the environment from damage, practice standard workings conditions and try to minimize the use of chemicals (Degani: 2011).

But, *Learning Africa Case Study (n.d)* observes that many flower growing countries apply codes of conduct on ecological and environmental concerns; labor issues; ethics of flower production etc. but with minor success. Smith and et al. (2004) believe that *“despite steps taken by producers...problems persist for female flower workers through both lack of comprehensive social chapters within the codes that address the gendered nature of employment inequalities in the industry, and the lack of proper implementation of those relevant codes that do exist.”*

Tefera (2011) is also of the opinion that having a regulation is a step forward, but follow up on implementation is what is essential. He confirms that *“The flower companies use different chemicals that are hazards to the health of employees and the soil. They need a regulatory body to control their activities”*. According to information from Gadaa.com (2009),...*“One hundred and twenty three chemicals are used in Ethiopia’s horticulture industry of which fifteen are classified as carcinogenic by the World Health Organization*

*and yet workers have no collective bargaining power because they have been forbidden from forming trade unions”*

Related to damages caused to water bodies, citing the Minister of Health and Sanitation, the *Daily Nation*(2010) reported:“*While we do not pretend to know what may have killed the fish and may be other Marine life in Lake Naivasha, what is obvious is that rouge flower firms...have been polluting the lake. That they do is no secret, with the Flower Council of Kenya having complained incessantly and even asked the government to grant it legal authority to discipline wayward firms.*“

From experiences of many flower producing developing countries, ecological and environmental concerns, exploitative labor conditions, issues of resource use like land and water and modes of their transfer from communities to flower farmers have remained a subject of people’s concern. Goodman (2007), reports that “*With 110, 000 employees, many of them single mothers and annual exports of \$1 billion, the industry provides an important alternative to growing coge, source crop of the Andean nation’s better known illegal export: Cocaine. But these economic gains come at a cost of worker’s health and Colombia’s environment.*”

Related to the Ethiopian condition, according to Sisay from information

*newBusinessEthiopia.com*, (2011) obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture,

...The Ministry has realized that previously land is abused by some investors. Some investors were renting the land they rented from government to others; while different regions do not have clear records on the size of land they distributed to investors...In fact, some investors were not providing the necessary facilities such as healthcare for their employs who work on the farms; some investors do not even have transparent bookkeeping and pay taxes to the government properly.

However, flower farmers everywhere complain that on top of the difficulties they face about the unpredictable weather conditions; flower transporting problems; marketing difficulties and over all flower business, they also face continuous pressure from governments and government agencies concerning land and water use; disposal of refuse and environmental pollution; labor condition and use of foreign manpower etc.(Policar,2008:39).

But, despite the existence of bottle necks in the sector, flower growers and governments of developing countries work together through establishing codes of conduct partly observed by flower growers and half-heartedly audited by governments due to the new positive economic income generated by the flora industry and sensitive nature of the flower business. Concerning codes of conduct, Dinham,(2011) based on the Colombian experience is of the opinion that *“In the absence of effective monitoring and enforcement through the labor movement and governmental environmental agencies they are little more than unenforceable wish-lists”*. So, many flower producing developing countries are at odds with their own citizens on the whole scenario of the flora industry and also face sharp criticisms from international communities on a lucrative business that cannot be easily traded off for something else.

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### **3. Methods of the Study**

#### **3.1 Research Design and Procedures**

Due to the nature of the present study under investigation, both quantitative and qualitative research designs were used through the application of questionnaires and scheduled interviews for the collection of pertinent data. Thus, the sphere of investigation was confined to descriptive and analytical approach. In initially, tools for collecting data (questionnaires and an interview schedule) on land holding transfer; procedures of land lease arrangement and displacement of farmers was designed. Then, pre-testing of instruments was done with 7 farmers, 4 elders, 4 *kebele* officers and 5 flower farmers (19.4 per cent) to identify item clarity, difficulty and problem areas of items. Based on the findings, some rewordings and corrections were made on tools of data collection.

Secondly finalized tools were administered to 39 farmers who leased land to flower growers, 16 local elders, 12 *Keble* officials, 32 flower growers' representatives, 2 district land administration and 2 district investment officers. Thirdly, the results were compiled and statistical analysis was tried on the responses of 39 farmers, 16 local elders, 12 kebele officials, 32 people representing flower farmers and 2 district land administration officers and 2 district investment officers respectively as planned. Thus, this chapter describes the design of the study as done and contains an account of the population, the sample frame and the statistical techniques applied and the rational for their use.

#### **3.2 Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

Population has its own unique definition in research."A *population refers to any collection of specified group of human beings or non-human entities such as objects, educational*

*institutions, time units, geographical areas, prices of wheat, or salaries drawn by individuals*” (Koul,1996:106).According to Mulusa (1992: 93) “*The population defined as the focus of the study is known as the target population.*” A target population in research is a very important source of data and information. It is the basis for reaching at the parameter of the study (Chadda, 1992:78)

In this study, population is defined as 39 local farmers who were supposed to have leased their farm plots to flower farmers, 16 local elders, 12 Kebele officials, 32 flower farmers, 2 district land administration and 2 district investment officers under whose administrative sphere the four flower farm clusters namely Menagesha, Sadamo-Geno,Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu are found in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta.

In the Western route from Addis Ababa, there are 28 horticulture farms in the direction of Holeta, of which 21 flower farms are located within the Walmera district in four locations in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta. For reasons preferred by the researcher, the Walmera district which houses 21 flower farms was purposefully sampled from other flower growing Oromia districts. The researcher felt that the Walmera district and flower farms in this district were ideal for a study as they are located in a similar surrounding occupied with similar jobs as well as are easily reachable with minimum time; fair transportation cost and difficulty. Therefore, out of the universe of 21 flower farms at four locations, 16 flower farms were randomly selected using the cluster sampling method. Ghosh (2004:238) is of the opinion that, “*The foremost characteristics of any sample is its repetitiveness. Representativeness may be absolute or universal provided the sample is similar to the universe in all respects. But in the practical field, it is very difficult to find out two cases that are perfectly similar, especially in the case of social phenomena. But in*

spite of this difficulty, a researcher should find out the sample in which maximum degree of similarity can be obtained”.

Panneerselvam (2006:199) is also of the view that “Cluster sampling is a sampling technique in which the population is divided into different clusters such that the members within each cluster are dissimilar (heterogeneous) in terms of their attributes, but different clusters are similar to each other. This leads to the inference that each cluster can be treated as small populations which possess all the attributes of the population.” Hence, the sample frame of the study is indicated as below.

**Table 3.1 Flower farms in the Walmera district forming the sample frame**

Location	Flower farms in the study area	Sampled flower farms
Menagesha	1. Alliance Flowers Plc 2. Dream Flowers Plc 3. Gallica Flowers 4. Flowerama	1. Alliance Flowers Plc 2. Dream Flowers Plc 3. Gallica Flowers
Sadamo-Geno	1. Eth. Meadows Plc 2. Oromia Wonders 3. Eth. Magical Farm	1. Eth. Meadows Plc. 2. Eth. Magical Farm
South Holeta	1. Eth. Agri. CEFT Plc 2. Joe Flower 3. Holeta Rose Plc 4. Fiyori Ethiopia 5. Dire high Land 6. A Flower 7. Top Flower Plc 8. Metrolux	1. Joe Flower, 2. Holeta Rose, 3. Top Flower Plc 4. A. Flower 5. Metro lux 6. Fiyori Ethiopia
West Holeta	1. Rose Ethiopia 2. Arsi Flower 3. Caf Rose 4. Agri-Flora Plc 5. Euro Flora 6. Ethio Dream	1. Rose Ethiopia 2. Agri Flora Plc 3. Euro Flora 4. Ethio Dream 5. Arsi Flower

**Source:** Field data

From the universe of 16 flower farms of about 43 farmers, who were supposed to have leased land to flower growers, using the simple random sampling method, 7 farmers from

Menagesha; 5 farmers from Sadamo-Geno; 14 farmers from Birbirsa Siba and 13 farmers from Tullu Harbu locations was selected, forming a sample of 39 farmers. Using the non-probability sampling method, 4 local elders from each flower farm location, a total of 16 local elders were chosen. From each flower farm location, 3 *Kebele* officers were selected. Based on the number of selected flower farms in each location, 2 people from each flower farm, a total of 32 people were also made to represent 16 flower farms. From the District Rural Land Administration Office, 2 officers and from the District Investment Office, 2 officers were made to represent their offices respectively. In totality, 103 persons were made to get involved in the study. It was felt that the responses obtained from this target population would bring about sufficient information and data for the study. Hence, the sample design was as below:

**Table 3. 2 Sampling design**

Respondents							
Location	Farmers per locations	Elders per locations	<i>Kebele</i> officials per locations	Flower farmers	District Land admin. officers	District investment officers	
					2	2	4
Menagesha	7	4	3	6	-	-	20
Sadamo-Geno	5	4	3	4	-	-	16
South Holeta	14	4	3	12	-	-	33
West Holeta	13	4	3	10	-	-	30
Total	39	16	12	32	2	2	103

Source: Field data

### 3.2.1 Data Gathering Methods and Tools

A systematic and planned approach was used for the field work. The collection of data was organized to take place at each location at a time. All data was collected by the researcher himself assisted by one trained assistant from the locality. Data gathering tools used were interview schedules and questionnaires. These instruments were developed in such a way

that they increase the possibility of generating responses to the basic research questions. Some tools (interview schedules for farmers, local elders and Kebele officials) were also translated into the local language to increase quality and validity.

An Interview schedule was used for interviewing 39 farmers, 16 local elders and 12 *Kebele* officers. Questionnaires were also filled by 32 flower farmers, 2 District Land administration and 2 District Investment Officers. All tools are presented as appendices I, II, III, IV, V and VI respectively is attached with the approved research proposal.

### **3.2.2 Methods of Data Analysis**

Completed interview schedules and questionnaires by respondents were checked, verified, edited and ordered sequentially. Each was coded. Master code sheets were prepared for data collected from each group of respondents. Then, data was analyzed using both descriptive and simple statistical techniques like tables, percentages in the majority of cases; frequencies and percentages distribution in some cases supported by the pertinent interpretations.

### **3.3 Issues of Validity and Reliability**

One way to insure build validity is to make use of multiple resources (MoE/AED, 2006: 51) So, to ascertain validity, multiples resources like farmers, local elders, *Keble* officials, flower growers, district land administration officers and district investment officers were involved in the study. Research procedures were also planned in a research proposal from the beginning. Separate files were developed for documenting responses from each group of respondents. Pre-testing of instruments was done with 20 respondents to improve quality of tools. Instruments for 39 farmers, 16 local elders and 12 Kebele officials were translated

into the local language for concept clarity and simplicity. Hence, it is hoped that these would help for replicating the study for reliability.

### **3.4 Limitations**

The flora industry has a limited age in Ethiopia. Due to its infancy, not profound work has been done on its different aspects like flower breeding, plant variety, propagating, product quality, longevity/shelf life, inputs and transportability. Further more, broad based work on access to land, water, energy; environmental protection, labor; protective measures and means for those who lose resources to flower farms are scant thus limiting the existence of written information. On top of this, there is a negative attitude starting from the Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association workers at head-quarters level down to field flower farm offices except a genuine few, not to easily give information to those who require data for studies on the pretext that many people come and bother them. Some farmers are also afraid to give information related to land lease matters to people who are unknown to them unless that person is accompanied by someone known to them despite one has a support letter from IGNOU Post graduate Programs. So, one has to look for local people that support to obtain the required information. But once found willing, the majority of farmers with out reservations talked of their true feelings, resentments and openly disclosed the good and bad things they observed and faced around land leasing. So, despite some weeks spent over the planned time for data collection, all data was obtained as proposed in the study plan.

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## **4. Result and Discussion**

In this chapter, data readied from those involved in the study through various techniques is presented in descriptions and tables. Data are also presented in both quantitative and qualitative forms and each is approached in its own way. The quantitative data is presented in tables supported by the pertinent narrations of the issues addressed. Whenever and wherever relevant, results from quantitative and qualitative data were made to supplement each other in the presentation.

### **4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

#### **4.1.1: Age of respondents involved at the four locations of the study (Menagesha, Sadamo-Geno, Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu)**

In a broader sense, age is a good indicator for planning purposes. Usually school plans, programs and facilities (teaching materials, equipment, buildings), for children; health services for all and social security for people are based on age. In the modern world, peoples' age is believed to increase with better amenities and health services. A report of UNICEF (1982:16) indicates that, *“After a rapid increase in the rate of population growth-caused by relatively sudden successes in controlling certain diseases, epidemics and famines which meant that more infants survived to have children of their own”*.

The current study that necessitated gathering data from people in different age categories required to obtain balanced information from people in a selected age bracket. Hence, the age structure of respondents involved in this study is indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 indicates that the highest group of respondents numbering 31(30.09 %) is in the age group 41-50 years while the aged ones numbering 17 (16.50 %) is in the age group above 61 years. The data confirms that at the lower ages between 20-30 years and upper



ages beyond 61 years, the number of residents in the study area is lower in number than those between the ages of 31-60 years. So, one may infer that it is an asset for the validity and reliability of the study to have involved such group of respondents aged between 31-60 years who are supposed to have profound knowledge of the area, the basic resource structure and ownership modality, psychological and socio-cultural make up of the community.

**Table 4.1: Age of respondents involved at the four locations of the study**

Age category	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirs Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%	
20-30	2	1	3	3	-	-	-	9	8.73%
31-40	5	2	3	3	5	2	-	20	19.41%
41- 50	3	6	3	6	11	-	2	31	30.09%
51-60		1	6	4	15	-	-	26	25.24%
Above 61	4	2	6	4	1	-	-	17	16.50%
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103	100%

Source: Field Data

#### **4.1.2: Sex of respondents involved at the four locations of the study**

From Table 4.2 below one can see that 89 (86.41%) respondents are male which confirms that the appearance of rural females in certain activities is still very minimal. In the traditional culture females talking to unknown strangers is not acceptable. It seems that sort of traditional thought has not died out yet. The 14 (13.59 %) female respondents in the data of Table 4.2 are those who inherited land from their parents or deceased husbands and are responsible. So; it is more or less acceptable for them to respond to queries related to their

property and social issues. On the other hand, rural women are busy through out the day in both house chores and outside the home in agricultural activities and are not available as their male counterparts. One study done by Gariyo (2001:78) in Eastern Uganda confirms that,

... Women’s working days are longer than men’s with fewer or no time for leisure. In the homes we visited during the field work for instance, we would talk to women while they are peeling matook or potatoes, sorting the beans or doing any of the necessary household chores for the next meal. When we wanted to talk to the men, we would usually be offered a chair and have enough time to talk or we would find them at their local drinking places during the evening hours. Men find leisure time to mingle with their friends and have a drink, which women do not do.

**Table 4.2: Sex of respondents involved at the four locations of the study**

Description	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Bibirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%	
Male	11	11	15	17	31	2	2	89	86.41%
Female	3	1	6	3	1	-	-	14	13.59%
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103	100 %

Source: Field Data

#### **4.1.3: Educational level of respondents involved at the four locations of the study**

*“Education is one of the important indicators of modernization as it can influence people’s perception, attitudes, and the ways people make their decision”*, (Peter: 2001: 161). Most research studies which involve people as source of data want to know the educational status of this source that in certain conditions have determinant role for scientific studies. Hence, Table 4.3 shows the educational level of respondents involved in this current study.

Table 4.3 depicts that the illiteracy rate that used to be rampant in the study area has enormously decreased and people with education of grade 5-10 about 17 (16.50 %) and with high school education (grades 11-12), about 21(20.38 %) are in the farming occupation. One may infer that the practice of leaving the area for looking for employment in bigger cities after failure of passing exams given at the end of grade 8, 10 and 12 is decreasing by joining local agricultural occupation which may induce change and improvement in many aspects in the economic, social and cultural life of the community. Zewdie (1998:37) is of the opinion that” *One prong to strengthen this issue is to invest on development of infrastructure in rural areas which would help the inhabitants to increase their incomes while continuing to live where they have been staying, thus making out-migration unnecessary*”.

**Table 4.3 Educational level of respondents involved at the four locations of the study**

Ed.level attained	Menagesha	Sadmo-Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. Officers.	District Investment Officers.	%
Illiterate	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	6(5.82%)
Literacy	4	1	2	10	-	-	-	17(16.505%)
1-4	1	4	4	4	-	-	-	13(12.62 %)
5-10	4	3	6	4	-	-	-	17 (16.50 %)
11-12	2	3	8	1	7	-	-	21(20.38%)
Diploma		2			23	1	2	26(25.24%)
1 <sup>st</sup> degree	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3(52.91%)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103(1005)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.1.4: Marital status of respondents (farmers, elders and Kebele officials) involved at the four locations of the study**

Many research studies demand to have data on people’s marital status to learn about their family life, family size etc. and to obtain data on population dynamics for developing different plans. The current study on marital status is only interested to see what type of marital status pre-dominated the area under the study.

Table 4.4 indicates that 48 (71%) respondents are married and only with very few divorce cases of 3 (4.48 %) people from the sample. So, one may infer the existence of stable family life with very few divorce cases which may be related to existence of better socio-economic life and persistent observation of strong traditional culture; socio-cultural values and their up keep practices of the local community. In connection with marital status, Maro, (2001:110) who made a study in the Kingdom of Swasiland, comments that *‘The implication of large household for land use and satisfaction of basic needs, cast doubts on the ability of the house to satisfy their needs entirely from agricultural activities and leads significant proportions of members of the household to wage employment’* which is true of any rural community with large families with small land holdings.

**Table 4.4 Marital status of respondents (farmers, elders and Kebele officials) involved at the four locations of the study**

Status	Menagesha	Sadamo-Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	%	
Not married	2	3	4	4	13	19.40%
Married	9	8	17	14	48	71.64%
Divorced	3	-	-	-	3	4.48%
Widowed	-	1	-	2	3	8.96%
Total	14	12	21	20	67	100%

Source: Field Data

**4.1.5: Respondents involved at the four locations of the study (farmers, elders and Kebele officials) by years of residence**

To obtain information on communities, basic local resources and their ownership history, past and present; people’s life long experiences and knowledge on localities can not be simply traded off for something else. However, if done, data obtained for a study may be considered weak.

Table 4.5 below shows that 8 (11.94%) respondents lived in the study area for 8-12 years while 59 (88.06 %) of residents approached for the study were people who lived in the locality above 12 years. It can be inferred that these people due to their long years of stay in the area have good knowledge of the local community and its mode of livelihood, basic resources in the area and their modes of ownership. So, their participation in this study is an asset for ensuring reliability as well as validity for the data gathered through their responses.

**Table 4.5: Respondents involved at the four locations of the study (farmers, elders and Kebele officials) by years of residence**

Time of stay in the area	Menagesha	Sadamo _Geno	Birbirs Siba	Tullu Harbu	%	
5-7	-	-	-	-	-	-
8-12	3	3	1	1	8	11.94%
Above 12	11	9	20	19	59	88.06%
Total	14	12	21	20	67	100%

Source: Field Data

## **4.2: Responses of Respondents to Various Issues of the Study**

### **4.2.1: By whom farmers were first approached for land lease at the four locations of the study**

In data of Table 4.6 below, 63 (61.20 %) respondent felt that it was the District Investment Office who first approached local farmers for land lease to flower growers. From the same data, one can also learn that some pre- agitation roles were played by the local *kebele* office and some brokers probably at locations of choice preferred by flower growers. It is also clear that the local kebele office as the lowest administrative structure had the role, interest and responsibility to implement policies, in this case the rural land investment policy. Cross reference with Table 4.14 below indicates that the local *Kebele* offices during the land lease process played a non local farmers' supportive role that run against farmers' interests.

Zewdie (2004:39) says that, "*The Kebele administration system is entrusted with overseeing socio-economic development and natural resource conservation activities within its geographic jurisdiction*". So with this role at grass root level and being responsible to the people who elected them to office, the local *Kebele* administration with the district office could have exhausted existing alternatives before approaching farmers for land lease, a condition which is strongly resented by farmers.

**Table 4.6: By whom farmers were first approached for land lease at the four locations of the study**

Respondents									
Who approached farmers	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%	
Flower Farmers	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	4	3.88 %
District investment office	8	2	10	8	31	2	2	63	61.20%
District land admin. office	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	1.94%
Kebele office	4	2	5	8	1	-	-	20	19.42%
Brokers	1	7	2	4	-	-	-	14	13.59%
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103	100%

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.2: Farmers reaction when first approached for land lease to flower farmers**

Table 4.7 below shows that 4(5.97%) respondents felt that framers were happy when approached for land lease, while 11 (16.42 %) indicated that farmers were indifferent about the issue and 52 (77.61 %) respondents depicted that farmers were unhappy about the matter which was indicative of their unwillingness to agree to the issue unless some sort of persuasive action or threatening cropped up. This actually corresponds with the responses of 25 respondent farmers who during an interview said, “Who in reality feels happy when he loses a basic resource base that feeds his family and a legacy of the deceased”. So it can

be commented that, land for an Ethiopian peasant like in many traditional communities is not only a resource base. It is also a major source of strength, confidence and pride. This type of traditional thought about land is a reflection of the old ‘rist’ ownership system. According to this system *“All descendants ...of an individual founder were entitled to a share, and individuals had the right to a plot of family land. Rist was hereditary, inalienable, and inviolable. No user of any piece of land could sell his or her share outside the family or mortgage or bequeath his or her shares as a gift as land belonged not to the individual but to the descent group”*(Land Reform in Ethiopia, Wikipedia).

**Table 4.7: Farmers reaction when first approached for land lease to flower farmers**

Farmers reaction	Frequencies	%
Happy	4	5.97 %
Unhappy	52	77.61%
Indifferent	11	16.42%
Total	67	100%

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.3: Presence of farmers who from the beginning resisted land leasing**

In Table 4.8 below, 76 (73.79%) respondents indicated that farmers even before being officially told to lease their land opposed, resisted and stood against those who in unofficial and semi- official way under ground agitated farmers to lease their land. But these people must have entered the hearts of some farmers through promises of getting work with flower farmers and scoring advantages from land leasing. Farmers in almost all locations during an interview reported that they were told that there will be the first opportunity of work for



families of those whose land is leased. But the majority of farmers had the feeling that they can better work for themselves on their own property. They felt that land lease money promised and cash through employment is as light as feather and does not last long as compared to the produce they continually reap from their plots. From the views, resentment and hard words of these people, it is clear that the majority of them did not have the wish and the will to lose their plots.

**Table 4.8: Presence of farmers who from the beginning resisted land leasing**

Description	Respondents						
	Farmers	Elders	Kebele officials	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers.	%
Yes	26	12	10	24	2	2	76 (73.79%)
No	6	3	2	8	-	-	19 (18.44%)
Afraid to refuse to lease	7	1	-	-	-	-	8 (7.77%)
Total	39	16	12	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.4: Presence of farmers in the study area who refused to lease land**

In Table 4.9 below, 57(62.64%) people responded that there were farmers who refused to lease their land to flower growers. However, despite the existence of farmers who refused to lease their holdings, how they were later trimmed to come into line against their will except with certain persuasive actions is an issue. So, it could be inferred that certain threatening and enforcing mechanisms must have been deployed which conform with farmers complaints.

Hence, on the basis of these complaints, one may be forced to comment that, on occasions of planning to establish new development projects in new areas among communities, a planner should be more thoughtful. He should be careful not to be based only on his own intentions and good convictions giving little attention to the feelings of the community and other related things although it is not possible for him to predict the exact impacts of new development projects. Barnard,(1999:48) is of the opinion that *“It is however his duty to attempt to predict the probable end result that such an introduction might have...So, it is unacceptable for the planner to rely on his subjective convictions to what the community probably wants; knowledge of and insight into the members of the affected community and their needs will enable the planner to traverse the terrain with more confidence and secure a surer touch”*.

**Table 4.9: Presence of farmers in the study area who refused to lease land**

Respondents						
Description	Farmers	Elders	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%
Yes	25	10	20	1	1	57(62.64%)
No	12	2	12	1	1	28(30.77%)
Some are afraid to refuse to lease	2	4	-	-	-	6 (6.59 %)
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>91 (100%)</b>

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.5: Possibility or no possibility to refuse to lease land identified for lease**

Table 4.10 indicates that 16(100%) respondents attest that there is no possibility to refuse to lease land identified for investment. But what a rural farming community commonly knows and understands is that as long as it possesses an ownership certificate; pays the

usual lawful annual land rent, certain contributions and is entitled to inherit it to its heirs, land belongs to every legitimate individual who can protect his right of ownership. So, one can comment that this general understanding of the rural community is what is known to them. However, it may be inferred that it does not correspond with the specific legal thoughts, related legal obligations and guides behind the whole scenario that confirm land holding right is of '*usufruct status*' according to the existing constitution on property rights article 40.N0.3,(1995:45). A major deficit on the other hand is that, land suddenly taken from farmers after new projects pop up is not under any prior land- use- plan set for pertinent projects with planned provisions on what are to be done for those who are quickly removed from their holdings.

**Table 4.10: Possibility or no possibility to refuse to lease land identified for lease**

Possibility to refuse or not to refuse	Respondents			
	Kebele officials	Distr. land admin. officers	District investment officers.	%
Yes	-	-	-	-
No	12	2	2	16 (100%)
I don' know	-	-	-	-
Total	12	2	2	16 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.6: Existence of chances or no chances for farmers to say why they do not want to lease their plots**

As shown in Table 4.11 below, 68 (66.02%) respondents indicated that farmers were not given the opportunity to explain or probably complain why they did not want to lease their land. It is evident that the district investment office was very keen only on fulfilling the investment guide and was not willing to listen to farmer's pleas on the general

understanding that land belongs to the government as a whole and there is no room to attend to other questions except going straight for land leasing. Reports from farmers during interviews held indicated that at two locations, Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu with no prior information except rumors, people from the district office were found measuring farmer's land. In the case of Tullu Harbu , this situation led to an opposition from local farmers who were only driven away by the local police force that was called to the area. According to the same informants and other interviewees, in the two locations and Sadamo , there are farmers who have not received the lease money and whose cases and appeals have reached the Supreme Court and the Federal Ministry of Justice. Related to the issue, some people are of the opinions that” *The government has given due attention to the flower industry because of growing revenue it collects from export taxes. However, the industry has brought with it much controversy: allegations of environmental mismanagement, labor abuse and unfair land holding*” (Jimma Times: 2008).

**Table 4.11: Existence of chances or no chances for farmers to say why they do not want to lease their plots**

Respondents								
Chances or no chances	Meagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment. officers	%
Yes	3	2	2	3	6	-	-	16 (15.53% )
No	9	8	15	15	17	2	2	68 (66.02 %)
I don't know	2	2	4	2	9	-	-	20 (18.45 %)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### 4.2.7: Instructions faced by farmers who refused to lease their plots

Data from Table 4.12 indicate that 48 (90.57 %) respondents felt that farmers were persuaded by local officials to lease land to flower growers. It could mean that those involved in the transaction are people from the district and the local *kebele* administration and is same group who could have persuaded farmers to make land lease. From the data, one can clearly infer that certain persuasive action in a lighter sense and threatening in a stern sense must have been deployed to discourage farmers not to oppose or stand against land leasing which corresponds to the responses of farmers and elders interviewed.

The Jimma times (2008), indicates, an interviewee, a former land owner who leased his plot reported that government officials convinced him to sell his plot and warned him if he does not comply, government land will be taken away.

**Table 4.12: Instructions faced by farmers who refused to lease their plots**

Instructions	Respondents				
	Farmers	Flower Farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers.	%
Permitted to keep	-	2	1	1	4 (7.55%)
Persuaded to lease	27	19	1	1	48 (90.57 %)
Told to respect the investment guide	-	1	-	-	1(1.89 %)
Total	27	22	2	2	53(100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.8: Opportunity or no opportunity for farmers to discuss/negotiate on land**

##### **lease price per hectare**

Data from Table 4.13 confirms that 30 (62.25 %) respondents feel that chances for discussion on land lease price are not in practice as land lease is handled through the district office. Though not fully clear for farmers, the district office knows that land lease price is a fixed issue through a guide depending on the annual produce from one hectare of land calculated on averagely basis over a period of ten years if it is land in cultivation. On the other hand, interviewed farmers, local elders and *Kebele* officials reported that chances for negotiations which is also maneuvered by people from the district, the local *kebele* offices and intermediaries appear only in two cases: when land for lease is identified by a flower grower and a location is his/her own choice ( eg. Sadamo location and when plots adjacent to an existing flower farm are needed for expansion). Even in this case as usual, farmers who do not agree with what is offered or do not wish to lease their land are not spared. So, there were cases which were brought to the court by farmers and appeals made to higher offices but after dragging on for years lost due to the intricacy of bureaucracy causing miscarriage of justice.

It seems that haggling on the issue of land holding was not limited only to the Walmera district and local farmers. Ten flower farm investors in the vicinity of Holeta who refused to pay taxes were also in the struggle. Assefa(2008, [www.nazret.com](http://www.nazret.com)) reported that, “*When ten flower farm investors said the land tax was too much for them, the Investment Bureau lowered it to 0.16 Birr per sq.m. However, even with such provision, the investors could not pay their dues promptly*”...On the issue, one of those responsible persons from the district office said that, “*If the investors would not settle their debts following the warning*

*issued to them; the Investment Bureau would be forced to take the case to the court".* Related to the case, a member of the local administration's cabinet said that *"it was unfair that farmers were evicted from their land only to be replaced by flower investors who fail to pay a 0.16 –birr- per sq.tax"*.

However, the truth is that the flower farm industry was a new phenomenon to the area and there was no profound skill, knowledge and experience on land lease techniques and estimation of proper reliable rural land value and price based on research studies on part of the concerned district office. On the entrepreneur's side, except the preparation of the usual project frame following the nominal method mainly by consultants, some practical details and unforeseen concerns and costs are ignored which caused serious problems for the beginner investor in the face of a new area like the flora industry spread in the rural setting. Concerning the scene of the flora industry in the country, based on Obole (2008), Sisay says that *"As we are beginners, we lack skill and knowledge. But training and codes of practice are under way by EHPEA: issues of production, labor, environment and community have been given priority so as to use them as minimum requirements for the certification to begin and run flower farm"*. In broader terms, it is viewed that along with other inhibiting aspects, *"Most of the studies in different nations observed, the success of the rural entrepreneurial business is constrained by the availability of and quality of these factors-innovation, leadership, infrastructure, risk financing (Mishra and et al: 2007:70).*

**Table 4.13: Opportunity or no opportunity for farmers to discuss/negotiate on land lease price per hectare**

Respondents					
Description	Kebele officials	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers.	%
Yes	-	6	-	-	6 (12.5%)
No	10	18	1	1	30(62.5 %)
Land lease price is already fixed	2	2	1	1	6 (12.5%)
I do not know	-	6	-	-	6 (12.5%)
	12	32	2	2	48 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.9: Role played by the local *Kebele* Offices in the land lease process**

Table 4.14 indicates that 39 (37.86%) respondents felt that the local *kebele* office under cover was engaged in convincing farmers to lease their land to flower farmers and in a subtle way used pressure and threatening exploiting farmer’s socio-cultural psychological mentality putting them off balance. Same data also indicates that 38 (36.89 %) of respondents felt that the local *Kebele* office was engaged in supporting flower growers to obtain land which in an indirect way meant standing against the interest of local farmers who intend not to lease land to flower growers.

The *Kebele* Administration set up during the *Derg* rule is the lowest level government administrative body. Zewdie (2004:39) explains the current role of the local *Kebele* offices as below. “*The Kebele Administration is entrusted with socio-economic development and natural resource conservation activities...However, its role in community planning is confined to one of implementing directives and plans issued from above...The office*



holders in the Kebele system are subject to dual subordination: to the people who elected them and to the District (Woreda ) Administrative Council”.

In totality, the local Kebele administration that is supposed to know the inner feelings, socio-economic background and psycho-social mentality of local farmers that in actuality represents the interests of the local community seem to have exploited same to stand against farmer’s interests. No doubt, it stood on the side of the district office and flower growers to fulfill the investment guide in the face of non planned provisions for farmers.

**Table 4.14: Role played by the local Kebele Offices in the land lease process**

Respondents								
Description	Menagesha	Sadamo- Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District. land admin. officers..	District investment. officers.	%
Convinced farmers to lease land	6	3	7	7	13	1	2	39(37.86%)
Supported flower farmers to obtain land	6	7	11	7	7	-	-	38(36.89%)
Supported inv. Guide	-	2	1	1	11	1	-	16(15.53)
No role played	2		2	5	1	-	-	10 (9.71)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100 %)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.10: Outlook that farmer were not pressurized to lease their land**

Table 4.15, indicates that 33 (32.04 %) respondents were of the opinion that farmers were not pressurized to make land lease while 62 (60.19 %) respondents felt that there was pressure on farmers to lease their land to flower farmers. This pressure indicated seem to have emanated from the district and local kebele offices that had the keen interest to execute the rural land investment guide and wish to see some development happen in their

localities. In interviews made with local farmers, elders and *Kebele* officials, there is a clear indication that in many instances farmers were systemically and subtly maneuvered to make land lease exploiting their weaknesses and inability to defend their rights in the nominal existence of the local farmers' Association. Rural farmers are usually poor, illiterate and could not stand against the enticement of knowledgeable, skilled intermediaries, *Kebele* officials and district officers and normally lack strong bargaining power and skills.

Based on Zewdie (2004:39), "*In arrangement, office holders in the Farmers' Association structure are subject to dual subordination: to the local people who elected them and to the district administrative council.*" However, despite their position in such a structure, official members of the association preferred to keep mum in the face of farmer's displacement with no prior arrangement for their future livelihoods. It is true that usually the existence of such associations is nominal, not well organized, and weak and submissive. It is also highly politicized and not also free of power abuse and illegal deal in the current political conditions at the lower levels.

Hence, there are pending cases of farmer's complaints and appeals in all the four locations, the worst cases in Birbirsiba, Tullu Harbu and Sadamo where a number of land owners and former land holders are not paid although their plots were already handed to flower growers through the district office. Some were not paid due to the refusal made to lease their plots and others on some presumed petty legal grounds on their land ownership and holding rights.

**Table 4.15: Outlook that farmer were not pressurized to lease their land**

Description	Respondents							
	Menagesha	Sadam o-Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu harbu	Flower Farmers	Distr land admin. officers.	Distr.inv. officers	%
Yes	6	4	4	6	13	-	-	33(32.04%)
No	7	7	16	13	16	2	1	62( 60.19%)
I don't Know	1	1	1	1	3	-	1	8(7.77%)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100% )

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.11: Thoughts that farmers on their own free will leased land to flower farmers**

Table 4.16 depicts that 18 (17.48 %) respondent are of the opinion that farmers on their own free will leased land to flower farmers while 85 (82.52%) respondents felt that farmers on their own free will did not lease their plots to flower farmers. So there is a close confirmation with result of responses of respondents in Table 4.15 in which respondents felt that farmers were put under pressure to lease their land to flower growers. From responses obtained from respondents, it can be inferred that those responsible for land lease at the lower level were only too keen to see some development happen in their area through obtaining land for flower farmers which led to pressing farmers heavily using different mechanisms to obtain what was required. This was also confirmed during an interview with farmers and local elders who indicated that in Menagesha, Sadamo– Geno and Birbirsa Siba, farmers were called through the local *Kebele* office by the district office for a meeting who told farmers that their farm plots are going to be measured for a lease and they must sign that the their plots are leased and collect the lease money from the District finance office. Farmers who tried to ask questions were discouraged and were openly told in a subtle way that refusals are impossible. Farmers reported that when some farmers put up an opposition to those who came to measure their land, they were threateningly told that land

belongs to the government and they will give it away by hook or by crook. In the Tullu Harbu case, where minor land holding right is under question, legal land holders who attempted to stop those who came to measure farm plots were disbanded by the local police called to the area.

Hence, the whole scenario of the flora industry in the country was commented by on lookers as follows. *“Government land ownership has created it easier for flower growers to get land easily...There is a big inflow of flower industry to Ethiopia despite the continuous local and international concerns on what flower farms cause to the environment, and unfair labor issues and land acquisition”*(Obole:2008).

**Table 4.16: Thoughts that farmers on their own free will leased land to flower farmers**

Description	Respondents							
	Menagesha	Sadamo-Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land Admin. officers	District investment officers	%
Yes	2	3	3	4	6	-	-	18 (17.48%)
No	12	9	18	16	26	2	2	85 (82.52%)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### 4.2.12: By whom land to be leased to flower farmers was measured

Table 4.17 shows that 59(83.09%) respondents indicated farmer’s plots to be leased was measured by the District Rural Land Administration Office which is responsible for matters related to land in rural areas that in a direct way had followed the procedure of land matter activities at the lower level. This office bears the ultimate responsibility that all activities related to land is carried out in a clear and clean manner involving no partiality or favoritism for any side during land measurement. However, during an interview conducted

with farmers, farmers complained that in most cases they have not accepted the land measurement done but were forced to accept what they were told. But in some cases of opposition and cases of local powerful and vociferous farmers, measurements were repeated and doubts rectified.

**Table 4.17: By whom land to be leased to flower farmers was measured**

Description	Respondents						
	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%
Kebele office	1	1	-	1	-	-	3 (4.23 %)
District land admin. office	12	9	20	18	-	-	59 (83.09 %)
District investment office	1	2	1	1	2	2	9 (12.68 %)
The flower farmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	14	12	21	20	2	2	71 (100 %)

Source: Field Data

**4.2.13: Existence of written agreement between farmers and flower farmers when leased land is to be returned or new agreement is to be signed**

Data of Table 4.18 depicts that 56 (78.87%) respondents confirm that farmers have not signed a written agreement with flower farmers directly how much they are to be paid per hectare or when their plots are to be returned or new agreement is to be signed. In fact, as the whole thing was handled by the district office, there was no direct discussion on land lease and land lease price between farmers and flower farmers in cases of Menagesha, Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu and part of Sadamo called Geno except in the Sadamo location where land identification and choice was that of the flower farmer. However, in all

cases, there was a strong presence and participation of the district office as a legal entity and the Kebele office as a local support body and a strong intermediary presence in the Sadamo case. So, in case of Menagesha, Birbirsa Siba, Tullu Harb and part of Sadamo, the Geno location, as a process for legal and procedural purposes, the district made farmers to sign in a group list that is kept at the district office confirming that the plot of land they held earlier is leased. According to interviews made with farmers and local elders, when some farmers went to the court with a complaint that they were forced to lease their plots and things must be corrected, the district as an evidence brought out the signatures and as a result files were closed. So, farmers lost their plots and legal cases due to the intricacy of the bureaucracy that was beyond what they plainly knew and understood and so could not obtain any fair legal protection although legal provisions are there. A case of farmers, (Bekele Tafa and others), with dozens of court documents confirm the same.

**Table 4.18: Existence of written agreement between farmers and flower farmers when leased land is to be returned or new agreement is to be signed**

Description	Respondents								
	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	District. land admin. officer.	District investment officer	%		
Yes	2	7	3	3	-	-	15	21.13%	
No	12	5	18	17	2	2	56	78.87%	
Total	14	12	21	20	2	2	71	100%	

Source: Field Data

#### **A case of Bekele Tafa**

Bekele Tafa owns some plots of land at the Sadamo location at three sites. At one site, he was asked by local intermediaries to lease his plot to a flower growing firm that needed the

plot for extension. The plot of land at the time was under ripping wheat crop. Bekele refused the offer of Birr 2.80 for a m.<sup>2</sup> of land. Although originally the plot was out side the flower farm, it was fenced into the flower farm with out his agreement. He could not collect his ripped wheat crop. He appealed to the district and the zone administration office that his plot was illegally included into the flower farm. They came to the spot and discussed the matter with the flower farmer. Bekele told the flower farmer that, “Although he does not want to lease his plot but for the sake of solving the problem, he can be paid Birr 3.00 per m<sup>2</sup>”. According to Bekele, the flower farmer told him that an” Ant and an elephant cannot fight. I own only 30 percent of the farm and (mentioning a name), he owns 70 percent. With whom do you fight”? There was a disagreement between the two. The flower farmer went to the police. Bekele was then called to the police station. Since the hard words they exchanged was in private, the police could not locate any evidence against Bekele. Bekele was left alone. Bekele then filed a case against the flower farmer at the district first instance court. He was told this is a case to be look at by the local *Kebele social court*. The *Kebele Social Court* decided the case against Bekele. He again appealed to the first instance court of the district. After a long time, the case was decided against him. He appealed to the Zonal higher court and then to the Regional Supreme Court. Things dragged on and on. The file was then closed due to an over due date for appeal. Bekele with out any pay lost his farm plot freely to the flower farm and bitterly resents the situation.

### **A case of the Tullu Harbu farmers**

The interviewed farmers said, “When people came from the district to measure our farm plots, the owners of the plots tried to prevent them. But they called the local police to the

area. They came with guns. Being afraid, we run to the bush. Later, we went to the district for appeal that we do not want to lease our land. The disagreement went on for 2 years and 8 months. The district office continued to be negative to our queries. We appealed to the Regional Government. We were paid some money and told the land lease will only be for 5 years. The land they took from us was 24.5 hectares. What they paid us was only for 8 hectares. The five years they promised is over. It is now over ten years. There are farmers who are not paid a single cent. Some of the land they took from us is not under flower cultivation. It is laying there fenced and uncultivated. This also makes us more irritated and resentful. We have continued with our appeals.”

#### **A Case of the Birbirsa Siba Farmers**

The interviewed farmers said, “The district and the Holeta town office called us through the local *Kebele* office and told us our plots are wanted by the government and we will be paid compensation by same. We tried to put up questions. They said they will call us again. In the mean time, they measured our plots and handed them to flower farmers and kept quiet. We set up a committee and the committee put an appeal to the Oromia City Development Council. The Council ordered the district and the Holeta town Council to pay lease money to those who owned farm plots in the area. With out our knowledge, they formed a committee of people who do not represent us and paid lease money to some farmers. Those of us who were not paid formed a committee and went to the Addis Ababa City Council. We were told to file a case at the district first instance court and the case went up to the interim court. The file was then closed. We appealed to the Federal Ministry of Justice and we were told that the case is over due for an appeal and the file was closed again. We struggled against the district from 1991 up to 2000 but could not win the case as we lack



experiences in litigation and the voice of the district is more powerful than that of poor farmers”.

#### **4.2.14: Approval of the land lease arranged between farmers and flower growers**

Table 4.19 indicates that 47(45.63%) respondents believe that land lease made to flower farmers at grass root level is approved by the district investment office. Because, it was the district investment office that from the start dealt with the whole matter and through which farmers were made to sign a group list at the district level. But according to the same data 42 (40.78%) respondents indicated that it is the regional investment office that approves the land lease made to flower farmers. Out of 42 (40.78%) respondents 25 (24.27 %) belong to the Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu locations where there was a big contradiction between the district office and local farmers on land lease issues which was brought to the District First Instance Court and then appeals made to the Regional Supreme Court and the Federal Ministry of Justice. In many instances, when offices at the grass root face strong opposition from the local population, there is a tendency of telling people that they have carried out their responsibilities based on orders from above and attempt to remain clean of the matter not fully understanding the concept and working system of federalism. It appears that farmers from the two locations where contradiction flared up from the beginning took the regional investment office as an approving body. But according to the existing structure if things go in a straight line, there is the Zonal Registration and Documentation Office in between the district investment office and the regional investment office that registers approved agreements dealt with in the district office for purposes of legality. As indicated in Table 4.19, the main issue is that except at one flower farm at the Sadamo location, no

farmer had reached a direct agreement with any flower farmer as attested by farmers, elders and *kebele* officials when interviewed which is also confirmed by data of Table 4.18.

The flower farm at the Sadamo location where flower farmers came into contact with farmers through the district office is an area that was the direct choice of the flower grower. Even this was a nominal case where the land lease price was not greater than that of other locations and those who refused to lease their plots were not spared except that farmers were first agitated by go-betweens and later involved in individual discussions and in the land lease processes and procedures. There are also complaints and cases even from this location that had reached the court from those who refused to lease their plots.

**Table 4.19: Approval of the land lease arranged between farmers and flower growers**

Description	Respondents								
	Menagesha	Sadamo- Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers.	%	
Kebele office.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
District investment office	9	2	6	5	22	1	2	47	45.63%
District land admin. office	2	3	3	2	3	1	-	14	13.59 %
Regional investment office	3	7	12	13	7	-	-	42	40.78%
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103	100%

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.15: Presence of farmers displaced due to flower farms**

Table 4.20, depicts that 75 (72.81 %) respondents indicated that there were farmers who were displaced from their original living quarters due to the establishment of flower farms

which is also confirmed by data of Table 4.21. Cross references of the study and interviews made with farmers, local elders and Kebele officials indicate that there were displacements of farmers from all clusters but the highest displacement occurred in Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu locations. Farmers confirmed that in the Birbirsa Siba case, those farmers who were displaced and did not own other living quarters except their former farm home stead were given 500 sq. meters of town land following the guide that stipulates where large tracts of land owned by people are considered to have been included into part of a city and taken get such a provision. But what local farmers question and wonder about is why they were only informed about the inclusion of their farm areas into the Holeta town after the flower farm business came up, a matter out side of which the holdings of the majority of farmers laid earlier. However, what happened seems to run against the provision of the constitution of PDRE, article 40, No.4, (1995:45-46) that states “*Ethiopian Farmers have the right to get land freely and not to be evicted from their holdings*”. But, local farmers seriously resent and complain why things were kept non transparent and out of the whole scene as if they were not there. A farmer said” They considered as if we were all dead people.” On the other hand, to fulfill the investment guide, if discussion was not permitted due to one reason or another and is considered counter-productive and should be avoided which is still short of democratic ideals, the community should have been briefed by the district office in a cautious manner.

**Table 4.20: Presence of farmers displaced due to flower farms**

Description	Respondents							
	Menagesha	Sadam -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District Investment. officers	%
Yes	10	7	16	13	25	2	2	75(72.81%)
No	3	4	3	6	4	-	-	20 (19. 42%)
I don't know	1	1	2	1	3	-	-	8(7.77 %)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.16: Farmer's land ownership status: How many hectares of land they originally owned and leased to flower farmers**

Table 4.21 indicates that, the highest tract of land owned by the sampled farmers in the area of the study is above 5 hectares in Tullu Harbu and 4 -5 hectare in Menagesha and *Tullun* Harbu before land leasing and the lowest is less than 1 hectare in all the four study areas respectively which indicates that out of the sampled 39 farmers, 11(28.21%) held less than 1 hectare of land. After land leasing; in Menagesha, out of the 7 sampled farmers, 3 have leased all the land they owned and in Sadamo-Geno, out of 5 sampled farmers, 2 farmers have leased the land he/she owned. In Birbirsa Siba , out of 14 sampled farmers, 9 farmers have leased all the land they owned and in Tullu Harbu, out of 13 sampled farmers, 5 farmers have leased all the land they owned. In aggregate, out of the sampled 39 farmers, 19 (48.72%) farmers have leased all land they owned and have remained with nothing. So there is a clear indication that there was a displacement of some farmers from all location which confirm the complaint of some sampled farmers interviewed (Gebre Tasdik and Erko etc).

Degefe (2003: 16-17) based on the 1999/2000 population estimate indicated that... *“44 percent of the population was under the poverty line with a coverage of 45 and 37 percent for rural and urban areas respectively which was planned to be brought down to 27.2 percent in 2010”*. On the land holding issue, the same source (2003:73) confirms that *“Already more than 50 percent of the population is cultivating less than half a hectare.”* With this situation in mind, the issue then is, is it affordable evicting farmers from their holdings unless they are provided with new income sources? Hence, this situation should be carefully considered by development planners and decision makers for future trends since the establishment of the flora industry is increasing in different regions of the country.

**Table 4.21: Farmer’s land ownership status: How many hectares of land they originally owned and leased to flower farmers**

Locations	Original holding per ha.	Leased land per ha.	Current holding per ha.	Frequency	%
Menagesha	Less than 3 ha.	Less than 3 ha.	Nil	3	(42.85%)
	4-5 ha.	2 ha.	2-5 ha.	1	(14.28 %)
	6-9 ha .	6 ha.	3 ha.	3	(42.85 %)
Total				7	100%
Sadamo-Geno	Less than 2 ha.	Less than 2 ha.	Nil	2	(40 %)
	4-6 ha .	4 ha.	2 ha	2	(40 %)
	1 ha.	Less than 1ha.	Less than 1 ha.	1	(20 %)
Total				5	100%
Birbirsiba Siba	Less than 5 ha.	Less than 5 ha.	Nil	5	(35.71 %)
	1 ha.	1ha	Nil	1	( 7.14 % )
	1ha.	Less than 1 ha.	Less than 1 ha.	1	(7.14 %)
	8-12 ha.	8 ha.	4 ha.	4	(28.57 %)
	Above 5 ha.	Over 5 ha.	Nil	3	(21.43 %)
Total				14	100%
Tullu Harbu	1 ha.	Less than 1 ha.	Less than 1 ha.	1	(7.69 %)
	Less than 1 ha	Less than 1 ha	Nil	1	(7.69 % )
	6-9 ha.	6	3 ha	3	(23.07)
	4-5 ha	2 ha.	2-5ha.	1	( 7.69 % )
	4-5	Less than 1 ha.	Less than 3-5 ha.	1	( 7.69 % )
	8- 10 ha.	6- 10 ha.	2 ha.	2	(15.38 %)
	Above 5 ha.	Above 5 ha.	Nil	1	( 7.69 % )
	12- 15 ha.	12-15 ha.	Nil	3	( 23.07 % )
Total				13	100%

Source: Field Data

#### 4.2.17: Farmers resent leasing their land to flower growers

Table 4.22 shows that 84 (81.55%) respondents felt that farmers resented leasing their land to flower farmers. Out of 39 farmers interviewed 26 (66.67 %) farmers complained that they were forced to lease their land, while 8 (7.77%) felt that the payment they received

through the district finance office paid per hectare was very small and was not enough to start something else. 5 (4.85%) farmers strongly complained that they did not get a chance for discussion and their views on the issue was simply undermined by the district office. So the whole business of land leasing did not consider the interests of the majority of local farmers except fulfilling the wish and keen interest of district officials for the better development of the area they are responsible for which could have also looked for some balancing mechanisms without eclipsing both issues.

Farmer's resentment, however, is not only on the issue of forced land lease and displacement. It is also on the issue that the multitude of flower farms except very few so far have not benefited the local community.

Worknieh, a land owner adjacent to the Menagesha flower farm said that, *"The amount of money flower farmers pay for lease does not last long where as my farmland feeds me for the rest of my life. These flower farms benefit us nothing; at least they were expected to provide employment opportunity. Only a few members of our community got employed. As for the rest we do not know where they came from"*.

In this connection, one may raise the case of the Karrayu who live around the Awash River in the Fantalle district in the Oromia Regional State. In a discussion held on Famine and Drought, a speaker from the Karrayu was of the opinion that the Karrayu was displaced from around the Awash River by the Awash National Park and the Methara Sugar Factory. *"They were displaced without compensation from their grazing lands; theirs by right and by necessity have now been sequestered for farming activities"*(*Pastoral Forum, Ethiopia, 2003:62*). He bitterly complained about the Sugar Factory and the National

Park from which the people have so far not benefited. The Karrayu who suffered for over five decades, because of drought, famine and displacement and reduced in number was only planned for recently through sufficient water supply for human and livestock and irrigation for sedentarisation purposes by the Oromia Regional State.

**Table 4.22: Farmers resent leasing their land to flower growers**

Resented	Respondents							
	Menagesha	Sadamo -Gino	Birbirs a Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District. land admin. officers.	District investment officers	%
Yes	14	12	17	19	18	2	2	84(81.55%)
No	-	-	3	1	14	-	-	18(17.48%)
I don't know	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (0.97%)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.18: Farmers given no advice how to use the money they got from land leasing to continue their future livelihood**

Table 4.23 shows that 56 (78.87%) respondents felt that no local government structure or any public organization had advised local farmers how to continue their livelihood with the money they received from land lease. During an interview with farmers, they clearly indicated that however it was small or big they never had had that amount of cash at one moment in their lives. They confirmed that what they owned was in kind in crops and domestic animals and had the experience and knowledge how to handle it but their sudden entry to doing so many things in cash had ruined many homes and commented that they would have been planned for and supported (Heyi, Guta and etc.).



**Table 4.23: Farmers given no advice how to use the money they got from land leasing to continue their future livelihood**

Advice received	Respondents						
	Menagesha	Sadmao -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	District .land .admin. officers	District investment officers.	%
Yes	2	1	3	-	1	1	8(11.27%)
No	11	9	16	18	1	1	56 (78.87%)
I don't know	1	2	2	2	-	-	7 (9.86%)
Total	14	12	21	19	2	2	71 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4. 2.19: Farmer's status of life after land leasing with reasons**

Table 4.24, shows that 8 (7.77%) respondents felt that farmers who made land lease have benefited while 63(61.16%) respondents confirm farmers who were made to lease land to flower farms have not benefited. In the same data, 32(31.10 %) respondents indicate that to the worse some farmers who leased land have turned poorer due to loss of farm plots or also probably because of lack of knowledge and experience how to handle and use ready cash that they have not owned before. It is astonishing that no one bothered to render advice to these farmers how they could continue their future livelihood after sudden loss of their farm plots with out their plan. It can be deuced that rural cash hungry farmers with no prior knowledge and experience in handling ready cash and putting it into some income generating activities could easily be ruined within a short period according to the responses of responding farmers which for sure happened at some locations particularly Birbirsa Siba and Tullu Harbu which already were impoverished areas due to high land fragmentation.

Such happenings are not uncommon in the history of land holding issues and peasants. History confirms that” *Prior to 1974, the Tendaho Cotton Plantation established by Mitchel Cotts, a British Firm and the Wonji Sugar Plantation managed by a Dutch Company with no compensation and provision for the local people through concession occupied large tracts of traditional land of the Afar and the Arsi which significantly affected traditional migration patterns for grazing and water” (Land Reform in Ethiopia, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)*. However, the whole thing is not the issue of giving away peasant land in concession or lease for developmental projects which is useful for the development and growth of a country. But, the issue of concern is what provision is planned for the evicted communities to carry on their already fragile livelihood with out further support who could easily slide into abject poverty, development generating negative impact on those for whom it is planned and executed.

**Table 4. 24: Farmer’s status of life after land leasing with reasons**

Respondents								
Reasons	Menagesha	Sadamo-Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District land admin. officers	District investment officers	%
Benefited	-		1		7	-	-	8 (7.77 %)
Not benefited	11	10	12	11	15	2	2	63 (61.16 %)
Turned poorer	2	3	8	9	10	-	-	32 (31.10 %)
Total	12	13	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100%)

Source: Field Data

#### **4.2.20: Issues on local resources which could generate complaints that can cause disagreement between the local community and flower growers**

Data of Table 4.25 confirm that 70 (67.96%) respondents felt there are some complaints of farmers against flower farmers mainly related to land and water issues in the locality while 33(32.04 %) respondents are of the opinion that there are nothing that could generate complaints leading to disagreements. One major complaint is that flower farmers had conspired with the district office to take farmers' farm plots with cheap lease price without the agreement of local farmers. They have fenced adjacent plots of land not included in the lease agreement in knowledge of some local *Kebele* members and local intermediaries. They have blocked existing foot path and tracks forcing the local people to walk longer around flower farms. They have fenced existing springs and blocked running water there by creating water shortage for the local communities. They have not fulfilled some of the promises told by the district office what flower farmers will carry out related to local development to improve the life of the local population particularly related to water and road except very few (Girma and Tesfaye etc.). So one can infer that the existence of such issues add fuel to the already hoarded resentment of farmers creating more ground for complaints.

Although such complaint are true in the vicinities of Menagesha and Holeta and else where in sharing of scarce local resources, in the area of local development, an asphalt road and high school were built in the town of Holeta by one flower farm investor ( Ethio-Agri-CEFT Plc:2008). In Zeway in Oromia, where there are 8 flower farms with an employee of 8000, a flower farm investor, owner of Sher Ethiopia...,” *has constructed a stadium with half million USD and granted it to the community with 25,000 USD as a donation. In*

addition, he has also built a hospital with a capacity of treating 140 inpatients and a school, which is now teaching 1,700 kids of low income families for free, (AfricaNews:2008).

Although flower farms in their localities are expected to support local development, “Flower companies with silver certification to attain the third and highest category, gold, are required to meet additional requirements’, namely...” contribution towards community development programs and engagement in environmental conservation schemes”(EPA: 2011).

**Table 4.25: Issues on local resources that could generate complaints that can cause disagreement between the local community and flower growers**

Respondents								
Description	Menagesha	Sadamo -Geno	Birbirsa Siba	Tullu Harbu	Flower farmers	District Land Admin. officers	District investment officers	%
Yes	9	9	16	15	17	2	2	70 (67.96%)
No	5	3	5	5	15	-	-	33(32.04 %)
Total	14	12	21	20	32	2	2	103 (100 %)

Source: Field Data

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## **5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.1. Summary:**

The history of the establishment of the flora industry goes back to the late 1800's where flowers were grown on a large scale on the vast estate estates. Like many other industries, it's growth and development is connected with the technological, economic, marketization and socio-cultural advancement of the developed world. Traditional production centers were the developed worlds (Western Europe with Japan and North America) who were both major producers and consumers. In Europe, the Netherlands spearheaded production and flower marketing over many decades which these days concentrate more on the flower market, the flowers being from developing countries like Colombia, Ecuador, Kenya, Ethiopia India, Israel, South Africa, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia ,New Zealand and etc.

Ethiopia's entry of the flora industry is a recent phenomenon of the 1990s which parallel to the positive economic growth of the flora industry was able to attract flower growers into the country through its favorable and attractive trade and investment policies. It seems that it's attractive trade and investment policies; topological suitability and peaceful conditions pulled some flower farmers from neighboring Kenya who were already under pressure due to various factors and many others in the flower trade from else where to the country.

Out of the more than 88 flower farms in the country, more than 21 flower farms are located to the west of Addis Ababa at about 30-40 kilometers in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta close to each other in locations. Most areas occupied by these flower farms that removed some indigenous natural forest cover and exotic tree plantations also cover some local farmer's farm plots. In the study made, the majority of farmers are not happy about



this situation. They strongly resent and complain that they were pressurized to make land lease through the local district office without their wish and will. Findings indicate that processes and procedures used to approach farmers to discuss about the issue and how conditions were handled later was not positive, transparent and inclusive of farmers. Further more, some farmers were displaced against their will and no accommodation was planned at all to prevent them from sliding into poverty which is the intention of overall positive growth and planned development including the establishment of flower farms.

Further more, despite their over all positive economic impacts, flower farms generated new local problems that became source of complaints of local farmers. Data indicates that flower farms have blocked and fenced existing waters sources formerly used by the local community; they have blocked tracks and foot path forcing people to walk longer and some have taken land adjacent to their farms not formally leased to them. At some locations, they have also destroyed sustained natural mixed forest cover and exotic tree plantations in many ways beneficial to the local community.

## **5.2. Conclusion:**

Despite its positive economic impacts, the negative consequences of the flora industry have occurred in many developing countries. Consequences of its effects on the natural environment and the eco-system, existence of hazardous conditions for worker's health due to the use of pesticides and others chemicals used in the green house and legalized land grabbing in the context of some developing countries on the pretext for development are not uncommon. Ethiopia exhibits similar traits and do not stand alone from other developing countries when it comes to the lucrative business of the flora industry. All

countries where there are extensive flower farms have their own requirements and regulations but display weaknesses in their implementations.

In the whole scenario, the majority of farmers in the study area are aware of their problems why they do not want to part with their farm plots. From life experiences, they know what they are able to do and what not. Their experience and knowledge is geared to the farming occupation. Outside what they have not done, they have no confidence on occupations they have not tried. Over the money from the land lease, they have no confidence how to handle and put it into some income generating activities. Physically, mentally and psychologically, they do not view it as the plot of land they owned for years through out their lives which they know does not disappear over night. So whether one believes or not, there is a strong physical, psychological, mental attachment and economic tie with their farm plots.

In the current situation, all the concerned farmers are helpless. The majority were not part of the decision made by the district concerned which farmers strongly resent and feel that they were forced to lease their plots and some of their members displaced without their will. Furthermore, no agency took the pain to make proper provisions and plan for all affected- how they can put the money from the land lease into some income generating activities so that they do not quickly slide into poverty which is the intention of overall positive growth and planned development.

### **5.3 Recommendations:**

Based on the conditions occurred in the vicinity of Menagesha and Holeta, concerning the establishment of flower farms, this study does not attempt to indicate only the black side of

the whole scenario and denounce the positive growth of the flora industry of the study area. But it is an indicative of existence of problems to be handled to minimize troubles and hardships faced by local farmers in the name of development as establishment of flower farms or any other development projects will continue in adjacent locations or else where within the country. So, development because of its objectives has to be fair to people through thoroughly planned means and people should support and stand for development for mutual benefits. But this can only happen in a positive way if there is a balanced and fair deal with the whole scenario on the side of those who work with local communities in related areas. In respect of this, the following recommendation is made.

5.3.1 Revise existing investment guide based on practical field experiences supported by evaluation studies and deploy knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated human resource for clean implementation.

5.3.2. Carefully study the details of the area that is presumed to be leased from existing authentic government documents. Make repeated field visits and clear if there are doubts of ownerships and boundaries to be fair and legal. Make also a study if there are better alternatives in the locality that does not displace many farmers, affect local shared resources like running water, springs, and cause large damage to the ecosystems forming parts of peoples life support system.

5.3.3 Plan suitable processes and procedures supported by legal guides how to implement

- development projects that affect peoples' resource ownership and holding.
- 5.3.4 Plan correct and suitable processes and procedures how to approach, handle and how to deal with the local community and farmers who are going to be affected.
- 5.3.5 Approach the community through their own leaders whom the community has a respect for because of one or another reason to be fair to the whole scenario.
- 5.3.6 In approaching the local population, express message in a clear and transparent manner and avoid commanding attitude that indicates enforcement and tend to create hatred and resentment in people.
- 5.3.7 Allow all those concerned to have a say. Never antagonize. Ask for suggestions that appeals to every body's conscience.
- 5.3.8. Explain processes and procedures in a transparent way how things are done after a decision reached.
- 5.3.9 Ask the community to set up a committee to follow up implementation on decision reached on behave of the community to create confidence and minimize mistrust.
- 5.3.10 Never promise what one cannot do later for the sake of obtaining positive say from the community.

5.3.11 Make a good practical provision and plan for members of the community/farmers

who are to be displaced/ affected and explain same in details and never fail to implement.

5.3.12 As development is for people's over all socio-economic growth and development and fair democratic governance, attend to the dissatisfaction, complaints and appeals of those alleged hurt in the process.

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