

Indira Gandhi National Open University

School of Social Sciences

**The Impact of Gender Relations on Rural Livelihoods: The
Case of Two Communities, East Shoa Zone Oromia
Regional State**

**A Thesis submitted to Indira Gandhi National Open University
(IGNOU) in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Rural Development (MARD)**

By: Nemo Husen

Advisor: Mengistu Hulluka (PHD)

April, 2012

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Dissertation entitled “The Impact of Gender Relations on Rural Livelihoods: The Case of Two Communities, East Shoa Zone Oromia Regional State ”submitted by me for the partial fulfillment of the MA in Rural Development to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) New Delhi is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier either 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 part is lifted and incorporated in this report from any earlier work done by me or others.

Place: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Date: 06/04/2012

Signature_____

Enrollment No. 089132631

Name: Nemo Husen

Address: Adama, Oromia Regional State

P.O.B 2178

Tell: + 251 911 70 40 08

Email: nemo_husen06@yahoo.com

CERTIFICATE

This to certify that Mr. Nemo Husen Tuke student of M.A (RD) from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi was working under my supervision and guidance for his Project Work for the Course MRDP-001. His Project Work Entitled “The Impact of Gender Relations on Rural Livelihoods: The Case of Two Communities, East Shoa Zone Oromia Regional State ” which he is submitting as his genuine and original work.

Place: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Signature_____

Date: 06/04/2012

Name: Dr. Mengitu Hulluka

Address of Supervisor: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like thank, ‘Almighty Allah’ who made it possible, to begin and finish this task successfully.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to my advisor Dr. Mengitu Hulluka, without whose support, the works of this study would not be come true. His benevolent guide, advice and relentless work helped me to complete the task under busy schedule. Once again, I am really thankful for his all rounded assistance.

I do not have adequate words to express my heartfelt gratitude to my wife Adde Nujuma Yusuf Chalo for her unreserved contributions during my post graduate study and research work through data coding and entry other than the moral and psychological support she gave me. Her support was indeed instrumental for my success. The encouragement of my sons, Nimona and Obsinaan, is also unforgettable.

The other persons whom I am very much indebted to is my Mum Zanizama and Grand Mum W/ro Leyla, who has been cause for me to be at this stage. There advice is always with me giving strength and inspiration. Next, my brother Redwan and sister Asia, deserves special thanks, because they have been my source of courage and passion.

I also appreciate the support and tolerance rendered to me from Oromia Development Association (ODA), my employer, to smoothly collect the data and complete the whole research task.

I am grateful to my friends Ibrahim Kasso, Seble Shimalis, Getachew Taferi , Jamal Umar and Abas Kadir who assisted me technically, morally and above all encouraged to undertake this research and complete it in time.

I am also thankful to Asia Kedir and Buzuwork Shumi for their support in formatting this research report.

My profound appreciation also go to Workina Jidha, Abdulmalik Mohammed, Kedir Abda , Muhamedaman Tuke, Anawer Kelil , Harun Adam, Yusuf Chalo, and other colleagues who supported me a lot in the data collection process from the field.

Last, but not least, I also thank all those whose name is not mentioned here for their support!

Nemo Husen

Table of content	Page
DECLARATION.....	I
CERTIFICATE	II
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	III
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	V
LIST OF TABLES.....	VIII
LIST OF MAP.....	XI
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	XII
ABSTRACT	XIII
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM.....	1
1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	4
1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	8
1.3.1. <i>General Objective</i>	8
1.3.2. <i>Specific objectives:</i>	8
1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	9
1.6. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY	10
1.7. SCOPE OF THE STUDY	10
1.8. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS	11
1.9. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS	11
1.10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	12
CHAPTER TWO.....	15
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	15
2.1. GENDER RELATIONS	15
2.2. LIVELIHOOD CONTEXTS	19
2.3. LIVELIHOOD ASSETS	19
2.3.1. <i>Human Capital</i>	20
2.3.2. <i>Social Capital</i>	21

2.3.3.	<i>Natural Capital</i>	22
2.3.4.	<i>Financial Capital</i>	23
2.3.5.	<i>Physical Capital</i>	23
2.4.	MEDIATING FACTORS: INSTITUTION AND ORGANIZATIONS	24
2.5.	LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES	25
2.6.	LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES	27
2.7.	GENDER RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF RURAL LIVELIHOODS.....	28
CHAPTER THREE		32
3.	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	32
3.1.	BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA	32
3.1.1.	<i>Location and Administrative Division</i>	32
3.1.2.	<i>Physical Condition</i>	35
3.1.3.	<i>Livelihood Means of the population</i>	36
3.1.4.	<i>Population and Basic Social Service</i>	37
3.1.5.	<i>Rural Community Organizations</i>	39
3.2.	<i>Data Sources</i>	39
3.3.	<i>Sampling Technique</i>	40
3.4.	<i>Instruments of Data Collection</i>	40
3.5.	<i>Methods of Data Analysis</i>	42
CHAPTER FOUR		43
4.	RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	43
4.1.	SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SAMPLE AREA	43
4.1.1.	<i>Demographic profile</i>	43
4.1.2.	<i>Religious Affiliation</i>	45
4.1.3.	<i>Education Level of Respondents</i>	46
4.1.4.	<i>Main occupation of Household Heads</i>	47
4.2.	RURAL LIVELIHOODS.....	48
4.2.1.	<i>Livelihood contexts</i>	48
4.2.2.	<i>Access to Livelihood Assets</i>	52
4.2.3.	<i>Mediating Factors</i>	60

4.2.4. *Livelihood Activities and Strategies*67

4.2.5. *Livelihood Outcomes*71

4.3. GENDER RELATIONS77

CHAPTER FIVE88

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS88

5.1. CONCLUSION88

5.2. RECOMMENDATION92

REFERENCES.....94

ANNEX 197

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOUSEHOLD SURVEY.....97

ANNEX 2 CHECKLISTS FOR FGD, KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION.....107

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF M.A. (RD) PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL.....110

List of Tables

Table 1: Name of Community by religious background.....	43
Table 2: Sex of Respondents by Marital status	44
Table 3: Family size in a household	45
Table 4: Religious affiliation of respondents by sex	46
Table 5: Level of Education for the head of Households.....	46
Table 6: Main Occupation of Households	47
Table 7: Location of Farm land by community.....	49
Table 8: Main factors affecting livelihoods of households	50
Table 9: Livelihood assets considered as important for respondents	53
Table 10: T-test for differences in land holdings between MHHs and FHHs.....	54
Table 11: Approaches to acquiring land by MHHs and FHHs	54
Table 12: Presence of Problems related to land distribution.....	55
Table 13: Reasons for the problem of accessing a plot of land.....	55
Table 14: Pattern of land holdings during the past five year	56
Table 15: Reasons given by respondents for land holding increase	57
Table 16: Reasons given by respondents for the decreased land holdings	58
Table 17: Number of oxen owned by households	58
Table 18: Average ownership of oxen of MHHs and FHHs and t-test analysis for significance of differences	59
Table 19: Access of respondents to agricultural extension services.....	60
Table 20: Reason for not having access to extension services.....	61

Table 21: Membership of respondents in traditional institutions	63
Table 22: Area of support the local institutions provide.....	63
Table 23: Criteria used to be member of the traditional institutions	64
Table 24: Reason for not belonging to any local institutions.....	65
Table 25: Loan recipients among respondents	65
Table 26: Sources of loan for respondents	66
Table 27: Purpose of loan taken by household heads.....	67
Table 28: Reasons for not taking loan	67
Table 29: The opportunity for households to engage in non-farm activities	69
Table 30: Major non-farm activities households were engaged.....	70
Table 31: Major constraints for households not to engaged in non-farm activities	71
Table 32: Pattern of income status during the past five years.....	71
Table 33: Reason for increased income level in the past five years	72
Table 34: Reasons for decreased income level in the past five years.....	73
Table 35: Sustainability of households' year round income	74
Table 36: Ways of supplementing households' income to sustain the family	74
Table 37: Causes of vulnerability for households	75
Table 38: Households' coping mechanisms of their vulnerability	76
Table 39: Respondents' perception about status of women in the community.....	77
Table 40: children's attendance of school.....	82
Table 41: Reasons for respondents whose children do not attend school.....	83
Table 42: Priorities governing decision of household heads to engage in some specific activities	84

Table 43: The occurrence of harmful traditional practices in the community under study ..	85
Table 44: HTPs exercises in the communities	85
Table 45: Impacts of HTPs on women	87

List of Map

Map.1. Location of the study area (district).....34

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CIDA: Canadian International Development Agency

CSA: Central Statistical Agency

DA: Development Agency

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

FHHs: Female Headed Households

HTPs: Harmful Traditional Practices

MHHs: Male Headed Households

SLF: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UN-ECA: United Nation-Economic Commission for Africa

UNDP: United Nation Development Programme

WARDO: World Agriculture and Rule Development Office

Abstract

Many literatures indicate that, women in general and rural women in particular, are at a disadvantaged position due to a multitude of problems working against them. Furthermore their case is not made explicit with the age-old assumption that they could benefit through their male counterparts. However, the reality shows something contrary to the assumption held by many people. Cognizant of this fact, this particular study has attempted to unravel the situation of rural women, with special emphasis to the female headed household by examining how their gender relation is operating in making a living. Pursuit of a livelihood is dependent on so many factors among which livelihood contexts (trends and shocks), access to and control over resources, and mediating factors of which gender relations is the chief concern are some of them. Hence, this study is typically concerned with exploring the effects of gender relations on making a living in the rural contexts.

In realizing this study both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were employed, and the Sustainable Livelihood Framework is used as a model. A sample size of **116** heads of households (both female and male) were selected and interviewed from two communities through systematic sampling technique. Besides, to complement and triangulate the survey results, other research instruments like focus group discussions, key informant interviews and personal observations were undertaken.

Hence, results from the study showed that there is still unbalanced power relation between the two sexes that can be manifested in so many ways, and implying that livelihoods' of rural women in general is highly constrained. For instance, in the study it is found that among the total FHHs interviewed **51.4%** of them are illiterate, where as it only **18.5%** of the MHHs

that were placed in this category, and additionally, the percentages of FHHs who attained higher levels of education dropped significantly. It is also obtained that, among one of the crucial assets in pursuit of livelihoods, average land holding for FHHs is **1.17** hectare and that of MHHs was **1.19** hectare. At-test of independent samples on land holding has shown that there is a significant difference of land holding between the two sexes. Similarly in terms of oxen ownership the study result depicted that, the mean ownership of oxen is **1.74** for the FHHs and **2.54** for the MHHs, which shows a significant difference of ownership with a t-test. When the mediating factors comprising institutional arrangements were observed, here too, the FHHs comprise only **9.3 %** where as the MHHs account for **90.7 %**. The main reason for this small number of FHHs benefiting from agricultural Extension services is attributed to the failure of the concerned bodies to prioritize the FHHs.

In the study it is also drewed that, about **58.6 %** of the total respondents have either experienced or witnessed the exercise of harmful traditional practices (HTPs). Similarly, it is reported by the respondents that these HTPs exercised in their localities have health risk (**43.8%**), demoralizing effect and reduce women to dependence status (**30.2%**), and constraining them not to have ownership and inheritance rights (**26%**). Therefore, it can be concluded that, FHHs were still at a disadvantage position and hence some practical solutions which focus mainly on their empowerment need to be implemented.

Key words: Gender relations, rural livelihoods, and households

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Problem

In our world women have been experiencing various difficulties in their pursuit of a living. In this regard the Beijing Conference (UN, 1996:38-39) had tried to list areas of problems that are faced by women and problematized the issue of gender inequality prevailing in the world. According to the document of the Beijing Conference, the number of women living in poverty has increased disproportionately due to rigidity of socially ascribed gender roles and women's limited access to power, education, training and productive resources and other emerging factors that may lead to insecurity for families. Adding on this fact, Mosse stated that, It has become clear that, even within the disadvantaged groups of a community, women are often hidden from view and forgotten. Consequently, women often suffer harsher extremes of poverty than the low-income men of their communities, especially those women who head their own households. Though poor male farmers, male tenants, and landless men are often geographically, socially and culturally isolated from development efforts, women of the same socio-economic groups tend to be still worse off, and isolated from the chances of improving the bases of their livelihood. They lack access to resources for development for example, to credit or to the attention of extension workers; gender inequalities produce barriers to their equal social participation, and the lack of viable organization to represent their interests prevents them from either developing a voice or having it heard (1994:22).

When describing the overall situation of women in our continent, UN-ECA (1995) reported that, women in Africa constitute 52 percent of the total population; contribute 75 percent of the agricultural work and produce and market 60 to 80 per cent of food. According to the United Nations Development Programmed (UNDP) Human Development Report, the female labour force in sub-Sahara Africa in 1993 was about 73 million, representing 34 per cent of those employed in the formal sector, earning only 10 per cent of the income while owning 1 per cent of the assets. According to the report these figures clearly indicate the need for increasing women's access to both formal and informal resources.

Women in our country and the world over are deprived of many things, such as education, property rights and even human rights. When arguing about access to property Mosse described that, "not surprisingly, the world over, women do not have the same access to land as do men, and very few women have full control over their land by acquiring it in their own right.

At the same time, there is a huge diversity of inheritance patterns practiced dictated by local tribal, religious, customary and statutory law (1994:56)". In the case of sub- Saharan Africa, it was also noted that, "Customary laws discriminate against women ,land rights often devolve to men on the assumption that there is a male head of household ,even though this may mean that women members of the family may lose their status as independent farmers (Ibid:67)".

The same line of argument holds true for the Ethiopian context. Data obtained from the Central Statistical Agency revealed that among the total owners of crop, livestock and the two together (livestock and crop) the major means of livelihood in rural areas , men constitute about 80 percent of the total owners while women constitute only 20 percent of the owners (CSA,2008:106). This figure has important implications for livelihood analysis in that, access to livelihood resources is more tilted towards men.

Hence, in order to have a good insight about the livelihood of households it will be good to get the view of both sexes. In conformity with this idea, it is argued that "...Despite differences among researchers, early feminist anthropologists did agree on one thing: that it is essential to take gender into account when attempting to understand how a society operates or how an individual's identity and life experiences are shaped (Mascia –Lees and Black, 2000:10)".

Consideration of the gender perspective is not only important to have a good insight about the situation of both sexes, but also will give the chance to have recognition for the contributions of women in pursuit of household livelihood. In this line, Mosse has stated that, "substantial gains will only be achieved with the contribution of both sexes, for women play a vital role in contributing to the development of their countries. If women do not share fully in the development process, the broad objectives of development will not be achieved (OECD, 1983, as cited in Mosse, 1994:254)". Besides, Young (1993:147) added that,"involving women at all levels of development thinking, planning and implementation will make a world of difference not merely to women but to the capacity of society to envisage and carryout planned social change which will permit humankind to live in harmony with nature and itself.

To bring women into center stage, however, will require profound changes in the way that societies conceive of relations b/n the genders and the dismantling of centuries old structures of thought and practice. Such changes will take a long time to bring about but as has become increasingly clear over the past decades, women are a tremendous social resource which no society can afford any longer to undervalue or under-use".

When we look at the case of Ethiopia, Zewde Abegaz (2002), cited in Genet, has explained how culture has played a role in discriminating the two sexes. She stated that, culture demonstrates the hierarchical status of the sexes from the very day of a birth of a child. To this end, she

referred about the difference in celebration of the birth of a male and a female child. She explained that in most cases the birth of a boy child is celebrated while that of a girl child perceived as mere acceptance of the 'gift' of nature (Genet, 2007:14). Genet has also added that, social institution such as family, school, religion, together with the law and the media have played important roles in creating, teaching and reinforcing these differences of roles and status between the sexes.

Therefore, the analysis of gender relations prevailing in the study areas in relation to rural livelihoods will enable to better understand the realities and actual practices of livelihood strategies among rural women and men. Accordingly, this study will try to identify the role gender relations play in determining the livelihood pursued by households in the rural context. To this end, the study will focus mainly on the analysis of access and control over livelihood resources, the role played by mediating factors like the role of local institutions and culture (expressed in the construction of gender identities and inequalities) and also the strategies adopted by rural households in view of gender relations.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

Women in our country and the world over have faced a multi-faceted which deserved a considerable attention at least to minimize the existing gender gap. When discussing the extent to which women are confronted with different problems, by quoting the United Nations population Fund (2000), Sernua statistically described that one in three women will experience violence during her time, most often at the hands of someone she knows; two million girl under age fifteen are forced into the sex trade each year; complications from pregnancy and child birth kill 500,000 women each year; one third of pregnancies each year (80 million) are unattended

or unwanted (Sernau, S.2006:84). The same material added that, once women are married they are expected to be devoted wives and mothers who give their effort to the home, even after a full day work. This according to Sernua, is pretty clear story of continuing male privilege.

According to data obtained from the CSA, Demographic and Health Survey of 2005, only three out of ten women in Ethiopia are literate and that literacy status varies greatly by place of residence. The survey result also indicated that, it is only fifth of the rural women that are literate (CSA, 2006:35). In terms of employment and income earned, the same source disclosed that among those women who are engaged in agricultural work 81.1 percent of them are not paid and those that are engaged in the non-agricultural work but not paid account about 20.6 percent in the rural areas (Ibid:44)

Among the barriers that inhibit women from the full enjoyment of development initiatives one is operation of the existing patriarchal system in our society. Accordingly, Alem Habtu (2003:103-104) has described that in Ethiopia, patriarchal ideology and cultural /social practices serve as obstacles to women. Ethiopia has followers of Orthodox Christian (about 50%) and Islam (about 33%). There are also other religions in Ethiopia such as Catholic, Protestant and followers of indigenous religions. All these religions, according to her study, especially Orthodox Christian and Islam, Propagate and sustain patriarchal ideology. As far as these religions are concerned, women could not be trusted with knowledge, responsibility or power. Male dominance and female submission were considered sacred. Patriarchal ideology was invested with “sacred legitimacy”. According to Helen Pankhrust (1992), as cited in Alem, women were stereotyped as dangerous, seductive, subversive, unclean, contaminating, deceptive and manipulative. She added that all traditional religious rites and ceremonies

reinforce the primacy of privileged male status and all traditional religious teachings and practices represent women as inferior and subservient to men.

Besides the discriminations of religious against women, the other area in which women are represented disproportionately is their poverty situation. The Beijing Declaration and the platform for Action has identified that while poverty affects households as a whole, because of the gender division of labour and responsibility for household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity. Poverty is particularly acute for women living in rural areas (UN: 38). The same material has revealed that, women's poverty could be attributed to absence of economic opportunity and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources, including credit, land ownership and inheritance, lack of access to education and support services and their minimal participation in the decision-making process.

The other area of problem in which women have faced is the neglect of their contribution to their household economy. In support of this argument Young, (quoting INSTRAW, 1984), stated that "women who comprise half of the population can and do make enormous contributions to development in all nations. Without adequate statistical description, their current contributions remain invisible and the barriers to promoting their future contributions to development process remain hidden (Young: 108). Then, she concluded that, due to lack of gender analysis, if women's contribution to the household economy continues to go unrecognized because their work is easily counted within the conventional structures, economic policies can result in women's perspectives and being left out of strategies for development.

There is also another problem area in which women are put into disadvantage, i.e., the negative effects of some local institution and cultures on them. As far as these effects are concerned, Young argued that, "more critically, women in many cultures are socialized in such a way as to

lack any sense of having rights or needs except in relations to others; women typically want things for others-their children, their family. Powerlessness not only impedes the powerless from getting their demands placed on the agenda, it often makes articulating such demands unimaginable (Ibid: 148)”. To complement this argument if we look at the Ethiopian case, a study commissioned by the Federal Minister of women Affairs and the World Bank has revealed that, the gender-based division of labor makes women incapable of accessing social benefits such as education and eventually lack the necessary knowledge, skill and know-how that would otherwise would have enabled them to qualify for the paid labor force (Genet, 2007: 20).

Therefore, the discriminator functioning of the existing patriarchal system in our society, the disproportional high number of women in poverty situation, the neglect of their contribution to the household economy, and the negative effects of some local institutions and cultures are the reasons (problem areas) that triggered this search work. In the researcher’s assumption all these problem could arise from the unbalanced gender relations existing in the rural areas and need to be curtailed at some point. Hence, this particular study is intended to fill this important gap (i.e., lack of focus on the gender relations and insufficient attention give to female headed households) by focusing on two rural communities and comparing Livelihood strategies adopted by female headed and male headed households. By so doing, an attempt was made to assess the role of gender relation in determining rural livelihoods of households by taking the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach as a conceptual framework.

1.3.Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The main objective of this study is to assess the effects gender relations have on rural livelihoods by way of comparing the livelihood of female and male headed households. In order to realize this general objective the following specific objectives need to be fulfilled.

1.3.2. Specific objectives:

- To examine the basis (the determinants) of having access to and control over livelihood resources;
- To assess how the mediating factors are operating across gender;
- To compare Livelihood strategies being adopted by female and male headed households;
- To assess the implication of the different livelihood strategies adopted by the different households ;
- To assess the fact that how organization and institutions incorporate rural female-headed households ideas and priorities into development initiatives.

1.4.Research Questions

In order to achieve the above objectives the following research questions need to be addressed in the course of undertaking this study. They include:

- How are rural female headed the households making a living (activities they undertake and strategies adopted)?

- Do female headed households have equal access to all the livelihood resources?
- What are the factors affecting access to and control over the livelihood resources?
- How do local institutions and cultures affect the pursuit of rural livelihood for rural Female-headed households?
- Is it possible to combine various livelihood resources to make a living?
- How do relevant organizations and institutions operate across gender in order to help households secure sustainable livelihood?
- What are the impacts of gender relation in shaping rural households livelihood?

1.5. Significance of the study

At the end of the research work this study is believed to have the following outcome:

- It will help to identify how gender relation in the rural setting is constraining FHHs' livelihood;
- It will bring into light the issue of rural women with special focus on factors affecting their livelihood;
- Will help to ensure recognition of rural women's capabilities in societies in handling situations by themselves;
- It will inform development practitioners on the difference on livelihood strategies adopted so that they could adjust their orientation accordingly;
- It is hoped to challenge the age-old assumption that women could benefit through the household structure in which the husband is the prime focus of every aspect of life and ;
- Finally, it will help other researchers to articulate similar research problems in the rural setting with a focus on gender issues.

1.6.Limitation of the study

The first limitation of the study arose from the sampling technique that was employed in order to get the necessary data. The study areas, i.e. the woreda, the two kebeles, and the specific communities were selected by using purposive sampling. Besides, the household heads that were involved in the survey were selected by using systematic sampling techniques in which these all did not involve randomness. Hence, it will be difficult to generalize the findings obtained since all members of the population were not given equal chance of being selected. The second limitation arises due to shortage of both time and budget. This has limited the study not to have a wider area and sample size converge. Thirdly, many respondents (especially the MHHs) were found at tempting to hide their belongings due to fear of taxation or not to be excluded at times of official assistance (aid). Nevertheless, to offset the mentioned limitations, the researcher has tried to devote his time and energy to the best possible level so as to get the reality in the study areas.

1.7.Scope of the Study

This study was conducted using 116 household heads as sample interviewees who were residing in two agro-ecologically different communities in the woreda. As is known the Sustainable Livelihood Framework has five major components (namely: contexts, livelihood assets, mediating factors, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes). In this particular study an attempt was made to look into the interplay between these components and gender relations. However, due to broadness of the framework each and every component could not be dealt with greater detail, given the limited time and budget at the research's disposal. Despite this, the role gender relations could play in relation to each of the SLF components is treated using some

major indicators of each component. Finally, a comparison was made on each component between the two sexes in order to have understanding on the effects of the prevailing gender relation.

1.8.Operational Definition of Terms

Some of the terms that are given operational definitions include:

Assets/ Resources: these are the basic building blocks upon which households are able to undertake production, engage in labor markets, and participate in reciprocal exchanges with other households. They are the stocks of capital that can be utilized directly, or indirectly, to generate the means of survival of the household or to sustain its material well-being at differing levels of above survival (Ellis, 2000: 31).

Gender: refers to the rules, norms, customs and practices by which biological differences between males and females are translated into socially constructed differences between men and women and boys and girls. This results in the two genders being valued differently, and in their having unequal opportunities and life chances. (N.kabeer, 2003).

Livelihood: it comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the together determine the living gained by the individual or household (Ellis, 2000:10).

1.9.Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized in such a way as to have five main chapters. Chapter one tries to give background information on the research topic by mentioning some international, regional and local evidences. Chapter two reviews related literatures so as to have understanding on areas

previously dealt with by other researchers and to identify unresolved problems that demand future research. Here, key concepts and ideas related to the research topic are examined in detail. It is in chapter three that the methodological part is dealt with. All techniques employed and a procedure followed for data collection and analysis are discussed in this chapter and also presents summaries of the background information of the study areas. Chapter four, the other hand, summarises the background information of the study areas and also presents their demographic profiles. Next, the major part is chapter four which deals with a broader presentation of the findings of this study. This is the chapter where findings are discussed and implications of the findings interpreted. Finally, based on the findings discussed, chapter five will provide some concluding remarks and practical suggestions on areas that require strengthening and/or correction.

1.10. Conceptual Framework

This study has used the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach as a conceptual and analytical framework. The framework will show, according to Scoones (1998: 1), how, in different contexts, sustainable livelihoods are achieved through access to a range of livelihood resources (natural, economic/financial, human, physical and social capitals) which are combined in the pursuit of different livelihood strategies (agricultural intensification or intensification, livelihood diversification and migration). Central to the framework is the analysis of the range of formal and organizational and institutional factor that influence sustainable livelihood outcomes. However, Ellis (2000: 29) has commented that this framework is simply to organize ideas into manageable categories, identify entry points and critical processes. Otherwise, he

claimed that, it is difficult in such a diagram to capture the dynamics of livelihood system that in practice involve innumerable feedbacks and complex interactions between components.

Hence, using this framework this study has identified and analyzed, what are the livelihood resources that the households could command on or claim, the mediating factors and livelihood strategies which are important in enabling or constraining the achievement of sustainable livelihoods for female and male headed households in the study area. In addition, the contexts in which households are making a living and the outcomes of the strategies adopted activities performed are treated in the course of the study.

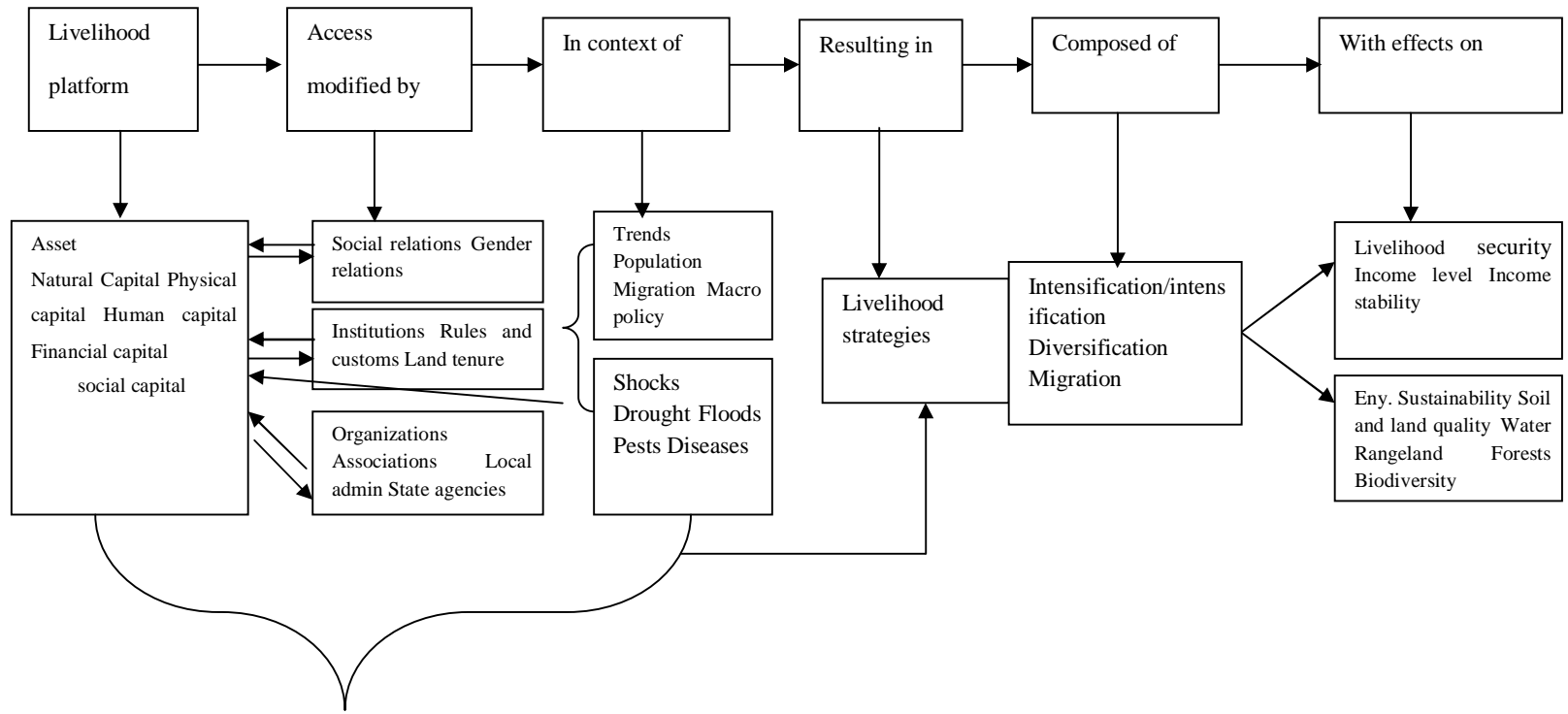


Figure 1.1 a framework for analysis of gender relations and rural livelihood
 Source: adapted from Ellis (2000:30) and Scoones (1998: 4)

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Gender Relations

Gender relation, as defined by Ellis (2000:138), is the social construction of roles and relationships between women and men, these socially constructed roles are usually unequal in terms of power, decision-making, control over events, freedom of action, ownership of resources, and so on. For this reason, he confirmed that, gender is fundamentally about power, subordination and inequality, and it is therefore also about ways of changing these to secure greater equality in all its social manifestations for women.

In order to understand about the prevailing gender relation in our society, first it will be better to know about patriarchy, means “the rule of the fathers”. According to Ruth, patriarchy to a society is in which people ruled by a certain kinds of men wielding a certain kinds of power-a society reflecting the values underlying the traditional male ideal (Ruth, S.1995: 53). To complement the above statement Ruth states that the place of women under patriarchy is precarious. Women are considered as objects of love and hate, fascination and horror hence, women may be desired and tolerated by men but only so long as ‘they’ serve and are controlled, like feelings within. She added in her argument that, more than a convenience, the subordination of women is a necessity in patriarchy. Furthermore, Ruth (ibid: 385-393) has described in detail how the patriarchal system has persisted to operate since time immemorial. One of the best mechanisms as to her is through the use of mind control as an instrument. This mind control works in such a way that by distorting knowledge and understanding. The

means that are used for this purpose include education/ curriculum (by teaching patriarchal consciousness), the environment (arrangement of women and men in most institutions—male doctor to female assistances; male manager to clerks or secretaries, etc), the media (by framing attitudes and forming opinions), and religion (by reflecting culture's ideals and attitudes).

In a society which has been governed by the patriarchal system there is an obvious sex preference due to many reasons. In line with this statement, Mascia- Lees and J. Black described that, “While no one denies that men and women differ biologically, there is great variation in the importance placed on these differences by research interested in understanding gender roles and the existence of sexual stratification (2000:20)”

In order to know the status and situation of both sexes, there is a need to analyse the gender relations prevailing in our society. An analysis of gender relations will have some important features to tell us. According to CIDA (2008), it will enable us to know who has access to resources, who has control, who is likely to benefit from an initiative, and who is likely to lose. The material added that, gender analysis asks questions that can lead us in a search for information to understand why a situation has developed the way it has. It can also lead us to explore assumptions about issues such as the distribution of resources and the impact of culture and traditions. It can provide information on the potential direct or indirect benefit of a development initiative on women and men, on some appropriate entry points for measures that promote equality within a particular context, and on how a particular development initiative may challenge or maintain the existing gender division of labour. With this information measures of equality can be created to address the disparities and promote equality.

When discussing on gender relations and what it entails, Mascia-Lees and J. Black (2000: 11) revealed that,

“in many societies, significant discrepancies exist between men’s and women’s access to opportunities and in the quality of their lives. In the United States, for example, women and children continue to comprise the majority of people living below the poverty level; women’s wage continue to lag behind men’s for comparable work; women’s continue to hit a “glass ceiling” that constrains their opportunities for advancement in their career: women are more likely than men to experience the double burden of working outside the home while simultaneously having responsibility for work in the home; and women continue to be physically battered by boyfriends and husbands at an alarming rate. Such patterns are typical of the disparities between men and women in many contemporary societies”.

One can safely draw some conclusion from the above example that, if women’s situation is such bad in the developed countries ours could be more than worse.

Another line of argument made by Chris Hunter (2006: 62) indicated that, violence against women is a means of social control through which men, individually and collectively, uphold their dominant position in the family and the community. This will result in fear of violence and the necessity of taking precaution which exert a controlling influence on most aspects of women’s lives. With regards to the way this unbalanced power relations operated, the same source showed that “the family plays a critical role in perpetuating the social order through socialization. Through socialization, people internalize societal norms, develop the self-discipline to avoid behavior that they understand as anti-social, and acquire an understanding of appropriate gender roles, Snider (1998) as quoted by Chris Hunter (Ibid: 63)”. Hunter added that, the family was not only a mechanism for socialization that perpetuated

patriarchal values, but also the foundation for a new social order that dismissed women's issues as subordinate to pressing political issues (Ibid: 64). To supplement the above argument in relations to the Ethiopian context, Hana argued that, as far as the institutions mediating livelihoods in are concerned one of them is family. Family as an institution affects women's livelihood in a way that, she described, "it is a major training and employment institution for women. It is within this framework that girl is prepared for their future, and women find their vocation as housewives and mothers. Girls marry at a younger age than boys, limiting their opportunities for education or gainful employment outside the household. Traditionally, non-marital alternatives have had adverse social consequences for women (Hana: 59)".

According to Hunter, there is also another mechanism that is used by men and the community as a whole in order to maintain male supremacy over women. She argued that "tradition as a 'reconstruction of the past that is unchallengeable' was used to support the system of male dominance. Thus, government policies created the conditions in which men exercised control over their wives (and other dependent women), justified in part by women's reactions and supported by 'tradition' and community structures (Hunter: 64)".

Regarding the unbalanced gender relations Young has also demonstrated that, in most countries women from the poorer strata have difficulties in getting effective access to credit, suitable and safe facilities for saving and investment, accessible information about services, raw materials and markets, adequate and equitable access to training and skills acquisition. She added that, they rarely get protection, recognition, or support from official bodies. Inadequate institutional provision for women derives from the ideology of the non-working

wife and mother. But, Young contended that, women of the poorer strata can rarely afford not to contribute to household finances (Young: 101).

All the arguments discussed above show that, in terms of gender relations women are in a disadvantaged position. These unbalance gender relations are promoted and reinforced through the use of different mechanisms. Therefore, this section could indicate how important will be to take the issue of gender into consideration in analyzing rural livelihoods just not to over generalize taking only the case of one sex.

2.2.Livelihood Contexts

The livelihood contexts are the conditions through which households are making a living and are mainly exogenous to them. According to Ellis (2000), livelihood contexts comprises of trends (population, migration, technological change, relative prices, etc.), and shocks, (drought, floods pest, diseases and civil war).

M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 5), on the other hand, described the trends as constituting demographic trends, resource trends and trends in governance. With regards to the stocks they stated it as comprising human, livestock or crop health shocks; natural hazards; economic shocks and in the form of national or international wars. While explaining about trends, the authors and have stressed the need not to consider all the trends as negative.

2.3.Livelihood Assets

In analyzing livelihoods different authors have been using the terms either ‘assets’, ‘capital’ or ‘resources’ almost to mean the same thing. Hence, in this particular study these three terms are used interchangeably as deemed necessary.

To being the analysis of rural livelihood, any one first needs to identify the available assets at the people's disposal. According to Bebbington (1999), as quoted by M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 5), the livelihoods approach is concerned first and foremost with people. So an accurate and realistic understanding of people's strengths (here called "assets" or "capital") is crucial to analyze how they endeavor to convert their assets into positive livelihood their self-defined goals, whereas no single capital endowment is sufficient to yield the desired outcomes on its own.

When making a living, access to livelihood assets is a crucial issue. However, some data revealed that rural women are not fortunate with this regard. In his analysis, Ellis has pointed out that, gender inequalities make their mark in agriculture as they do in other facets of rural livelihoods. In his example which indicates the case of sub-Saharan Africa, he stated that women's pre-eminence in cultivation and harvesting is not complemented by ownership of resource use, or by decision-making capabilities, all of which tend to remain firmly within the male sphere (2000: 147). In fact different authors have categorized assets in various ways, example Swift (1989) cited in Ellis, divides assets between the three broad categories of investments, stores and claims (Ibid: 31). But, for this study the livelihood assets are broadly categorized into five major components based on Ellis' category, and each of them are discussed below:

2.3.1. Human Capital

In the context of the sustainable livelihood framework DFID (2000), as quoted by M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 6) defined human capital as: "it represents the skills knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objective". According to these authors, at the household level

human capital varies based on household size, skill levels leadership potential, health status, etc. and appears to be a decisive factor- besides being intrinsically valuable –in order to make use of any other type of assets. Therefore, changes in human capital have to be seen not only as isolated effects, but as well as a supportive factor for the other assets.

As far as this resource is concerned, Ellis (2000: 148) identified that, it is usual for women's obligations to engage in own-account farming or other income generating activities. But, when looking at the men's condition, he described that, men are able to mobilize labor, including the women of the household, and have decision making capabilities over inputs and investments.

2.3.2. Social Capital

This is the most important type of livelihood resource widely observed in the rural settings, but it is difficult to identify what exactly is meant by the term “social Capital” and the aspects it comprises. M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 6) explained that in the context of the SLF it is taken to mean the social resources upon which people draw in seeking for their livelihood outcomes, such as networks and connectedness, that increase people's trust and ability to cooperate or membership in more formalized groups and their systems of rules, norms and sanctions.

The same source added that, quite often access and amount of social capital is determined through birth, age, gender or caste and may even differ within a household. Obviously and often parallel to positive impacts social capital also may cause effects that are restrictive for development. For instance the membership in groups always entails excluding other stakeholders; or the social affiliation to a certain caste may be positive or negative depending on the person's hierarchical position within system. The authors connected that, still, it is

important through its direct impact on other capitals by improving the efficiency of economic relations or by reducing the ‘free rider’ problems associated to public goods through the mutual trust and obligations it poses onto the community. And for the most deprived, social capital often represents a place of refuge in mitigating the effects of shocks or lacks in other capitals through informal networks (Ibid: 6-7).

When describing the importance of social capital, Ellis also has described that, evaluation of the social context of rural livelihoods is likely to yield information relevant both to the social capital status of individuals, households or communities, and to the constraints and opportunities represented by local level customs, rules and organizations. He added that, the community low in social capital as manifested by weak networks and associational activities, poorly performing and little reciprocity occurring between households, seems also likely to be one that offers little scope for negotiating access to assets, and experience weak management of, common property resources (Ellis, 2000: 39)

2.3.3. Natural Capital

According to M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 7), natural capital is the term used for the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services (such as land, water, forests, air quality, erosion protection, biodiversity degree and rate of change, etc.) useful for livelihoods are derived. The stressed that, it is of special importance for those who derive all or part of their livelihoods from natural resource-based activities as it is often the case for the poor stakeholders, but also in more general terms, since a good air and water quality represents a basis for good health and other aspects of a livelihood. Within the framework a particularly close relationship exists between natural capital and the vulnerability context and

many of the devastating shocks for the livelihoods are natural processes that destroy natural capital.

2.3.4. Financial Capital

Financial capital, according to M. Kollmair and St. Gamper, denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives and it comprises the important availability of cash or equivalent that enables people to adopt different livelihood strategies.

They identified two main resources of financial capital:

Available stocks comprising cash, bank deposits or liquid assets such as livestock and jewellery, not having liabilities attached and usually independent on third parties.

Regular inflows of money comprising labour income, pensions, or other transfers from the state, and remittances, which are mostly dependent on others and need to be reliable (Ibid: 7).

2.3.5. Physical Capital

According to Ellis (2000: 32-33), physical assets comprise capital that is created by economic production processes. Buildings, irrigation canals, roads, tools, machines and so on are physical assets. He also added that, it is worth noting that physical or 'man-made' capital can substitute for natural capital in many circumstances. Indeed, the entire long-term process of technological change coupled with industrialization and urbanization is one in which physical capital cumulatively substitutes for natural capital over time. This substitution process can potentially help to take the pressure off natural resources that are being depleted in local contexts. Important classes of physical assets that facilitate livelihood diversification he identified are infrastructural assets such as roads, power lines and water supplies.

Among the five categories of assets financial capital is probably the most flexible as it can be converted into other types of capital or it can be used for direct achievement of livelihood outcomes. However, it tends to be the asset that least available for the poor, what makes other capitals important as substitutes.

2.4. Mediating Factors: Institution and Organizations

The mediating factors are those processes in which a great number of social, economic and policy considerations are mediated in order to translate a set of assets into a livelihood strategy composed of a portfolio of income earning activities (Ibid: 37). Ellis also stressed that, social relations institutions and organization are critical mediating factors for livelihoods because they encompass the agencies that inhibit or facilitate the exercise of capabilities and choice by individuals or households.

Ian Scoones (1998: 11-12) on his part stated that, unless we understand the social structures and processes through which sustainable livelihoods are achieved, a description of the relationships between variables and outcomes is somewhat limiting.

With regards to institutions, Ian Scoones sees them as ‘regularized practices (or patterns of behavior) structured by rules and norms of society which have persistent and widespread use’. As to Scoones, institutions may thus be both formal and informal, and usually subject to multiple interpretations by different actors. He further added that, power relations are embedded within institutional forms, making contestations over institutional practices, rules and norms always important. Institutions are also dynamic, continually being shaped and reshaped over time. They are thus part of a process of social negotiation, rather than fixed ‘objects’ or bounded social systems’. Institutions (in North’s terms the ‘rules of the game’) therefore are distinguished from organizations – the players (North 1990, cited by Ian

Scoones), the interplay of both being important in the framework. According to Davies (1997: 24) as quoted by Ian Scoones (Ibid: 12):

“Institutions are the social cement which link stakeholders to access to capital of different kinds to the means of exercising power and so define the gateways through which the pass on the route to positive or negative [livelihood] adaptation”

In dealing with the policy and practice of development for sustainable livelihoods Scoones stressed the necessity of considering institutions and forwarded some inter-related reasons (Ibid: 12-13) which include:

- *Understanding institutional processes allows the identification of restrictions/barriers and opportunities (or ‘gateways’) to sustainable livelihoods.*
- *An institutional approach sheds light on the social processes which underlie livelihood sustainability. Achieving sustainable livelihoods is not a deterministic affair; contestations, negotiations and trade-offs are evident at every turn.*
- *An approach which emphasizes both on formal and informal institutions and underlying rules and norms suggests a complex and ‘messy’ institutional matrix mediating the processes of livelihood change. Describing such an institutional matrix in any setting is, not surprisingly, far from an easy task. However, the recognition of such complexity allows scope for innovation in planned interventions at different levels, going beyond the conventional support for formal organizations or institutional mechanisms to look at combinations of formal and informal approaches.*

2.5.Livelihood Strategies

Given the livelihood assets at their disposal and the livelihood contexts, households will undertake some activities and adapt strategies to make a living. Accordingly, when describing livelihood strategies M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 8) stated that, “livelihood strategies comprise the range and combination of activities and choices that people undertake in order to

achieve their livelihood goals. They have to be understood as a dynamic process in which people combine activities to meet their various needs at different times and on different geographical or economical levels, whereas they may even differ within a household. Their direct dependence on assets status and transforming structures and processes becomes clear through the position they occupy within the framework". A changing assets status may further or hinder other strategies depending on the policies and institutions at work.

In terms of the relationship that exists between livelihood strategies and the SFL in general, the above stated source added that, it is important to recognize that people compete (for jobs, markets, natural resources, etc.), which makes it difficult for everyone to achieve simultaneous improvements in their livelihood. The poor are themselves a very heterogeneous group, placing different priorities in a finite and therefore highly disputed environment. Compromises are often indispensable. An application of the SLF offers the advantage to be sensitive for such issues in a differentiated manner (Ibid: 8-9).

On the other hand, Ellis (2000: 40-41) explained livelihood strategies as, a combination of activities that generate the means of household survival. The categories and sub-categories of activities that are potential components of a livelihood strategy are divided between natural resource and non-natural resource based activities. The natural resource based activities include collection or gathering (from woodlands and forest), food cultivation, non-food cultivation, livestock keeping and pastoralism, and non-farm activities such as brick making, weaving, thatching and so on. The non-natural based activities include rural trade (marketing of farm outputs, inputs, and consumer goods), other rural services like rural manufacture, remittances (urban and international), and other transfers such as pensions deriving from past formal sector employment.

2.6.Livelihood Outcomes

M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002: 9) have described that, livelihood outcomes are the achievements of livelihood strategies, such as more income (e.g. cash), increased well-being (e.g. self-esteem, health status, access to services, sense of inclusion), reduced vulnerability (e.g. better resilience through increase in asset status), improve food security (e.g. increase in financial capital in order to buy food), and a more sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. appropriate property rights). It is further explained by the authors that, livelihood outcomes could directly influence the assets and change dynamically their level offering a new starting point for other strategies and outcomes.

On the other hand, Scoones (1998: 5-7) has classified the indicators of livelihood outcomes into five sub-components. These include first, creation of more working days, i.e. the ability of a particular combination of livelihood strategies to create gainful employment for a certain portion of the year; second, poverty reduction, which could be assessed based on income or consumption levels; third, well-being and capabilities, that entail self-esteem, security, happiness on the one hand, and what people can do or be with their entitlements, on the other; the fourth sub-component is livelihood adaptation, vulnerability and resilience, i.e. the ability of a livelihood to be able to cope with and recover from stresses and shocks; and finally the last sub-component is natural resource base sustainability, which refers to the ability of a system to maintain productivity when subject to disturbing forces whether a 'asset' or a 'shock'.

2.7. Gender Relations in the Context of Rural Livelihoods

This sub-topic deals with the interplay that exists between gender relations and rural livelihoods. Here an analysis is made on the livelihood of women in general taking account of the prevailing gender relations in our society. In explaining how rural women's livelihood is constrained Moser described that, "even if women and men often own, and have access to income and resources, this is generally structured differently. Although wide regional variations exist in women's access to and control over land in Africa, Asia and Latin America, nevertheless in most rural society's women's access is largely indirect. They acquire land by means of their gendered roles as wives of mothers. Men, in contrast, own land in their own right or by virtue of their lineage membership or other systems of inheritance (Moser, 1993: 24)".

The same source has also revealed how gender has played a role in allocation of livelihood resources. It argued that, "men and women not only have differing access to resources. Gender based responsibilities also result in differences in the management and distribution of resources within the household. Gender division of income allocation varies widely. Cultural traditions determine which aspects of collective expenditure each must cover. In some societies husbands are responsible for housing and children's education. While income for food and clothing ultimately, almost universally women allocation income to day-to-day food, clothing needs and domestic goods (Ibid: 24)". The implication of this argument is that, the meager income obtained by women is allocated for fulfilling immediate consumption, not for diversifying their livelihood strategy.

In terms of accessing important livelihood resources women are facing various problems. To this end, Young explicitly stated that, "land is a vital commodity, not just in terms of the food

and crops it provides, but as a means of obtaining credit, access to inputs, and participation in rural development schemes. Obviously to be without clear title to land is to be dependent on those who control it, even though use rights alone are recognizedmen's use rights were often, however, more clearly defined than women's, whose rights often depended on their ability to bear children (Young: 60-61)".

Another author, Whitehead has also discussed on women's access to resources this way: "women as a whole have less control over the family's economic resources; they also have less status relative to that of their husbands and wives are marked by the behavioral components of inferiority/superiority, deference, and so on. By and large the family based household is a hierarchical structure marked by the dependence of wives and children on the husband, whose specific role in the household is marked by the bureaucratic definition of him as its head (Whitehead,) not determine what crop to plant, or whether a cow should be sold or nor participate in decisions to take out loan for to meet the household's economic needs. According to her, the rule still remains that within the family the male makes all the decisions and the female follows his direction (Ibid: 65).

Hana further described the state of rural women in such a way that, "...most rural women have no independent budget, but are part of their husband's household. As far as they have control over money, they derive their income from what little grain or cash crop the male head of household allocates for their discretionary use. Mostly, this portion is for the women to purchase household goods necessary to sustain the family. A woman may be allowed to use some cash for her own use if she deems it necessary. However, conditions are such that there is scarcely enough to get the household through the season until the coming harvest. So

women rarely spend on themselves or their children without the approval of the patron and even then only for special occasions such as holidays. As of today, most women consider their productive work and income as a means of caring for the entire family, and not as a way of protecting themselves in the materials relationship (Ibid: 64)".

As a whole it could be easily seen that women's livelihood is constrained very much in that it has reduced them to the level of dependence on their husbands. This can be attributed to various reasons. Buhl has described some of the constraints for women's livelihood In this way: " it could be argued that women lack the lime, resource s or initial capital to pursue other income generating work, or alternatively, that men discourage or even forbid women to gain an independent income. In addition, women had a large workload to tackle. Weaving mats for the construction of their houses was time-consuming, domestic work was hard and look up several hours per day and some women also helped in livestock production, e.g. milking cattle. Time was thus a factor limiting women's possibilities in taking up other work that could possibly provide them with income (S. Buhl: 148)".

Ellis (2000: 158) has states that gender inequality is pervasive feature of rural livelihoods. Women have unequal ownership or access right to land, their access to productive resources occurs through the mediation of men, their decision-making capabilities concerning resource use and output choices are often severely restricted. Moreover, women confront narrower labour markets than men and unequal earning prospects in such labour markets are open to them.

When we look at the context of Ethiopia with regards to ownership of resources, a study conducted in Tigray region revealed that, in areas where agriculture is the predominant means of subsistence in the rural areas abundance of farm animals is largely seen critical in rural

households. With regard to the ownership of all the different types of animals, households that are headed by men showed a better status. Especially with respect to the ownership of oxen, the large gap that was seen between rural male headed households and female headed households confirms the labor poorness of the latter type of households, which constantly constrains them from deriving sufficient benefit from the agricultural sector (Mirutse, D. et al, 2006: 16).

Therefore, one can conclude that women are really in a disadvantage position due to so many constraints and hence their livelihood could not be promising. The patriarchal system of our society has done a lot in reinforcing women's subordinate position through the use of mechanisms like religion, the media, and the school curriculum. So any development initiative that is aimed to benefit the whole society first needs to handles the issue of gender with great care, otherwise its end result may happen to be widening the already existing gender gap. To this end, these kinds of work with special emphasis on rural settings will have good contribution in challenging the age old problem of women related to gender relations.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Background of the study area

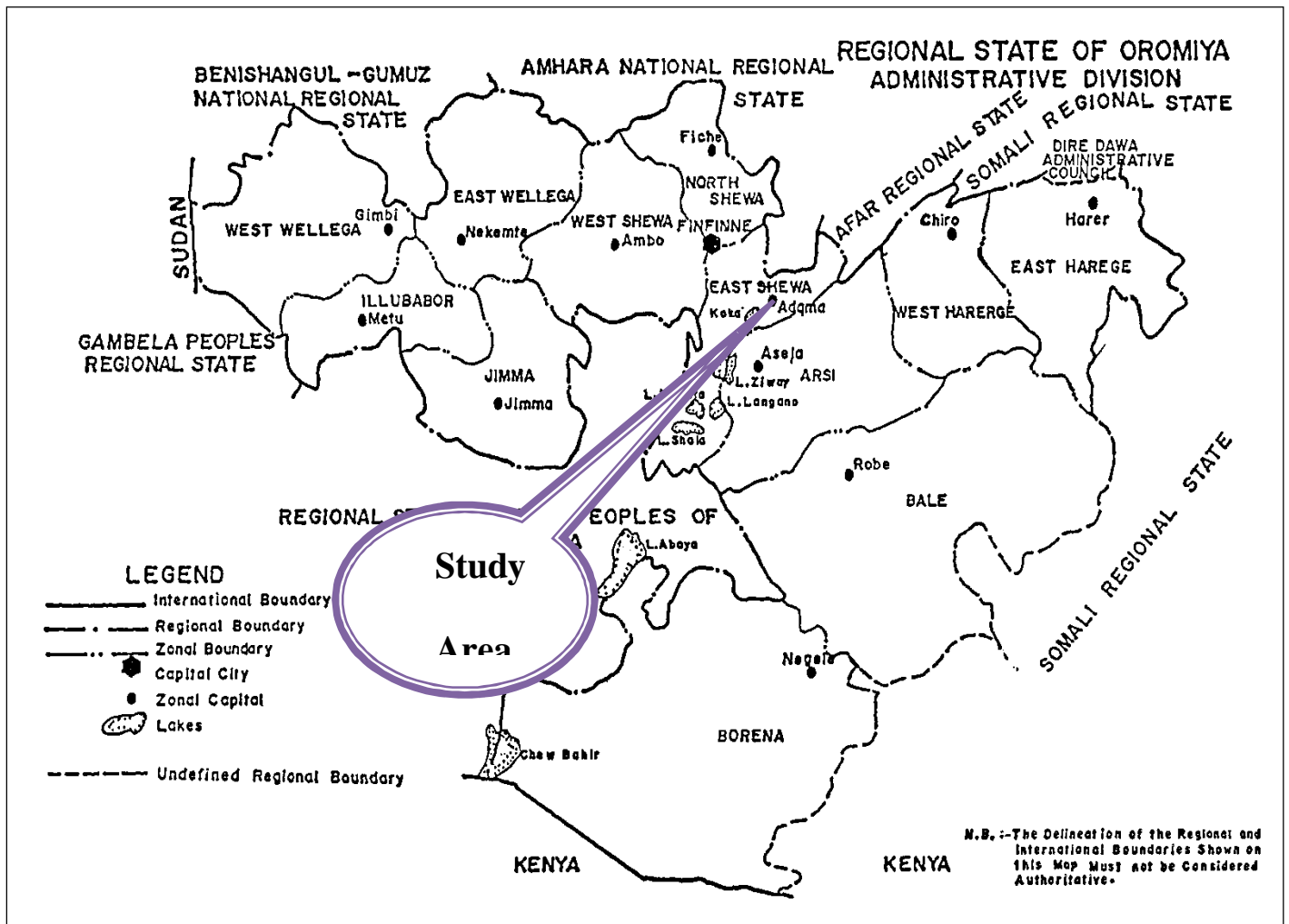
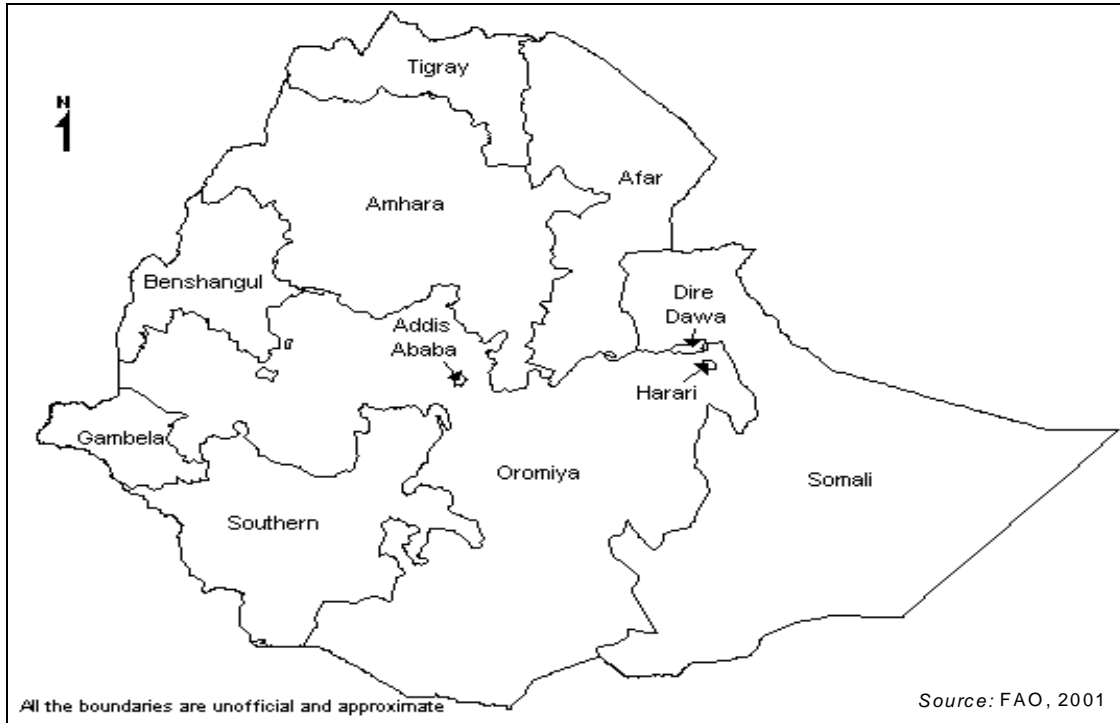
3.1.1. Location and Administrative Division

Adama is one of the 11 districts in East Shoa Zone of Oromia National Regional State and located at a distance of 100 kilo- meters away from Addis Ababa. The capital of the district is called *Adama* which is also zonal *capital*. The Addis Djibouti rail way line runs across Adama for about **28** Km which is about **14.74%** of the total zonal railway line.

The relative boundary of the district indicate that the district is bounded by lume woreda in the west and North, Boset woreda in the North East and East, as well as South East and Arsi zone in the south. Regarding the total land area, the district covers **801** kilometers square, where part of the district is covered by river and man-made lake. Awash is the only significant river in Adama flows along the eastern part of the woreda. It forms the boundary between Adama and Arsi zone. This river irrigates wonji sugar plantation, medium and small scale private and producers' cooperative forms. It is also the main source of drinking water supply for Adama district and town for both humans and animals. Koka man-made lake is the only lake in Adama woreda. It is constructed at the basin of Awash river for generating electrical energy and regulates the flow of the water for irrigation taking place below the Dom. It is located between Adama and lume woreda and it has about 250km² surface areas and is about 9 meter deep.

According to current administrative division, the district is sub-divided into 37 rural kebeles and 4 urban units named Awash Melkasaa(01) town, Wanji Gafarsaa(01) town, Wanji shoa Alem tenaa(01) town and Siree Robii(01) town. These urban units are serving local community as market center on weekly bases. Structurally, the management of kebeles is led by chair persons responsible for the entire governance system. In the recent days, manager is also assigned in every rural kebeles with the view to closely coordinate rural development activities undertaken inside the grass root community (Adama District Profile 2011).

Map 3.1 Location of the study area (District)



3.1.2. Physical Condition

The ecological physical conditions of the district, 85% lies in the categories of midland, 10% lowland and the remaining 5% fall under the division of highland. In terms of elevation above sea level, the district is found at an altitude range of 1500-2300 meter. With regards to climatic condition, the district receives 700-800 mm of rain fall annually. Regarding the nature of rain fall in the area, the district receives a bi-modal rainfall type. These are the shorter rainy season locally known as “*Arfaasaa*” from April to May while the longer rainy season locally called “*Gannaa*¹” between the months of June and September. However, recent years' experiences shown that both rains are increasingly unreliable (untimely on-set) and early cessation for successful crop harvest. The mean annual rainfall is about (700-800) mm. The average minimum and maximum daily temperature of the district is 15°c and 20°c respectively. According to the information obtained from district finance and economic development office, Adama is dominated by sub tropical grassland of cherry so pagan aucheria and dactyloctenium scandium which covers **571.77** km or **62.69%** of the land area of the woreda. Except its eastern section that belongs to wood land ttand Solana of mixed deciduous category, with **340.24** k .m² or **37.31%** of its land area. Nazareth flowed plantation that covers about **2400** hectares extending from its neighbor woreda lume to Adama. the holding or size of Adama woreda from this plantation is **406** hectare .There are other small

¹ **Arfaasaa** rains are short rains also called Belg rains in Amharic. **Gannaa** rains are long rains, also called Meher rains in Amharic

public forest sites in kechema and dibibisa kebeles. The total vegetation coverage area of the woreda is about **1046** hectare (Adama District Rural and agricultural Development office).

3.1.3. Livelihood Means of the population

Few decades ago, the majorities of the population of the district were farmers and it is one of agriculturally rich districts of east shoa zone. Its major soils, andasols, though have low water retention capacity are relatively quite productive and give yields during periods of sufficient rain (Adama District Rural and agricultural Development office).

Adama like the same category woredas (Akaki, Gimbichu, Ada ,Liben and Lume) of the zone that are outstanding in crop production rather than live stock livestock rearing . The Awash River area of the woreda undertakes high level irrigation agriculture. Here the commercial product like sugar cane and flower are conducted at both large and small-scale levels around wonji (Adama District Rural and agricultural Development office).

The major crops produced in the rural kebeles by farmers are *teff* (42.78%), *maize* (22.59%), *wheat* (12.99%) and the rest are Barely and *haricot bean* .The production and size of livestock is an indicator of the way of life of the population. In addition, off farm activities like petty trade, fishing and daily wage basis in the nearby State and Commercial farms are supplementary means of income generation for few of the community members. However, both crop and livestock productivity is extremely low mainly because of the low genetic potential, backward agricultural practices and moisture stress. Due to the community's heavy reliance on rain fed agriculture within the environment of variable and unreliable rainfall pattern, and lack of livelihoods diversification activities are the main cause for their vulnerability to successive food shortage hectare (Adama District Rural and agricultural Development office).

According to seasonal food availability analysis obtained from district Agriculture and Rural development Office, January is the month when food is relatively available in the market while June- September is the period at which food is most scarce in the area. During this period, many people resort to tree cutting for charcoal making and fire wood collection as one of the survival strategies. Food availability tends to decline from February towards June-September. In addition to its low rainfall and high temperature, the area is characterized by recurrent rainfall shortage/absence that has made drought a cyclical phenomenon. As a result, the rural life during the last decades has been marked by repeated crop failure and hence household food insecurity. The situation has, among other things, resulted in the ever-increasing rate of adoption of fuel wood and charcoal-based business as a forefront means of income for food purchase, thereby causing massive deforestation to the area (Adama District Profile 2011).

3.1.4. Population and Basic Social Service

According to the data obtained from East Shoa Zone finance and economic development office, the total population of the district is **174,169** (**85,584** are female and the remaining **88,585** are male). Out of the total population **144,658**, are living in rural area and the remaining **29,511** are urban residents living in four small towns (Adama District Profile 2011).

According to the information collected from district Education Office, there are 68 primary schools, 3 secondary school(9-10) and 1 preparatory school serving 99,073 (49601 female and 49472male) students in_the 2008/2009 academic year. On the other hand, the district has 3 health institutions (7 health center, and 36 health post) that provide service to the entire district population (Adama District Profile 2011).

With regards to infrastructural development, the district is better served by all weather asphalted and rural gravel road that connects villages to the urban units found in the district. In addition, the district is also well serviced by telecommunication network where 32 rural kebeles and four urban units. On the other hand, 4 urban units and 16 rural kebeles are supplied with electricity. Regarding the gender equality, women are the most disadvantaged community groups having limited access to resources control as well as decision-making power despite their restless involvement in almost every activity of the family. The economic status of women at the household level is at lower stage due to limited access and control over resources and decision making power both at household and public level. This implies that women are economically subordinate to men. As a matter of fact, they have very limited or no access to income generating activities that which resulted in dependence on men. In addition, there are many right violations like abduction (rarely), home based harassment, polygamy, female genital mutilation in rural areas, incidence of rape, widow inheritance, exchange marriage and divorce due to polygamy condition. These HTPs are challenging the life of women mainly through physical and sexual abuse and punishment or culturally 'justified' assaults. In the study area, the awareness of local community on women and girl's right and effect of major violations. Other than these, there are also long time socio cultural practices and perceptions that degrade women societal role. In the society, women are mainly responsible for domestic works, child bearing, cooking and providing food for households, participate in farming and provide domestic labor. Women in the district do not have access to the means of production on an equal basis with men, no equal access to land, labor, and credit, training and marketing facilities. This particularly limits the women participation in the decision making process and resources control efforts. On the other hand, the local

community awareness on gender equity and equality is very low where the majority of the people do not have enough knowledge and understanding about women right issues (Adama District Profile 2011).

3.1.5. Rural Community Organizations

Rural community organizations are playing a significant role in maintaining social coexistence harmony, security and supporting the weaker members. In explaining the worthiness of rural organization, Yigremew (1999) notes that rural organizations play important in food production, sustainable use of natural resources, by facilitating resource mobilization information exchange service provision and promoting self and mutual social support at times of problems (Yigremew,1999:297).

Though disparities could be observed among communities, rural organizations in Ethiopia are categorized in indigenous/community based organizations, peasant associations and farmers' cooperatives (Yigremew, 1999). In the study area, too, these Arural organizations are operational. More specifically, community based organization such as "Afosha" established usually by men and women separately for social support system. The other community organization in the area include, women association, youth associations, women self help groups, women saving and credit groups, small scale irrigation cooperatives, various sand producer cooperative groups, vegetable and horticulture producer cooperatives and union.

3.2. Data Sources

This research work was conducted based on data obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Review of literature is made on gender relations the five main components of the Sustainable livelihoods Framework, and the nexus between gender relations and rural

livelihoods. To get these secondary data books, journals, documents and reports, and electronic material from various web sites were reviewed. On the other hand, primary data were collected from female- and male headed households, key informants, focus group discussants and the researcher's own observation.

3.3. Sampling Technique

For this particular study two communities were selected as the study areas from two kebeles of adama woreda. The woreda and the two kebeles were selected using purposive sampling technique, taking into account representativeness, affordability (in time and cost) and accessibility. With the assistance of development agents working in the selected kebeles, the list of communities and households found were identified, categorized into female headed and male headed, Christian and Muslim and then using systematic sampling technique a total of 116 interviewees were selected (10% of the households residing in the two kebeles). From the total interviewees 49 of them are selected from the lowland (Bokoji Dawaro) community and the other 67 are from the mid altitude area (Kachama), and interviewees are also chosen according to their religious affiliation, i.e., from Christian and Muslim religions, in their respective communities. The reason behind the categorization of the study areas into mid-land and lowland, across religion and between the two sexes is to have fair representation of all the categories for this particular study.

3.4. Instruments of Data Collection

To get the required data both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used. The combination of these two research techniques is through to provide a better understanding of the research problem by complementing each other. Quantitative data were collected through

the use of fully structured questionnaires. On the other hand, semi-structured questionnaires, interview with key informants, focus group discussion with female – and male headed households and observation by the researcher were employed to collect qualitative data.

The research instruments that were employed are described below:

Questionnaire: Prior to data collection fully and semi- structured household questionnaires were developed and copied to the required amount. Then, using this instrument data were collected from 116 household heads on their demographic information, access to and control over resources, activities undertaken and strategies adopted by households, and on perception of household heads on the existing gender relations and the harmful traditional practices exercised in the communities.

Interview with key Informants: here interview was held with those people who know the culture and tradition of the study areas very well and to better investigate existing households' opportunity and challenges. The key informant includes religious leaders/ community elders, development agents, Woreda Rural Development and agriculture staff members, and Woreda Women Affairs Office workers. To facilitate the interview at the moment of discussion and interviews, a checklist of questions was used that covers major areas of concern.

Focus Group Discussion: to have a group reflection on the major aspects of rural livelihoods and the prevailing gender relations, focus group discussion was held between female-headed and male- headed households separately in each community. During this time exaggerations was being controlled, missed point raised, and reinforcing of common concerns among discussants.

Observation: By using observation checklist, the existing gender relations in the area, livelihood activities and strategies adopted were observed by the research. This was employed

to supplement and crosscheck data collected through the above instruments. During the field work observation was used to look at the various livelihood activities being undertaken, the challenges facing households and the opportunities they can utilize to make a living. Besides these, such things as household participation in social and cultural ceremonies, types of social networks prevailing among households were observed when conducting the field work.

3.5. Methods of Data Analysis

After the completion of data collection, to make sense of the data collected through the above mentioned strategies, data were edited, properly organized and the both qualitative and quantitative analytical tools employed for analysis. Hence, qualitative data were narrated, interpreted and analysis of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software program was applied. And also descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and the mean, and a t-test were utilized for analyzing and interpreting all the relevant quantitative data. A maximum possible care and attempt was made to maintain data objectivity and validity through triangulation and cross-checking. The unit of analysis for the data collected was a household; this is because, the household in the rural areas functions as a socio-economic unit and have decision making power in matters influencing its livelihood.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.Results and Discussions

4.1.Socio-Economic Conditions of sample Area

4.1.1. Demographic profile

The survey was conducted in two communities namely, Kachama and Bokoji Dawaro which constitute 67 and 49 respondents from each community, respectively. In terms of religious background, 60 (51.7%) respondents are Muslim and 56 (48.3%) were Orthodox Christians (Table1).

Table1: Name of community by religious background

Name of community	Religious background of respondents		Total
	Muslim	Orthodox	
Kachama	35(52.2%)	32(47.8%)	67 (100.0%)
Bokoji Dawaro	25(51.0%)	24(49.0%)	49 (100.0%)
Total	60(51.7%)	56(48.3%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

As the study was focused to analyze the role played by gender relation in making a living in the rural communities, the respondents were made to be both female headed and male headed households. Therefore, the respondents of the study constitute 81 male- headed households and 35 female headed households. Besides, in terms of marital status, 86.4 percent of them were married (all of them male- headed households), 29.3 percent were widowed and 10.3 percent were divorced. Based on an informal interview held, the reason for the divorce of

female-headed households was failure to give birth, drunkenness of husbands and due to resistance against polygamous marriage (Table2).

Table 2: Sex of respondents by marital status

Sex category	Marital status of the respondents			Total
	Married	Divorced	Widow	
Male	70 (86.4%)	2 (2.5%)	9 (11.1%)	81 (100.0%)
Female	0 (0.0%)	10(28.6%)	25(71.4%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	70 (60.3%)	12(10.3%)	34 (29.3%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Household members of a family are considered as important livelihood resources. But, there were two views among the respondents when it comes to the size of the family members. The first view is that, in families where labor is highly demanded large family size is considered crucial by important. The other view was large family poses a problem in providing food, clothing, education materials and medical expenses; in that large family size is considered as a burden. In fact, as the main stay of the communities was agriculture, and as long as this sector is labor intensive, the large majority of the respondents favor the first view, despite difficulties in affording some of their expenses. The number of family members categorized by size is presented in table 3 blow:

Table 3: family size in a household

No. of family members	Frequency	percent	Mean
<=3	13	11.2	6.24
4-6	57	49.1	
7-9	36	31.0	
>=10	10	8.6	
Total	116	100.0	

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Among the total respondents 49.1 percent of them have household members consisting 4-6 persons followed by 7-9 members for 31% of respondents. However the average family size was 6.24 members in the locality.

4.1.2. Religious Affiliation

Religious affiliation of an individual may have influence on the degree of freedom one has to engage in various livelihood activities. Among the surveyed respondents within the communities, 51.7 percent were Muslims and the remaining 48.3 percent were Orthodox Christians (Table4).

Table 4: Religious affiliation of respondents by sex

Sex of Respondents	Religious background		Total
	Muslim	Orthodox	
Male	44 (54.3%)	37 (45.7%)	81 (100.0%)
Female	16(45.7%)	19 (54.3%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	60 (51.7%)	56 (48.3)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

4.1.3. Education Level of Respondents

An attempt was made to differentiate the level of education of respondents. It is found that 51.4 percent of the FHHs were illiterate, where as it is only 18.5 percent of the MHHs who were illiterate. Similarly, among the respondents only 3.7 percent of the MHHs who attended grades 9-10, while there were no FHHs found in this category (Table5).

Table 5: Level of education for the head of households

Sex of Respondents	Level of education for the head of households				Total
	Illiterate	Read and write	Primary school completion(1-8)	Grade 9-10	
Male	15(18.5%)	24 (29.6%)	39 (48.1%)	3 (3.7%)	18 (100.0%)
Female	18(51.4%)	8 (22.9%)	9 (25.7%)	0 (0.0%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	33(28.4%)	32(227.6%)	48 (41.4%)	3 (2.6%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Due to lower level of education FHHs have, they were not in a position to reap the fruits obtained from education in order to improve their livelihood.

4.1.4. Main occupation of Household Heads

The main occupation of a household head could indicate which livelihood asset is very important for him/her, and even to what extent a given household is prone and vulnerable to various shocks.

Table 6: Main occupation of households

Sex of respondents	Main occupation of households		
	Farming	Mixed Farming	
Male	50 (61.7%)	31 (38.3%)	81 (100.0%)
Female	34 (97.1%)	1 (2.9%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	84 (72.4%)	32 (27.6)	116 (100. %)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Among the total FHHs, 97.1 percent of them were engaged in farming activities, while it was only 61.7 percent of the MHHs who were engaged in this sector. The other main occupation, which was seen as predominantly MHHs domain was mixed farming, in which the MHHs comprise 38.3 percent and only 2.9 percent of FHHs. The majority of the respondents (i.e. 72.4%) were engaged in farming activities (Table 6). The important implication of this finding is that, the livelihoods of those households engaged in diverse areas (that of the MHHs in this study) is more viable and resilient than those involved in one or limited areas of making a living. In addition it can be implied that, as farming is highly dependent on natural assets in turn are more liable to external shocks like drought and flooding. Those households who are more reliant on these assets (the FHHs in this study) were highly vulnerable to these shocks, resulting in negative livelihood outcomes.

4.2. Rural livelihoods

According to Ellis and Freeman, 2005 the term livelihood attempts to capture not just what people do in order to make a living, but the resources that provide with the capability to build a satisfactory living, the risk factors that they must consider in managing their resources and the institutional and policy context that either helps or hinders them in their pursuit of a viable or improved living condition (Ellis and freeman, 2005: 4). Therefore, in order to have a holistic understanding of livelihoods in the rural areas, all the findings of this study are going to be treated in the following sections based on these mentioned major tenets of livelihoods.

4.2.1. Livelihood contexts

This concept encompasses the conditions in which people are making their living and the trends that are happening within the given area. According to Ian Scoones (1998), the livelihood contexts deal with the policy environment, history of the given areas, politics, macro-economic conditions, terms of trade, climate, agro-ecology, demography, and social differentiation. Hence, in this study, some of the elements mentioned here will be used for the analysis of livelihood contexts of the study areas.

As the main stay of the communities under study was agriculture, household heads were asked whether their farm land is situated at a favorable site or not (to identify whether their farm land was of good quality or not). Based on the survey findings, 88.9 percent of household heads from Boqoji Dawaro (the lowland area) and 11.1 percent from Kachama (the highland area) expressed their farm land was not located at a favorable site With the reason given was topography of the land, and agro- climatic condition(Table7).

Table 7: Location of farm land by community

Situating in a favorable site	Name of community		Total
	Kachama	Boqoji Dawaro	
Yes	62 (87.3%)	9 (12.7%)	71 (100.0%)
No	5 (11.1%)	40 (88.9%)	45 (100.0%)
Total	67 (57.8)	49 (42.2%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding. 2011

During the survey period, respondents were made to specifically identify the main factors affecting their livelihoods, mainly aimed to understand the context in which people are making a living. Accordingly, the survey finding reveals that, 38.9 percent of the FHHs and 22.7 percent of the MHHs stated shortage of farm land to be one of the main factors affecting their livelihood, which has implication with the policy of the government on land tenure system and also could be related to trends in population growth. The second main factor affecting 22.8 percent of the FHHs and 44.3 percent of the MHHs was shortage of rain fall, which could be attributed to agro-ecology and the frequent climate change occurring in the study areas. Furthermore, the other factor affecting the livelihoods of the households was lack of supply of agricultural inputs, in which 13.9 percent of the FHHs and 12.5 percent of the MHHs claimed to have been affected by this factor (Table8).

Table 8: Main factors affecting livelihoods of households

Factors affecting livelihoods	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Shortage of rainfall	39 (44.3%)	10 (27.8)	49 (39.5%)
Too much rain	14 (15.9%)	2 (5.6)	16 (12.9%)
Pest infestation (crop disease)	2 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.6%)
Shortage of farm land	20 (22.7%)	14 (38.9)	34 (27.4)
Lack of agriculture inputs	11 (12.5%)	5(13.9%)	16 (12.9%)
Lack of labor	1 (1.1%)	3 (8.3%)	4 (3.2%)
Lack of oxen	0 (0.0%)	2 (5.6%)	2 (1.6%)
Animal disease	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)
Total	88 (100.0%)	36 (100.0%)	124 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

N.B. multiple responses are given in the above table.

In addition to the household survey findings on similar topic, key informant interviews and focus group discussion were held in order to have a better understanding of the livelihood contexts of the study areas. Hence, key informant interview held with WARDO staff members indicates that, there were so many constraints hampering the pursuit of livelihoods and put a threat on the communities under study. Accordingly, some of these include, topography of the land most of which constitute lowland areas, that is, rugged terrain which does not produce much yield and so much exposed to run-off; climate change, i.e. either the communities face serious shortage of rainfall, heavy rain or untimely rain, lack of supply for modern agricultural technology and lack of market, suitable road and transportation facilities.

Key informants from religious leaders and community elders have also indicated that lots of things have changed in their communities. For instance, population was increasing so fast which was not proportional to the capacity of the available farm land; the prevailing deforestation rate was so high which can be easily be discerned, in that, they used to walk not more than ten minutes to collect fire wood and today have reached a diminishing point to the extent that it is impossible to collect wood within the community periphery.

As far as soil fertility is concerned, the informants emphasized that, by now there were so many farm lands in the lowland areas might have been abandoned for they have failed to give any yield. The key informants have also indicated that, the farm land is now accustomed to fertilizer and the price is sky rocketing which was a challenge to their livelihoods. Consequently, due to the inability of most farmers to afford the cost of fertilizer, they resort to leasing or share cropping. As a result, rich farmers were getting richer.

Similarly, due to the existence of a wider gap between the demand and supply of improved seed in the study areas farmers were forced to produce below the potential of the farm land. There was also a complaint, according to key informants, that the government was not doing what most farmers are in need of, like provision of fertilizer without advance payment, creating an opportunity for the mass of unemployed youth living in the rural areas, availing improved seeds both for cereals and vegetables that could go with the weather condition of the communities. Besides, the functioning of 'Safety Net program' has created a serious dependence syndrome and as a result, they stressed, most people including the kebele administrators are claiming to get assisted through this program rather than working hard to withdraw from the cycle of poverty. The unavailability of some services such as potable water, road transport, schools, and health service institutions both for people and animals, etc,

are the other constraints that have hampered their livelihoods. They raised the case of so many deaths related to pregnancy as evidence for the absence of the above mentioned services.

In dealing with the livelihood contexts of the study areas a key informant interview was also conducted with DAs working in the respective communities. In terms of the opportunities available to make a living the DAs identified that, by adopting a resource saving culture there is a high potential for diversifying households' livelihoods and secure a decent living. Specially, in the highland areas, the key informants indicated that, the households can engage in animal fattening, poultry production and vegetable production, while in the lowland areas there is a high potential for bee keeping.

With regards to the challenges they have expressed that, higher population growth rate in the two communities was compelling families to distribute their resources and are putting higher pressure on the existing natural resources. Particularly, the discussants emphasized that, in the lowland areas HHs have reached that they are tilling a land that is so sloppy which is highly exposed to run- off. The other challenge of livelihood is the frequent climate change that was occurring in the study areas. Households are unable to know the pattern of rain, as they depend on rain fed agriculture.

4.2.2. Access to Livelihood Assets

The ability to pursue a decent livelihood depends on the households' access to and control over resources (assets). Hence, during the course of the study household heads were requested to distinguish between resources which they consider the most important for their livelihoods. Accordingly, 64.7 percent of them expressed natural assets as the most important for their living. The second most important assets for MHHs (25.9%), was economic and financial assets where as for FHHs it was the human asset (Table 9).

Table 9: Livelihood assets considered as important for respondents

Sex of respondents	Livelihood assets considered the most important than others				Total
	Natural assets	Social assets	Human assets	Financial/Economic assets	
Male	50(61.%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (12.3)	21 (25.9%)	81(100.0%)
Female	25(71.4%)	2 (5.7%)	6 (17.1%)	2 (5.7%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	75 (64.7%)	2 (1.7%)	16 (13.8)	23 (19.8%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Based upon this information, it can be implied that HHs more reliance on natural resources could indicate their higher vulnerability because changes in some aspects of these assets can be out of their control.

Having access to and control over land is very much crucial to rural people's livelihood. Accordingly, all respondents were requested to state the size of their land holdings. The average size of land holding for FHHs was 1.17 hectare and for the MHHs it was 1.91 hectares. To evaluate significance of the differences between the average land holdings of FHHs and MHHs a t-test analysis was performed. The result ($t= 4.71$) implies that the difference in the land holdings is so significant, i.e., MHHs have much greater land holding than FHHs (Table 10).

Table 10: T-test for differences in land holdings between MHHs and FHHs

Sex of respondents	Frequency	Mean	t-test for equality of mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Male	81	1.9105	t=4.71	.85997	.42814
Female	35	1.1714		.52780	.47972

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The finding of analysis shows that the MHHs are in a better position than FHHs in the size of land ownership. Lacking this asset means being trapped into the vicious circle of poverty, since almost all the FHHs' entire livelihood is dependent on farming.

Land assets for farming or for any other purpose can be obtained through different approaches. The majority of the respondents had provided land for farming through peasant associations. In addition, the MHHs have got access to land through leasing (8.1%), share cropping (7%), and purchasing (1.2%), where as these opportunities are very rare for the FHHs only 2.9% have got their plot of land through leasing (Table 11).

Table 11: Approaches to acquiring land by MHHs and FHHs.

Means of land acquisition	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Provided by peasant association	42 (48.8%)	26 (74.3%)	68 (100.0%)
Inherited from parents	30 (34.9%)	8 (22.9%)	38 (100.0%)
Through purchasing	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)
Through leasing	7 (8.1%)	1 (2.9%)	8 (100.0%)
Through share cropping	6 (7.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (100.0%)
Total	86 (100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	121 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

N. B. Multiple responses could be possible in the above table

During the survey respondents were also requested to identify problems related to acquiring their own plot of land. Among the total respondents, 58.6 percent complained on the distribution of land (Table 12).

Table 12: Presence of Problems related to land distribution

The existence of problem in acquiring land	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	46 (56.8%)	17 (48.5%)	63 (58.6%)
No	35 (43.2%)	18 (51.5%)	53 (41.4%)
Total	81 (100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	116(100.0%)

Source: survey finding, 2011

Among those respondents who claimed to have a problem in acquiring their land expressed that the main obstacle has emanated from the non-existence of land for distribution 54.3% (Table 13).

Table 13: Reasons for the problem of accessing a plot of land

Reason	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Due to the existing land tenure system	63	54.3	100.0
Reason not thrown	53	45.7	
Total	116	100.0	

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Results of key informant interviews with community elders/religious leaders show that, starting from the Dergue regime, there has been no land redistribution and as a result there was the fragmentation of land among most families and confinement of large farm land in the hands of few farmers. A serious problem of acquisition of land was encountered by the young household heads.

Despite the fact that there was a problem in acquiring a farm land, there were various ways of accessing land in the communities which could result in increase of land holdings for some households or decrease for the other households (Table 14).

Table 14: Pattern of land holdings during the past five year

Sex of respondents	Pattern of land holding during the past five years			Total
	Increase	Decrease	No change	
Male	41(50.6%)	25(30.9%)	15(18.5%)	81(100.0%)
Female	4 (11.4%)	27(77.1%)	4 (11/4%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	45(38.8%)	52(44.8%)	19(16.4%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Availability of land has been of various d patterns for different households during the past five years in the study areas. Among the total respondents 44.8 percent claimed that their land holding has decreased, while for 38.8percent it has increased, and for 16.4 percent their land holding has not changed. When this finding is disaggregated by sex, land holding has decreased for 77.1 percent of FHHs, where as it is only 30.9 percent of the MHHs have decreased. On the other hand, among those whose land holding has increased the MHHs constitute 50.6 percent, whereas the FHHs are only 11.4 percent. Therefore, in terms of

pattern of land holding (i.e., increase) the MHHs appear in a better position than the FHHs (Table 14).

The reasons behind the increase and decrease of land holding during the last five years respondents expressed different views

Table 15: Reasons given by respondents for land holding increase

Sex of respondents	Reasons		Total
	Shared cropping in	Renting of land	
Male	19 (46.4%)	22 (53.6%)	41 (100.0%)
Female	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (100.0%)
Total	23 (51.1%)	22 (48.9%)	45 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

For those respondents whose land holding has increased in the stated period, the reasons include shared cropping (51.1%) and renting of land (48.9%). When this data is disaggregated by sex, all of the FHHs increased their land holding through shared cropping , which is relatively less capital intensive as compared to renting land, and that of MHHs' land holding increased through both share cropping and renting of land (Table 15).

As far as the reason for land holding decrease is concerned the survey finding shows that, for 58.1 percent of FHHs and 41.9 percent of the MHHs it was due to sharing with children. The other reason given was the taking away of farm lands (eviction) by their owners, especially lands which were contracted affecting 62.5 percent of the MHHs and 37.5 of FHHs (Table 16).

Table 16: Reasons given by respondents for the decreased land holdings

Reason	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Due to sharing with children	13 (41.9%)	18(58.1%)	31 (100.0%)
Abandoning land Due to erosion	7 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (100.0%)
Due to taking away of the land by owner(eviction)	5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)	8 (100.0%)
Due to shared crop out	0 (0.0%)	6(100.0%)	6 (100.0%)
Total	25 (48.1%)	27(51.9%)	52 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The other important indicator of the asset holding of a household is ownership of oxen.

Table 17: Number of oxen owned by households

Number of oxen	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
1	10 (12.7%)	10 (33.3%)	20 (18.3%)
2	37 (46.8%)	19 (63.3%)	56 (51.4%)
3	13 (16.5%)	1 (3.3%)	14 (12.8%)
4	18 (22.8%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (16.5%)
5	1 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)
Total	79 (100.0%)	30 (100.0%)	109 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

N.B. In the above table the total number of respondents become 109 because there are some (7) household heads who do not have an ox at all.

The, majority of respondents which comprise of 51.4 percent had two oxen. When the finding is disaggregated across sex, virtually, no FHHs who own more than two oxen, whereas 40.6 percent of the MHHs owned more than two oxen (Table 17).

When oxen ownership is categorized by sex of respondents, the average for the MHHs was 2.54 and for FHHs it was 1.70 oxen per head. Significant difference of oxen holding was observed between the two sexes (Table 18).

Table 18: Average ownership of oxen of MHHs and FHHs and t-test analysis for significance of differences

Ownership of oxen	Sex of respondents	No	Mean	t-test for equality of means	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	Male	79	2.54	t= 4.16	1.060	.119
	Female	30	1.70		.535	.098
	Total	109				

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

N.B. The means and t-test are computed using the SPSS software

When describing rural women’s disadvantaged position in terms of having some crucial resources, Yigremew (2001: 16) by citing Frank (1999) stated that “.....as has already been noted, women either have fewer oxen or non at all. However, in the plow agriculture system, a pair of oxen is necessary for effective farming. Lack of male labour is also an important factor affecting female headed households in getting access to land. Therefore, women, without such critical resources, are considered, at best, as “weak farmers,” and often as “non-

farmers,” which has resulted in marginalizing when it comes to community land distribution”.

4.2.3. Mediating Factors

The mediating factors are one component of the SLF that comprise institutions and organizational structures. According to Ian Scoones (1998: 12), power relations are embedded within institutional forms, making contestation over institutional practices, rural and norms always important. Institutions are, according to Davies (1997: 24) as cited by Ian Scoones (1998:12), “the social cement which link stakeholders to access to capital of different kinds to the means of exercising power and so define the gateways through which they pass on the route to positive or negative livelihood adaptation”.

As all of the respondents derive their livelihoods from agricultural products, having access to agricultural extension services will be important. To this end, among the total respondents who stated that they have access to the extension services, about 90.7 percent constitute the MHHs, while only 9.3 percent of the FHHs. Agricultural extension service plays a vital role in boosting production and thereby improving the livelihoods of the users. Hence, it can be concluded that, the majority of the FHHs (80%) were devoid of this advantage.

Table 19: Access of respondents to agricultural extension services

Access to agricultural extension services	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	68 (90.7%)	7 (9.3%)	75(100.0%)
No	13 (31.7%)	28 (68.3%)	41(100.0%)
Total	81 (69.8%)	35 (30.2%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Tracing back the reasons for not having access to extension services the survey reveals that, majority of the respondents (64.3% of them FHHs) raised lack of prioritization by development agents (DAs) as the main reason, followed by lack of interest of FHHs to the services provided (21.5%). In fact, the second reason could be attributed to lack of time due to work burden (for the FHHs). Besides, the FHHs have raised the gender bias in accessing to the services and lack of time to seek assistance and to attend various discussion sessions (Table 20).

Table 20: Reason for not having access to extension services

Reason	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Have no interest to services provided	4 (30.8%)	6 (21.5%)	10 (24.4%)
Non-existence of the services	3 (23.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (7.3%)
Due to sex preference (gender bias)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.1%)	2 (4.9%)
Having not time to ask their assistance	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.1%)	2 (4.9%)
Due to prioritization by the DAs	6 (46.1%)	18 (64.3%)	24 (58.5)
Total	13(100.0%)	28 (100.0%)	41 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

During the field work many farmers, especially the women had been complaining for unavailability/inadequacy of services provided by development agents (DAs). Taking this matter into account, a discussion was held with DAs on equity of provision of service. Accordingly to DAs, the criteria for service provision include: willingness to accept new things and be able to participate in different discussion sessions; being energetic and eager for a change; having good track record in performance and that can serve as a role model; being

literate to a certain level, i.e., be able to take notes during trainings; capable to repay back which is given to them as a loan. A closer look at the information given on table 20 and the criteria outlined above, do not consider the real situation of FHHs. Elliot cited by Mommsen (2004) stated that, “there is often a gender bias in terms of access to training (such as technical assistance from extension workers) and access to modern inputs to agriculture, that ensures that many agricultural development interventions have very different impacts on women and men (Elliot, 2006: 175)”. There are also other instances confirming women’s disadvantaged position in terms of agriculture extension services. For instance, when discussing about women’s less access to extension services, Dejene, 1994 and Dessalegn (1994) as cited in Yigremew (2001:8) described that, women’s access to modern technologies and services was very low. The two authors cited by Yigremew have asserted that female farmers are marginalized in extension services; and also agricultural services are “male-oriented”, that women, with or without land “are not expected to attend agricultural extension training programs”. Yigremew quoting Staudt (1982: 207) added that, there are certain biases in the discrimination of women against access to extension services, which include the perception of women as traditional, conservative, poverty-stricken, and unwilling and unable to adopt innovations that were promoted by the agricultural administration (Ibid:9).

Involvement in various local institutions is very important and necessary for households who are living in the rural areas, because it is so difficult to be self sufficient in every aspect of life. In the study areas there are various local institutions required membership of residents to get access to the services provided. Along this line, the survey finding revealed that, about 91.4 percent of the respondents were members of different local institutions available in their locality.

Table 21: Membership of respondents in traditional institutions

Membership in traditional institutions	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	75 (92.6%)	31 (88.6%)	106 (91.4%)
No	6 (7.4%)	4 (11.4%)	10 (8.6%)
Total	81(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The services provided the local institutions comprises mutual assistance at times of economic crisis, assistance at times of death of household members and assistance during various local ceremonies. It is possible to be a member in more than one local institutions and especially membership in 'idirs' (an institution that provide assistance during death of household member) is considered as crucial. As a rural person who has managed to establish his own family in the study areas is expected to join 'Idirs' as soon as possible.

Table 22: Areas of support the local institution provide

Responses	No. cases	Percent
Mutual assistance at times of economic assistance	29	15.1
Assistance of times of death of household members	111	57.8
Assistance at different local ceremonies	52	27.1
Total	192	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

People seeking to be members of local institutions to are required to fulfill a given precondition set by the community (Table 23).

Table 23: Criteria used to be member of the traditional institutions

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Kinship ties	11	7.0
Religion	42	26.6
Duration of stay with the community	21	13.3
Social group	84	53.2
Total	158	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The large majority of respondents (53.2 percent) believe that being a member of social group, i.e. living together and participating in different social affairs the most important criterion .The second most mentioned criterion was being affiliated to a particular religion (26.6%).

However, some community members may not join to some or all of the local institutions due to different reasons. According to the survey finding, some households do not participate in local institutions because of poverty (60%) being young (30%) and simply due to lack of interest (10%). If this finding is categorized in terms of sex, all FHHs fail to belong to any local institutions due to poverty (Table 24).

Table 24: Reason for not belonging to any local institutions

Reason for not belonging to any local institutions	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Because of poverty	2 (33.3%)	4(100.0%)	6 (60.0%)
Lack of interest	1 (16.7%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (10.0%)
Age(non-applicable)	3 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Total	6(100.0%)	4(100.0%)	10(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The availability of loan service is also one important institution that could facilitate the pursuit of livelihoods. In this regard 87.9 percent of respondents had obtained. When this figure is seen across gender, 97.1 percent of the FHHs and 83.9 percent of MHHs have taken loans. Even though both female-and male headed households benefitted from the larger proportion loans, of the FHHs resort to loans could imply that there were more compelling reasons to take loans to augment their livelihoods than their male counterparts (Table 25).

Table 25: Loan recipients among respondents

Did you receive loans?	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	68 (83.9%)	34 (97.1%)	102(87.9%)
No	13 (16.1%)	1 (2.9%)	14 (12.1%)
Total	81 (100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Heads of households had access to loan from different sources. Based on the survey result, 74.5 percent of the MHHs got loan from local lenders, where as only 25.5 percent of the FHHs had receive loan from this source. On the other hand, 57.1 percent of the FHHs and

42.9% of MHHs got loan from relatives. Some MHHs have obtained loan from a government agency, but no FHHs head benefitted from this source (Table 26).

Table 26: Sources of loan for respondents

Source of loan	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Local lenders	38 (74.5)	13 (25.5%)	51 (100.0%)
Relatives	15(42.9%)	20 (57.1%)	35 (100.0%)
Friends	5 (83.3%)	1 (16.7%)	6 (100.0%)
From government	10(100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (100.0%)
Total	68(66.7%)	34 (33.3%)	102(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Loan may be sought from different sources for various purposes. Most respondents had obtained loan to purchase consumables (44.1%). In this regard, large percentage 68.8% of nearly double FHHs acquired loan than their male counterparts (35.3%). Surprisingly, 26.5 percent of the MHHs taken loan to buy fixed assets, whereas no FHHs are found in this category. Hence, it can safely be said that, the MHHs were obtaining loan further to generate income and improve their livelihood, whereas the FHHs were spending it for day to day consumables (Table 27).

Table 27: Purpose of loan taken by household heads

Purpose of loan	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
To by agricultural inputs	25 (36.7%)	13 (38.2%)	38 (37.3%)
To buy consumables	24 (35.3%)	21 (61.8%)	45 (44.1%)
To buy fixed assets	18 (26.5%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (17.6%)
For medical treatment	1 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)
Total	68 (100.0%)	34 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Household heads who were not seeking loan were asked for the reasons behind they reluctance to accept a loan. Most Respondents (78.6%) expressed that they have no need for loan while the remaining 21.4% claimed lack of collateral as the constraint for not taking loans (Table 28).

Table 28: reasons for not taking loan

Reasons	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Due to lack of collateral	3 (23.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (21.4%)
Not in need of taken loan	10 (76.9%)	1 (100.0%)	11 (78.6%)
Total	13 (100.0%)	1 (100.0%)	14 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

4.2.4. Livelihood Activities and Strategies

According to Ellis, livelihood strategies are composed of activities that generate the means of household survival (Ellis, 2000:40). There activities are divided into natural resource and non-natural resource based activities. Hence, in the survey findings, the FHHs' livelihood was

mainly driven from farming (97.1%), which is more natural resource based, while the MHHs derive their livelihood both from farming (61.7%) and mixed farming (38.3%).

Ian Scoones (1998:9) on the other hand, has classified the livelihood strategies into three main categories, namely agricultural intensification/extensification, livelihood diversification, and migration. The first category, as is expressed by Ellis (2000:41), corresponds to continued or increased reliance on agriculture as a strategy, either by intensifying resource use in combination with a given land area, or by bringing new land into cultivation or grazing. To this end, the survey finding had, revealed that the strategy for livelihood followed in the study area was mainly intensification. According to results from key informant interview involving development agents and community elders /religious leaders, intensification was no more a feasible strategy as some of the community members had reached areas which are not recommended by normal standard. With regards to the second livelihood strategy, i.e. livelihood diversification, the MHHs were having more opportunities to diversify than the FHHs (Table 29). Similarly, the survey findings had indicated that, 26.5 percent of the MHHs acquired loan to diversify their livelihood by purchasing fixed assets. The third livelihoods strategy, which is migration, had minimal contribution to households in the study area as a strategy due to its non-existence or its non-regular nature. On this point, results of focus group discussion had indicated that, migration as a livelihood strategy was not applicable for HHs as a whole since they would have no one to leave the remaining household members.

In addition to the agriculture related activities that respondents were actively involved in, the survey finding reveals that 63.8 percent of respondents had expressed the existence of opportunity to engage in non-farm activities. When disaggregated by sex, 54.3 percents of the

FHHs stated to have more opportunity and 67.9 percent for the MHHs, indicating that the MHHs have more opportunities than the FHHs (Table 29).

Table 29: The opportunity for households to engage in non-farm activities

Opportunity for non-farm activities	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	55 (67.9%)	19 (54.3%)	74 (63.8%)
No	26 (32.1%)	16 (45.7%)	42 (36.2%)
Total	81 (100.0%)	35(100.0%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Respondents in the survey area were also made to identify the major non-farm activities they are engaged in.

Majority of the MHHs (47.3%) were engaged in petty trading, whereas the FHHs were engaged (36.8%) in local drink preparation (Table 30). Some non-farm activities, like renting a house, engaging in seasonal employment, and carpentry work were the categories in which the FHHs were not found engaged in. thus, it can safely be expressed that there were wider areas of non-farm activities for MHHs than for FHHs.

Attempt was made to disclose the reasons for getting involved in non-farm activities.

Table 30: Major non-farm activities households were engaged

Major non-farm activities	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Petty trading	26 (47.3%)	5 (26.4%)	31 (41.9%)
Local drink preparation	9 (16.4%)	7 (36.8%)	16 (21.6%)
Renting out land	2 (3.6%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (5.4%)
Renting house	2 (3.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.7%)
Engaged in employed work which is seasonal	4 (7.3%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (5.4%)
Carpentry	7 (12.7%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (9.5%)
Pottery making	0 (0.0%)	3 (15.8%)	3 (4.0%)
Hand craft making	5 (9.1%)	2 (10.5%)	7 (9.5%)
Total	55(100.0%)	19(100.0%)	74(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Major constraints among the FHHs, lack of man power (56.3%) and lack of initial capital (43.7%) are the two main constraints that impede them not to engage in non-farm activities. But, when it comes to the MHHs the main constrains comprise lack of initial capital (30.8%), lack of man power (30.8%), lack of market facilities (19.2%), and lack of know how (19.2%).

Table 31: Major constraints for households not to engaged in non-farm activities

Main constraints	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Lack of initial capital	8 (30.8%)	7 (43.7%)	15 (35.7%)
Lack of market facilities	5 (19.2%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (11.9%)
Lack of know how	5 (19.2%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (11.9%)
Lack of man power	8 (38.8%)	9 (56.3%)	17(40.5%)
Total	26(100.0%)	16(100.0%)	42(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

4.2.5. Livelihood Outcomes

Livelihood outcomes are the results of combinations of activities and strategies. Household heads are engaged in different livelihood activities and adopt workable strategies.

Table 32: Pattern of income status during the past five years

Pattern of income status	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Increased	42(93.3%)	3 (6.7%)	45 (100.0%)
Decreased	39 (54.9%)	32 (45.1%)	71 (100.0%)
Total	81 (69.8%)	35 (30.2%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Among the total respondents 93.3%of and 6.7%of FHHs declared that MHHs their income has increased during the past five years (Table 32)... By the same token, those households whose income has increased were made to identify the reasons behind and thus, the finding indicates that, engaging in off-farm activities, getting additional land for farming, employing out children and getting additional man power for labor were the reasons given (Table 33).

Table 33: Reason for increased income level in the past five years

Reason for increased income	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Engaged in off-farm activities	26(100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	26(100.0%)
Got additional land for farming	15 (93.8%)	1 (6.3%)	16(100.0%)
Got additional man power	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)
By hiring out their children	0 (0.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)
Total	42 (93.3%)	3 (93.7%)	45(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

According to respondents the main reason for the households decrease of income constitute lack of farm land, and sticking to the old ways of doing things for income generation.

Tale 34: Reasons for decreased income level in the past five years

Reasons for decreased income level	Sex of respondents		Total
	male	female	
Have been doing the same thing	8(20.5%)	8(25.0%)	16(22.5%)
Faced with health problem	6(15.4%)	9(28.1%)	15(21.1%)
Due to increased family size	6(15.4%)	3(9.4%)	9(12.7%)
Due to bad weather condition	11(28.2%)	1(3.1%)	12(16.9%)
The land has got old –no yield as is expected	2(5.1%)	1(3.1%)	3(3.4%)
Lack of farm land	6(15.4%)	10(31.3%)	16(22.5%)
Total	39(100.0%)	32(100.0%)	71(100.0%)

Source: own survey finding, 2011

When contribution of this reasons are seen in terms of sex, lack of farm land (31.30%), encountering health problem (28.1%), and lack of change in farm practices during the past five years (Table 34).

To the question of sustainability of the earning, the survey finding reveals that about 70.7 percent of the households' responded that the income had not been sufficient to sustain their family all year round. On the other hand, among those respondents who replied that their income was sufficient, all of MHHs. The implication of the findings is that, FHHs were deprived of sufficient income to sustain their family and therefore compelled to resort to various activities in order to ensure their survival (Table 35).

Table 35: Sustainability of households' year round income

Sustainability of income year round	Sex, of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	34(42.0%)	0 (0.0%)	34 (29.3%)
No	47(58.0%)	35(100.0%)	82 (70.7%)
Total	81(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

For the question of availability of supplementary income to sustain their livelihood year round, 76.9 percent of them stated that they borrow money to supplement their income. The next most important means of supplementing the households' income was by selling their livestock, especially sheep and goats, which comprise about 13.4 percent of the respondents. This finding when disaggregated by sex reveals that, the large majority (94.3%) of the FHHs supplement their income through borrowing money, where as the MHHs do have and use other additional means of generating income, through engaging in daily labor (10.6%) in their locality, moving to other places (4.3%) in search of job (temporary migration) and through selling fixed assets 2.1% (Table35).

Table 36: Ways of supplementing households' income to sustain the family

Ways of supplementing income	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Borrow money	30 (63.9%)	33 (94.3%)	63 (76.9%)
Move to other places (migrate)	2 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.4%)
Sell fixed assets	1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.2%)
Sell live stocks-specially small animals	9 (19.1%)	2 (5.7%)	11 (13.4%)
Engaged in daily labor	5 (10.6%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (6.1%)
Total	47(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	82(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Having observed at the pattern of income status of the household heads, they were required to express their views on vulnerability different stresses and shock. All responded as “yes” to express their vulnerability. Consequently, they are made to identify the causes for their vulnerability. Hence, the reasons they raised as the causes for their vulnerability include, environmental condition (63.6%), i.e. infertility of the soil and frequent climate change; population increase (27.2%), because it is leading to fragmentation of land and putting higher pressure on natural resource; unfavorable government policy (4.3%), i.e. lack of land (re) distribution or failure to create other opportunities for the younger generation; and the existence of water logging in some areas 4.9% (Table37).

Table 37: Causes of vulnerability for households

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Environmental condition	103	63.6
Population increase	44	27.2
Unfavorable government policy	7	4.3
Water logging	8	4.9
Total	162	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

N.B Multiple responses are possible; i.e. vulnerability could be several causes

Even though the heads of households stated that they are vulnerable to different conditions, they are adopting some coping mechanisms in order to get rid of the consequences arising from their vulnerability and/or to lessen the bad effects.

Table 38: Households' coping mechanisms of their vulnerability

Responses	Frequencies	Percent
Through aid	14	7.0
Through social networks	69	34.5
Through seasonal movements	15	7.5
Remittance from relative	4	2.0
Through loan	98	49.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Among the total respondents 49 percent of them said to use loan as a coping mechanism when faced with shock. Other respondents which constitute about 34.5 percent stated to have used social networking as a coping mechanism. The respondents had indicated that during periods where there is less seasonal labour requirement in their locality they move to other places to get additional income. However, according to the respondents, the demand for such labour power at the destination was so limited and not enough to augment the need of the household. Among the indicators of livelihood outcomes the most important one is natural resource base sustainability. On this point, Ian Scoones (1998: 6-7) described natural resource base sustainability as, the ability of a system to maintain productivity when subject to disturbing forces. He added that, this is avoiding the depleting stocks of natural resources to a level resulting in an effectively permanent decline. In view of this findings of key informant interview with WARDO staff members revealed that the opposite of his statement. Accordingly, the key informants stated that that, though there were some improvements in the lives of the population, the changes are so slow and do not seem to have sustainability

because all the improvements in their livelihood seen are at the expense of the of farm land, water resources and surrounding forest. Prevailing climate change is also another threat for the non sustainability of the improvements witnessed. The discussants added that, soil fertility is now decreasing from time to time due to population pressure.

4.3. Gender Relations

In the previous sections analysis were made in view of the prevailing gender relations in contrast to their livelihoods in the study areas. But, here an attempt was made to evaluate the prevailing power relations between the two sexes.

Among the total respondents, 35.3 percent had indicated that women are considered as inferior to that of men this entails 65.7 percent of the FHHs and 22.2 percent of the MHHs (Table39).

Table 39: Respondents’ perception about status of women in the community

Perception about status of women	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
As equal with that of men	63 (77.8%)	12 (34.3%)	75 (64.7%)
As inferior to that of men	18 (22.2)	23 (65.7%)	41 (35.3%)
Total	81 (100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

To get the views of different individuals existing gender relations in their respective communities a focus group discussion organized in the two communities. In this regard, the male discussants have admitted of the existence of some imbalance of power between the sexes, but, referred that their relations was not as oppressive to have a negative effect on the pursuit of women’s livelihood. The participants have also asserted that, there was no one who

deliberately acts to show his supremacy. Rather, they contended that, every man acts according to what is expected of him in the community. Accordingly, a person's action depends mainly on cultural and/or religious norms in which she/he is grown up. The women group on their part expressed that, theoretically people have got the awareness on the equality of the two sexes, but when it comes to decision making on things that influence their livelihood the inequality becomes visible. By the same token, if there is any training or even meeting, wives do not attend that session in the presence of their husbands, unless and otherwise the training/meeting is focused on women. Even FHHs could attend such sessions only if they are strong and have assistant at their home. According to the discussants of the female group, there were lots of problems that women are encountering in making a living and which could result in the imbalance of power. They have mentioned the existence of polygamous marriage, especially among the Muslim society, is one factor which is undermining their status. The participants mentioned that, their property and income are shared (leading to shrinking of resources) and if engaged in such marriage, usually the older women are ignored in most cases. If the women preferred divorce hating to live under polygamy, the consequences become bad for her, because divorced women were not accepted/respected by the community members; she has no/rare chance of re-marriage. The other problem women were facing, according to participants, the community at large the men in particular, places a higher value for male child. They will urge the women to give birth to male child (for both religious groups) or opted for another marriage in search of a male child. Another problem area the participants raised was that, for the betterment of their livelihood they cannot negotiate on their resources by their own initiative and also is hardly possible for them to oppose decisions made by their husbands on resources. Elliot (2006: 175) described

that, “in many parts of the developing world, women receive rights to land through their husbands on marriage, but may have few rights to decide what is cultivated or marketed or how much the profits are spent”.

On similar topic an interview conducted with key informants of the Woreda’s Women’s affairs office indicates that, after a relentless effort to create awareness on women’s equality, there is now a big improvement on people’s perception. But the discussants admitted that, the upper hand is still with men in decision making on matters that affect their livelihoods. The discussant have added that, women have got good understanding about their rights and equality; have begun fighting to avoid polygamous marriage; and if any harm is to occur on them or on their relatives, they are now accustomed to go and report to concerned woreda offices. On the topic of the existing gender relations in the communities under study, key informant interview was also held with community elders/religious leaders and similar stand is observed like that of Women’s Affairs Office staff. These key informants explained that, previously women used to be viewed as inferior to that of men, but due to efforts made by various government officials, development agents and health extension workers this perception is getting changed. The participants explained that, there were no religious grounds to undermine women and give supremacy to men; rather the existing gender relations came into being simply from people’s own interest. Interviewees from both religions emphasized the need to give respect and love, as women are part of man’s flesh. But, they expressed, a lot needs to be done both by religious leaders/community elders and an external body to work hard on this issue, because people have internalized what is being practiced with the existing relation is taken as a norm.

Similarly, interview shed with key informants of the woreda's Agricultural and Rural Development Office revealed that lots of issues implying the imbalance power relations between the two sexes and the underprivileged status of women. Some of the findings of the discussion include: women of Muslim community still do not express their feelings in the presence of their husbands, and even in gatherings where there are men-there could be stigmatization- attributable to the existing culture and their illiteracy; with regards to utilization of resources women to be given by their husbands only the amount that is required for some particular purpose, while men can utilize the resources at their hand with their own discretion; even cabinet members of the woreda and kebeles are enjoying polygamous marriage which entails male supremacy over the female; among both Christian and Muslim members of the communities most of the work in and around the home is done by women, but when it comes to decision making the power goes to; there is a firm belief to confine women in the homestead, and to limit their independence there is delineation of job as inside home and outside the home, so that women are made to work inside the home and the men outside. One important point which indicates the existing gender relations is that, according to the discussants, is said that women living farther away (low lands) from the center of he woreda are not allowed to come to town, because men fear that the women get civilized and demand their right.

In addition to the above findings, the researcher himself has witnessed some areas which show the existence of clear gender inequality in the study areas. Some of the areas that indicate the prevailing imbalance of power include:

- If the husband and wife are to go somewhere and have only one horse, the husband ride the horse and the wife walk on foot, except she is pregnant or carry a very small child on her back;
- During market days, when men and women come from rural areas, men can have their lunch in hotels but women are reluctant to do the same thing. Similarly, men can travel market with no reason just to enjoy, whereas women come only if they have something to purchase for the household;
- Women have the sole responsibility for child rearing and also for domestic works. Unless there are children to help them, they are also responsible to collect fire wood and water. Besides, unless the household has a pack animal, it is the women who carry on their back grain or other products to the market or to a flour mill, as the job is tiresome and occupy most of their time.
- The higher value attached to having many children coupled with all-day long domestic chores make women appear older than their age; and
- Due to the higher work burden women shouldered, most of them are not benefiting, as it should be, from agricultural extension works and even the DAs are not really addressing this issue in their program.

Some studies have also shown similar circumstances on the unbalanced power relations between the two sexes, which is in conformity with the above discussed findings. Among them the work done by Yigremew (2001) is noted. Accordingly, he described by citing Chafetz (1991) that:

“the gender based division of labour assigns to women the dominant responsibility within the household, while men are assigned the major responsibility in economic or other extra-

domestic roles, regardless of their other commitments. Chafez quoted arguing that, as the economy and polity (rather than family) constitute the central institutions of modern societies, this division of labour, priorities, and responsibilities produce power inequalities between men and women. The greater power that accrues to men, in turn, results in a variety of other differences and inequalities, which reinforces the gender division of labour, but the other thing related to this is the asymmetric fact that men and women do different work is not tantamount to saying that their work is unequal in value. Division of labour is associated with the unequal ranking and rewarding of tasks as performed by the different gender categories and resulting from power inequalities (Yigremew, 2001:10)”.

All households in a community may not send their children to school for various reasons and failure to send children to school could be one indicator of the economic status of a household. This is because, a household head who can afford the labor requirement in the family, who is able to cover educational expenses, and the like send her/his children to school, but the one who is unable to meet these requirements does not do so. Taking into account this point, respondents were asked whether all of their children are attending school or not, their responses vary.

Table 40: children’s attendance of school

Reason	Sex of respondents			Total
	Yes	No	No child	
Male	6 (7.4%)	73(90.1%)	2(2.5%)	81 (100.0%)
Female	4 (11.4%)	30 (85.7%)	1(2.9%)	35 (100.0%)
Total	10 (8.6%)	103(88.8%)	3(2.6%)	116 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Among the total respondents only children of 8.6% household heads had attended school while the other 88.8 % responded that their children do not attend school (Table40).

Several reasons were given for not sending the children to school.

Table 41: Reasons for respondents whose children do not attend school

Reason	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Their age do not reached for school	56 (75.7%)	10 (32.3%)	66 (62.9%)
Location of the school is far from the village	3 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.9%)
To assist family with labor	8 (10.8%)	21 (67.7%)	29 (27.6%)
Fear of abduction	2 (2.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.9%)
Dropped to turn their own business	5 (6,8%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (4.7%)
Total	74 (100.0%)	31 (100.0%)	105 (100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The main reason was to assist their family with labour (67.7%) for FHHs and 10.8 percent of MHHs' children; especially, in the low land areas there was the problem of abduction, which force families not to send their girl children to school. This fear of abduction at the end will keep women to remain illiterate and then impede them not to enjoy benefits related to education (Table40). During the FGD held with the community elders/religious leaders they were asked if there is any sex preference, in sending children to school. The discussants, thus, have admitted that at times of economic pressure households tend to send the male child than

the female to the school.. Respondents were made to identify what priorities govern their involvement in some specific activities. Accordingly, 71.6 percent of the respondents indicated that maintaining survival of the household is their major pre-occupation. When this figure is disaggregated by sex, about 94.3 percent of the FHHs attempt to engage in various activities just to maintain the survival of the household. On the other hand, about 38.3 percent of men engage in some activities to accumulate wealth, where as it is only 5.7 percent of FHHs that claimed the same concern (Table42).

Table 42: Priorities governing decision of household heads to engage in some specific activities

Priorities of respondents	Sex of respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Maintaining survival of the household	50 (61.7%)	33 (94.3%)	83 (71.6%)
Accumulation of wealth	31 (38.3%)	2 (5.7%)	33 (28.4%)
Total	81(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	116(100.0%)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Existence of harmful traditional practice operating against women in a given area could be one indicator of the prevailing gender relations in general and women's position in particular. In this regard, 58.6 percent claim that there were harmful traditional practices exercised against the will of the women as they have either witnessed or faced the problem related to HTPs in their community (Table43).

Table 43: The occurrence of harmful traditional practices in the community under study

Exercise of HTPs	Sex of respondents		
	Male	Female	
Yes	41 (50.6%)	27 (77.1%)	68 (58.6%)
No	40 (49.4%)	8 (22.9%)	48 (41.4%)
Total	81(100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	116 (100.0)

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

The harmful traditional practices exercised in the study areas include female genital mutilation (31.1%), physical abuse of women (29.2%), inheritance of one's brother's wife (28.3%), polygamous marriage (7.5%) and early marriage (3.8%) (Table44).

Table 44: HTPs exercises in the communities

HTPs exercise	Frequency	Percent
Early marriage	4	3.8
Physical abuse of women	31	29.2
Inheritance of one's brother's wife	30	28.3
female genital mutilation	33	31.1
Polygamous marriage	8	7.5
Total	106	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

In addition to the survey finding on the existing HTPs in the study areas, key informant interview with the woreda women's Affairs office reveals similar situations. When discussing on the major problems women were facing, the discussants raised that harmful traditional practices like FGM, abduction, inheritance of brother's wife and physical abuse were still

practiced in various parts of the woreda (at least in a disguised way); most of the time, it is the women who are forced to leave from their home during dispute without any property at hand. If during conflict the women happen to report the mistreatment to the police, the husband does not allow her to return home. If justice prevail and allowed to share property with their husbands, because of bias by community elders (usually men) she does not get her due share. According to women affair office, the widow woman does not have children; she would be compelled by relatives of her ex-husband to leave the area without taking the properties she had accumulated with the husband.

With regard to negative impacts of HTPs 43.8 % of the respondents stated that the HTPs had been causing health risks, especially at times of the giving birth (delivery). The health risk was associated with the inheritance of one's brother's wife, because this is done without health checkup, having not known the cause of the death for the brother. The second negative impact of the HTPs was that, it has a demoralizing effect and reduces women to a dependence status (30.2%). Respondents claim that, women do experience physical abuse not to demand their own rights. In addition, the practice of polygamous marriage is the other HTPs that have similar effect. When men are engaged in polygamous marriage resources are shared and the older wives are ignored. The other negative impact of the HTPs is that, men are constraining women not to have ownership and inheritance rights (26%). Even though it is claimed by many men that inheritance of one's brother's wife is an exercise to safeguard the deceased brother's family, the reality shows that this is done to have full control over the property of their brother, including the wife of the deceased brother. Once the women are inherited they lose their control over their own property since the upper hand to make decisions on property goes with the men (Table45).

Table 45: Impacts of HTPs on women

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Demoralizing and reduce women to dependence status	29	30.2
Constraining women not to have ownership and inheritance rights	25	26.0
Health risk	42	43.8
Total	96	100.0

Source: Own survey finding, 2011

Therefore, it can be concluded that, the impact of these harmful traditional practices are so detrimental to women in the pursuit of their livelihoods.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

This study was initiated with the assumption that women are disadvantaged in many respects and there are still unbalanced power relations between the two sexes. This assumption has emanated from both international and local findings dealing with gender issues. Having this view in mind, it was attempted to look at the reality in the study areas, by taking gender relations as a core concept and assessing its role in affecting livelihood of rural households. To facilitate this assessment the SLF was used as a model and all of its major components are dealt with.

Households try to pursue their livelihood in a given context. With the attempt to know this condition it is observed that, households in the study areas were making a living in a situation where population is increasing so fast, which is not proportional to the capacity of the available farm land; the prevailing deforestation rate is so high; and also in a situation of declining soil fertility, in which by now there are so many farm lands in the lowland areas which are abandoned for they have failed to give any yield. Moreover, the unavailability of some services such as potable water, road transport, schools, and health service institutions, etc were all constraining their livelihood not to improve. For instance, results of the survey finding revealed that, shortage of farm land to be one of the main constraints affecting their livelihood, which has something to do with policy of government on land tenure system.

In whatever conditions they were making a living, households need to have access to and control over resources, which are the basic building blocks of their livelihoods. In this regard,

heads of households are assessed about the resource they could command on. Hence, it is found that, natural assets are the most important resources for their livelihood. With regards to the other assets, financial/economic assets are found to be considered the second most important assets. As the main stay of the community in the study area is agriculture, having access to and control over land is very much crucial. Though FHH's land holding size was smaller, they claim to have problem in acquiring land. This has mainly emanated from the non-existence of land for distribution. The other asset that could matter a lot in rural livelihoods is ownership of oxen where the survey finding reveals that FHHs own not more than two oxen, as compared to MHHs.

The utilization of the above discussed assets and any others in making a living is dependent on factors that mediate between access and transformation of these resources into a viable livelihood strategy. From the mediating factors that could facilitate the pursuit of rural livelihoods one is agricultural extension service, which plays a vital role in boosting production and thereby helps to improve the livelihoods of the users. However, in the survey MHHs had better access to such services as compared to FHHs. In addition, the availability of loan services is also another important factor that could either facilitate or hamper the pursuit of livelihoods. Both FHHs and MHHs were benefiting from this service, mostly obtained from local lenders and relatives. The loan was sought by household heads, to purchase materials for domestic consumption and to buy fixed assets. Hence, it can be safely said that the MHHs take loans to further generate income and improve their livelihood, whereas the FHHs spending of the loans for consumables while many not contribute for the improvement of their livelihood.

Within a given livelihood context, people, will strive to adopt a viable livelihood strategy with resources at their disposal. In the survey it is indicated that, the FHHs' livelihood was mainly derive from farming , which was more natural resource based, and the MHHs derive their livelihood both from farming and mixed farming system. To this end, the strategy followed by the respondents was mainly intensification. Results from key informant interviews have also shown that, extensification is no more a feasible strategy. With regard to the second livelihood strategy, i.e. diversification, the MHHs are found to have more opportunities to diversify than the FHHs. Similarly, survey findings have shown that, the MHHs have taken loans to diversify their livelihood by purchasing fixed assets. The third livelihoods strategy, which was migration, had minimal contribution to the households as a strategy due to its non-regular nature. In another instance, MHHs have more opportunities than FHHs to engage in non-farm activities so as to diversify their income portfolio.

Household heads do engage in different livelihood activities and adopt strategies to generate income and try to obtain their needs for life. Therefore, increase or decrease of households' income was associated with livelihood activities and strategies, i.e. the outcome of their livelihood. In this regard, this finding could imply that, the MHHs could have better chance to achieve a positive livelihood outcome than the FHHs. However, households' income was not enough to sustain their family the year round. Here, an important implication of this finding was that, the FHHs were deprived income to sustain their family and therefore were compelled to resort to various activities in order to ensure survival of their family members. Due to this shortage of income the large majority of the FHHs supplement their income by borrowing money, where as the MHHs do have and use other additional means of supplementing their income like through engaging in daily labour moving to other places in

search of job, and through sell of fixed assets . In general, though slow some level of improvements in the lives of the population was observed. All the improvements witnessed in their livelihood were at the expense of the farm land, water resources and surrounding forest, however, the ability of the natural asset to provide a sustainable service is at a stake.

Beside the analysis of the five major components of the SLF model, an attempt was also made to asses the factors directly affecting FHHs in particular and rural women in general. To this end, results had depicted that, among the factors that, constrain FHHs' livelihood, harmful traditional practices were still being practiced in the study areas. The practice had constrained their livelihood by creating health risk, demoralizing and reducing them to dependent status, and constraining them not to have ownership and inheritance rights of crucial assets. The study noted male-bias community elders/religious leaders were working against women especially at times of divorce or domestic conflict. The main constraint and the root cause for female oppression is people's perception of women as inferior to men.

Finally, the study had amplified the cases of women is subjugation in the rural context and there is still a long way to go to bring women's equality and ensure improved livelihood. It can be shown how difficult it was for the FHHs' pursue a decent livelihood, because they need to struggle not only hard to obtain productive resources but also against biases and cultural discriminations that had deep rooted within the community. Therefore, development practitioners, policy makers and other organizations working to bring about development to community need to have a closer look at the case of rural women in general and FHHs in particular, otherwise their attempt will be simply perpetuation of the already condemned established norm. Even through problems of rural women are multi-faceted and intertwined, a recommendation is forwarded as a way-out from these deprived situations.

5.2.Recommendation

In order to minimize the effects of the existing unbalanced relations between men and women in the study areas, and to improve FHHs livelihoods the following recommendations are forwarded:

- The findings of study have shown that, as far as entitlement for land holding is concerned, legally women have equal rights with that of men. In reality, however, the rights that come with entitlement for land holding like leasing, etc. does not exist for women. Hence, development practitioners and policy makers working on ensuring gender equality need to go to insure their right.
- All households in general and FHHs in particular could have improved their livelihoods if government or other concerned bodies be able to facilitate condition in favor of women. For instance, availing things like agricultural inputs (improved seed and fertilizer), credit service facilities, health services, potable water supply, etc. Hence, it can be stated that, for the betterment of FHHs' livelihood practical measures, especially things dealing with enhancing their asset status and promotion of appropriate technologies could lessen their burden.
- People tend to farm lands which were much smaller than usual due to the existing population pressure. This tends to have a very serious consequence by causing runoff, which could eventually lead to the loss of land for farming. Such problem need to be addressed by redistributing land to the needy and take soil conservation measures.
- Beyond the rhetoric, the women Affairs Office should move to provide some practical solutions for women's problem in general and FHHs in particular. For instance, through facilitating access to credit, provision of training on income

generating activities, and by working in close collaboration with other partners women's livelihood can be improved. Moreover, to eliminate people's perception on women as inferior, a continuous education on women's rights should be conducted. In terms of changing the attitude of people towards women, religious bodies and cultural institutions have a great role to play.

- To challenge the traditional perception of the population on women's capability, they need to be given decision making opportunity on critical matters, at least at government or community leadership level.
- The insignificant number of the FHHs getting access and benefiting from agricultural extension services indicate that the concerned bodies had not incorporated women's demand (FHHs' in particular) and has failed to consider the hardship they have been through. Therefore, improvement of their livelihood could be realized if especial attention and training on modern technologies were provided as with MHHs.
- Given the limited amount of time and budget, it is difficult to extend the coverage to include of rural households using the SFL as a model. Hence, future researches need to be conducted on similar topics either on few of the SFL components for or on extended timeframe to get a comprehensive understanding of the topic under study.

References

- Alem Habtu, 2003. Gender Gap in Ethiopian Education (1974-2002), in BERCHI: The Annual Journal of Ethiopian Lawyers Association, Issue 4. Addis Ababa. Ethiopia.
- Buhl, Solveig, 2005. Gender Equality? No! What Do FulBe Women Really Want?, in Katherine Homewood (ed.), Rural Resources and Local Livelihoods in Africa. James Currey Ltd, Oxford.
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), 2008. Equality Between Women and Men. WWW.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/
- Central Statistical Agency, 2008. Statistical Abstract Of 2007. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Central Statistical Agency [Ethiopia] and ORC Macro, 2006. Ethiopia Demographic Health Survey 2005. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Calverton, Maryland, USA.
- Elliot A. Jennifer, 2006. An Introduction to Sustainable Development. Third Edition. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.
- Ellis, F.2000. rural Livelihood and Diversity in Developing Countries. Oxford University Press. Ellis, F. and Freeman, H. Ade (eds), 2005. Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction Policies. Routledge Studies in Development Economics. Antony Rowe Ltd, Eastbourne.
- Frances E. Mascia- Lees and N.J. Black, 2000. Gender and Anthropology. Waveland press. Inc. prospect Heights, Illinois.
- Genet Ashabir, 2007. Women as Victims/ Perpetuators of Patriarchy: A case of women Vendors in to Localities in Addis Ababa. A Masters Thesis in the partial

- Fulfillment of Requirements for MA Degree in Gender Studies. Institute of Gender Studies, AAU. Unpublished.
- Hana Kebede, 1990. Gender Relations in Mobilizing Human Resources. Siegfried Pausewang, et al. (eds.), in Ethiopia: Rural Development Options. Zed book Ltd. London and New Jersey.
- Hunter, Chris, 2006. The Master's Tools Revisited: Can Law Contribute to Ending Violence Against Women? Rosalind Eyben, et al, (eds.), in Exploring Power for Change. IDS Bulletin. Vol. 37, no. 6, Nov. 2006.
- Indira Gandhi National Open University, School of Continuing Education: Field work and Dissertation in Rural Development, New Delhi 2005.
- Indira Gandhi National Open University, School of Continuing Education: MRDE 101 Rural Social Development, Development of Rural women, re-printed December 2007, New Delhi 2005.
- Kabeer, N., 2003. Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals: A handbook for policy-makers and other stakeholders. International Development Reserch Center. Ashford Color Press, Ottawa
- M. Kollmair and St Gamper, 2002. The sustainable Livelihoods Approach. Development Study Group, University of Zurich.
- Mirutse, D., Gebregiorgis H., and Selam A., 2006. Female-Headed Households and Livelihood Intervention in Four Selected Woredas in Tigray Ethiopia. Dry land Coordination Group Report No. 44
- Moser, Caroline O. N., 1993. Gender Planning and Development: theory, Practice and Training. Printed by Routledge, New York.

- Mosse, J. C., 1994. *Half the World Half a Chance: An Introduction to Gender and Development*. Alden Press, oxford.
- Ruth, Sheila, 1995. *Issues in Feminism*. Third Edition. Mayfield Publishing Company, California.
- Scones, Ian, 1998. 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for analysis' IDS Working paper 72, Brighton: IDS.
- Sernau, Scott, 2006. *Global Problems. The search for Equity, peace and Sustainability*. Pearson Education, Inc. united States of America.
- UN, the Beijing Declaration and The Platform for Action, 1996. Fourth World Conference on women. Beijing, China.
- United Nations Economic and Social Council, Economic Commission For Africa, 1995. *Empowerment of women: Progress Report on the Proposed African Bank for women and Promotion of women Entrepreneurship*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Whitehead, Ann, 2006. Some preliminary Notes on Women's Subordination, in Devereux, S. and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Challenging Orthodoxies: influencing Debates*. IDS Bulletin Volume 37, No. 4, September 2006.
- Yigremew, A., 2001. *Land Redistribution and female- headed Households: A Study in Two Rural Communities in Northern Ethiopia*. Forum for Social Studies, Discussion Paper No. 5. Addis Ababa
- Young, K., 1993. *Planning Development with Women. Making a World of Differece*. MACMILLAD Development Studies Serious. Printed in Hong Kong.

Annex 1

Questionnaire for Household Survey

The main aim of this survey is to collect data on the effects gender relations on rural livelihoods, and then forward some appropriate solutions and intervention as a way-out. To attain this purpose, dear respondents, your provisioning of genuine responses and sharing of your experience is very much valuable and highly appreciated. For the sake of confidentiality, your name will not be revealed on the questionnaire, multiple answers for some of the questions is possible.

Thank you in Advance for your kind cooperation!

I. Household Information

Code of the respondent _____

1. Kebele _____ Community name _____

2. Sex: a. Male b Female

3. Age: _____

4. Religious Back ground

a. Muslim b. Christian c. Other (please, specify) _____

5. Marital status: a. Married b. Single c. Divorced d. Widow e. Separated

6. Family size (number of persons in the household)

a. Male _____

b. Female _____

c. Total _____

7. What is the main occupation of the household head?

- a. Farming b. Animal husbandry c. Mixed farming d. Hand craft e. Daily

labor

- f. Petty Trade g. Selling wood products (fire wood and charcoal)

h. other (please, specify) _____

8. Level of education for the head of the household

- a. Illiterate b. Read and write c. Primary School completion (1-8)

- d. Grade 11-12 e. Grade 9-10

9. Level of education for the family members

No.		Sex	Age	Level of Education
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

II. Livelihoods

10. Which of the livelihood assets do you consider the most important than others?

- a. Natural assets b. Social assts c. Physical assets d. human assets e. Financial/Economic

assets

11. What do you think the chosen asset is so important?

12. How much total size of land the household owned?

_____ Hectare or _____ in local unit

13. How could you get the above stated amount of land?

- a. Provided by peasant association b. Inherited from my parents c. Purchased it d. Leased it
e. Through share cropping f. Others (please, specify) _____

14. Is there any problem related to having your own land?

- a. Yes b. No

15. If your answer is yes to the question, what are the reasons?

- a. Due to the existing land tenure system b. Due to cultural barriers
c. Others (please, specify) _____

16. Is your farm land situated in a favorable site?

- a. Yes b. No

17. If you answer is no, what is the reason?

- a. It is as a chance b. There is discrimination between household heads
c. Others (please, specify) _____

18. What has happened to the size of your land holding over the past five years?

- a. Increased b. Decreased c. No change

19. If it has increased, how it becomes so?

- a. due to shared cropped in b. Increased due to purchase c. Increased due to renting land
d. Other (please, specify) _____

20. If has decreased, why that happened?

- a. Decreased due to land distribution due to by PA

b. Decreased due to sharing with children

c. Other (please, specify) _____

21. Do you have access to communal land?

a. Yes b. No

22. If yes, for which of the communal land do you have access?

a. Grazing land b. Communal forest c. Communal water point

d. other (please, specify) _____

23. Please, indicate the type and number of livestock owned by the household

No	Type	
1	Oxen	
2	Cow	
3	Heifer	
4	Bull	
5	Calves	
6	Horses	
7	Mules	
8	Donkey	
9	Goats	
10	Sheep	
11	Chicken	

24. What are the major problems related to owning livestock?

a. shortage of capital b. Lack of man power c. Lack of grazing land

d. Others (please, specify) _____

25. Does your income increased in the past five years?

- a. Yes b. No

26. If the answer is yes to question number 25, what are reasons?

- a. Engaged in off- farm activities b. Got remittance from relatives
 - c. Got additional land for farming d. Other (please, specify)
-

27. If the answer is yes to question number 25, what are reasons?

- a. Have been doing the same thing b. Faced with health problem
 - c. Due to increased family size d. Others (please, specify)
-

28. Is there any opportunity for your family to engage in non-farm activities?

- a. Yes b. No

29. If yes to the above questions, specify the major ones.

30. If the answer is no to question number 28, why not?

31. What are the main constraints you faced in pursuing your livelihood?

- a. Lack of know how b. Lack of capital c. Lack of market facilities
- d. Lack of family labor e. Lack of transportation f. Other (please, specify)

32. Is you income enough to sustain your family all the year round?

- a. Yes b. No

33. If it is not enough, how do you supplement it and sustain your family?

- a. Borrow money or grain b. Move to other places (migrate)

c. Sell fixed assets d. sell livestock e. Daily labor

f. Sell fuel wood/charcoal g. Hunt wild animals

h. Others (please, specify) _____

34. How far is the nearest market from your village (round trip)?

Please specify in hour _____ or Kilometers _____

35. What means of transportation do you use?

a. vehicle b. pack animals c. walking

36. Which month (s) of the year you experience shortage of income?

a. May b. Jun c. July d. August e. September f. October g. Other _____

37. What are the main factors that adversely affect your livelihood (please, rank them by order of severity)?

a. Shortage of rainfall b. Too much rain c. Pest infestation (crop disease)

d. Shortage of farm land e. Lack of agricultural inputs

f. Lack of labor g. Traditional farming method h. Lack of oxen

i. Animal Disease j. Others (please, specify) _____

38. Do you take loans?

a. Yes b. No

39. If yes to the above question, from where do you get the loans?

a. MFIs b. Local lenders c. Relatives d. Friends me. others (please, specify) _____

40. for what purposes do you take loans most of your time?

a. To buy agricultural inputs b. To buy consumables c. To buy fixed assets

d. For medical treatment e. Others (please, specify) _____

41. If you have never taken loans, why not?
- a. High interest b. Due to lack of collateral c. Not in need of taking loan
 - d. others (please, specify) _____
42. Do you have access to agricultural extension services?
- a. Yes b. No
43. If not the above question, what are the reasons?
- a. Have no interest to the services provided b. Non-existence of the services
 - c. Due to sex preference (gender bias) d. Others (please, specify)
 - _____
44. Are you a member of any traditional institutions?
- a. Yes b. No
45. If yes, in which of the institutions do you involve?
- a. Debo b. Idir c. Equb d. Mahiber (senbete)
 - e. Others (please, specify) _____
46. What are the areas of support these institutions provide for their members?
- a. Mutual assistance at times of economic crisis (like crop failure)
 - b. Assistance at times of death of household members
 - c. Assistance at different ceremonies (like wedding)
 - d. Others (please, specify) _____
47. What are the criteria to be member of local institutions?
- a. Kinship ties b. Religion c. Duration of stay in the community
 - d. Social group e. Others (please, specify) _____
48. If you do not belong to any local institutions why not?

- a. Because I am poor b. Lack of trust c. There is nothing to cooperate with
- d. Some criteria for membership and exclusion
- e. Others (please, specify) _____

49. What crises the household has faced in the past?

- a. Health crises the b. Natural disasters c. Crop failure d. Animal disease outbreak
- e. Indebtedness f. Others (please, specify) _____

50. Do you think that you are vulnerable?

- a. Yes b. No

51. If yes, to what kinds of problems are you vulnerable?

- a. Drought b. Food shortage c. Price fluctuation of agricultural products
- d. Others (please, specify) _____

52. What do you think that causes or aggravates your vulnerability to some of the above problems?

- a. environmental condition (erosion, infertility...)
- b. population increase c. water logging
- d. unfavorable government policy e. others (please, specify) _____

53. How do you try to cope with some of your problem related to your vulnerability?

- a. through aid b. Through social networks (like, Equb, Mahiber, etc.)
- c. Through seasonal movement to other pleas d. Remittance
- e. Through loan f. Others (please, specify) _____

III. Gender Issues

54. How are women perceived in the community?

- a. As equal with that of men
- b. As inferior and subservient to that of men
- c. As useful only for reproduction
- d. Others (please, specify) _____

55. Who is entitled to have land holding rights?

- a. Women
- b. Men
- c. Both have equal rights

56. If both sexes have no equal rights of entitlements to land holding, what are the grounds?
for not entitled equally?

- a. Religious
- b. Cultural
- c. Land tenure system
- d. Others (please, specify)

57. Do both women and men have the same rights of inheritance of properties during?

- a. Yes
- b. No

58. If your answer is no to the above question, what are the reasons?

59. Do all of your children attend school?

- a. Yes
- b. No

60. If your answer is no to the above question, what are the reasons?

61. What priorities govern decisions of household heads to engage in some specific activities?

- a. Maintaining the survival of the household
- b. Accumulation of wealth

c. Others (please, specify) _____

62. To which of the consumption and other items does the bulk of your income goes?

- a. Food b. Clothing c. On another income generating activities d. Medicine
e. Social obligations f. Loan Repayment g. Fixed assets h. Household utensils

63. Do you think that there are harmful traditional practices in your community?

- a. Yes b. No

64. If your answer is yes, what are these harmful traditional practices?

- a. Early marriage b. Physical and verbal abuse of women c. Child labor
d. Others (please, specify) _____

65. What do you think is the impact of these harmful traditional practices will be?

- a. Demoralizing and reduce women to dependence status by subordinating
b. Constraining women not to have ownership and inheritance right
c. Health risk

Annex 2

Checklists for FGD, key Informant Interview and Observation

i. Discussion topics with Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office

- Demographic profile
- Socio-economic situation of the communities
- Opportunities and challenges of households in the communities under study in achieving sustainable livelihood
- The organizational arrangements in assisting households to make a living
- Livelihood contexts of the communities

ii. Discussion topics with Woreda Women Affairs Office

- What kinds of services are they providing for different households in the communities?
- How do they perceive the existing gender relations in the woreda?
- What are the major problems they are dealing with?
- What are the major causes of the problems raised above?
- What do they think about the implications of these problems on the livelihoods of the household?
- What kind of organizational arrangements exist to assist to households pursue a sustainable livelihood?

iii. Discussion topics with Religious Leaders/ Community Elders

- How do they view the existing gender relations in the communities?
- What are the cultural or religious bases for the existing gender relations?
- What could be the role of religion in creating equality among community members?
- What is the impact of the existing gender relations in pursuit of livelihood by different households?
- How do they view the prevailing livelihood contexts?

iv. Discussion topics with Development Agents

- How do they perceive the existing gender relations in their respective communities and what do they think it is so?
- What are the challenges and opportunities available in the communities in pursuing livelihoods for female headed households and male headed households?
- What are the bases for treatment of households in providing services for them to have a sustainable development?
- What should be done to create equality among community members so as to achieve a sustainable development?

v. Discussion topics for the Focus Group Discussion (both for FHHs and MHHs)

- How do they observe the existing gender relations in their respective community?
- What are the major challenges/ constraints of making a livelihood?
- What are the opportunities that exist in to improve their livelihood?

- What needs to be done by different stakeholders (relevant government offices, religious leaders and community elders, etc) to improve situation so that sustainable livelihood could be ensured

vi. Check list for Observation

- What are the activities households are doing to make a living?
- Who does what in the respective communities?
- What kind of institutions exist and how they are operating?
- What kind of social services are available to the community?
- Resource base, potential and opportunities for the households to make a living?

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF M.A. (RD) PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL

Signature: _____

Name: Dr. Mengitu Hulluka

Address of Guide: _____

Name and Address of Student: Nemo Husen

P.O.B 2178

Adama, Oromia Regional State

Tell: 0911 70 40 08

Email:nemo_husen06@yahoo.com

Enrolment No: 089132631

Date of Submission: December 22, 2011

Name of Study Center: St.Mary's University College

Name of Guide: Dr. Mengitu Hulluka

Title of the project: The Impact of Gender Relations on Rural Livelihoods: **The
Case of Two Communities, East Shoa Zone Oromia Regional
State**

Signature of the Student _____

Approved/Not approved

Date :

Table of Contents	Pages
1. Introduction	3
2. Statement of the problem	7
3. Objective of the study.....	10
4. Research Questions	11
5. Review of Related Literature	12
5.1 Gender Relations	12
5.2 Livelihood Assets	16
5.2.1 Human Capital.....	17
5.2.2 Social capital	18
5.2.3 Natural capital	19
5.2.4 Financial capital	19
5.2.5 Physical capital	20
5.3 Mediating Factors: Institutions and Organizations.....	20
5.4 Livelihood strategies	23
5.5 Gender Relations in the Context of Rural Livelihoods	24
6. Research Methodology.....	28
6.1 research design	28
6.2 Scope of the study.....	28
6.3 Sampling	29
6.4 Data collection: Tools and procedures	30
6. 4.1 Data collection	30
6.4.2 Primary data	30

6.4.3 Secondary data.....	31
6. 5 Data analysis	32
7.Chapterization	32
8. Reference	33
Annex 1: Household Survey Questionnaire.....	36
Annex 2: Checklists for group discussion, Interview and Observations.....	46



In our world women have been experiencing various difficulties in their pursuit of living. In this regard the Beijing Conference (UN, 1996:38-39) had tried to list areas of problems that are faced by women and problematized the issue of gender inequality prevailing in the world. According to the document of the Beijing Conference, the number of women living in poverty has increased disproportionately due to rigidity of socially ascribed gender roles and women's limited access to power, education, training and productive resources and other emerging factors that may lead to insecurity for families. Adding on this fact, Mosse stated that,

It has become clear that, even within the disadvantaged groups of a community, women are often hidden from view and forgotten. Consequently, women often suffer harsher extremes of poverty than the low-income men of their communities, especially those women who head their own households. Though poor male farmers, male tenants, and landless men are often geographically, socially and culturally isolated from development efforts, women of the same socio-economic groups tend to be still worse off, and isolated from the chances of improving the bases of their livelihood. They lack access to resources for development for example, to credit or to the attention of extension workers; gender inequalities produce barriers to their equal and social participation, and the lack of viable organization to represent their interests prevents them from either developing a voice or having it heard (1994:22).

When describing the overall situation of women in our continent, UN-ECA (1995) reported that, women in Africa constitute 52 percent of the total population; contribute 75 percent of the agricultural work and produce and market 60 to 80 per cent of food. According to the

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report, the female labour force in in sub-Sahara Africa in 1993 was about 73 million, representing 34 per cent of those employed in the formal sector, earning only 10 per cent of the income while owning 1 per cent of the assets. According to the report these figures clearly indicate the need for increasing women's access to both formal and informal resources.

Women in our country and the world over are deprived of many opportunities, such as education, property rights and even human rights. When arguing about access to property Mosse described that, "not surprisingly, the world over, women do not have the same access to land as do men, and very few women have full control over their land by acquiring it in their own right.

At the same time, there is a huge diversity of inheritance patterns practiced dictated by local tribal, religious, customary and statutory law (1994:56)". In the case of sub- Saharan Africa, it was also noted that, "Customary laws discriminate against women ,land rights often devolve to men on the assumption that there is a male head of household ,even though this may mean that women members of the family may lose their status as independent farmers (Ibid:67)".

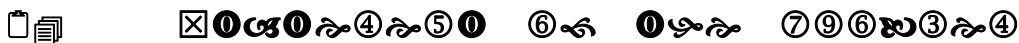
The same line of argument holds true in the Ethiopian context. Data obtained from the Central Statistical Agency revealed that among the total owners of crop, livestock and the two together (livestock and crop) the major means of livelihood in rural areas , men constitute about 80 percent of the total owners while women constitute only 20 percent of the owners (CSA,2008:106). This figure has important implications for livelihood analysis in that, access to livelihood resources is more tilted towards men.

Hence, in order to have a good insight about the livelihood of households it will be good to get the view of both sexes. In conformity with this idea, it is argued that “...Despite differences among researchers, early feminist anthropologists did agree on one thing: that it is essential to take gender into account when attempting to understand how a society operates or how an individual’s identity and life experiences are shaped (Mascia –Lees and Black, 2000:10)”.

Consideration of the gender perspective is not only important to have a good insight about the situation of both sexes, but also will give the chance to have recognition for the contributions of women in pursuit of household livelihood. In this line, Mosse has stated that, “substantial gains will only be achieved with the contribution of both sexes, for women play a vital role in contributing to the development of their countries. If women do not share fully in the development process, the broad objectives of development will not be achieved (OECD, 1983, as cited in Mosse, 1994:254)”. Besides, Young (1993:147) added that, “involving women at all levels of development thinking, planning and implementation will make a world of difference not merely to women but to the capacity of society to envisage and carryout planned social change w/c will permit humankind to live in harmony with nature and itself. To bring women into center stage, however, will require profound changes in the way that societies conceive of relations b/n the genders and the dismantling of centuries old structures of thought and practice. Such changes will take a long time to bring about but as has become increasingly clear over the past decades, women are a tremendous social resource w/c no society can afford any longer to undervalue or under-use”.

When we look at the case of Ethiopia, Zewde Abegaz (2002), cited in Genet, has explained how culture has played a role in discriminating the two sexes. She stated that, culture demonstrates the hierarchical status of the sexes from the very day of a birth of a child. To this end, she referred about the difference in celebration of the birth of a male and a female child. She explained that in most cases the birth of a boy child is celebrated while that of a girl child perceived as mere acceptance of the ‘gift’ of nature (Genet, 2007:14). Genet has also added that, social institution such as family, school, religion, together with the law and the media have played important roles in creating, teaching and reinforcing these differences of roles and status between the sexes.

Therefore, the analysis of gender relations prevailing in the study areas in relation to rural livelihoods will enable to better understand the realities and actual practices of livelihood strategies among rural women and men. Accordingly, this study will try to identify the role gender relations play in determining the livelihood pursued by households in the rural context. To this end, the study will focus mainly on the analysis on the of access and control over livelihood resources, the role played by mediating factors like the role of local institutions and culture (expressed in the construction of gender identities and inequalities) and also the strategies adopted by rural households in view of gender relations.



Women in our country and the world over have faced a multi-faceted problems which deserved a considerable attention at least to minimize the existing gender gap. When discussing the extent to which women are confronted with different problems, by quoting the

United Nations population Fund (2000), Sernua statistically described that one in three women will experience violence during her time, most often at the hands of someone she knows; two million girls under the age of fifteen are forced into the sex trade each year; complications from pregnancy and child birth kill 500,000 women each year; one third of pregnancies each year (80 million) are unattended or unwanted (Sernau, S.2006:84). The same material added that, once women are married they are expected to be devoted wives and mothers who give their effort to the home, even after a full day work. This, according to Sernua, is pretty clear story of continuing male privilege.

According to data obtained from the CSA, Demographic and Health Survey of 2005, only three out of ten women in Ethiopia are literate and that literacy status varies greatly by place of residence. The survey result also indicated that, it is only one fifth of the rural women that are literate (CSA, 2006:35). In terms of employment and income earned, the same source disclosed that among those women who are engaged in agricultural work 81.1 percent of them are not paid and those that are engaged in the non-agricultural work but not paid account about 20.6 percent in the rural areas (Ibid:44)

Among the barriers that inhibit women from the full enjoyment of development initiatives one is operation of the existing patriarchal system in our society. Accordingly, Alem Habtu (2003:103-104) has described that in Ethiopia, patriarchal ideology and cultural /social practices serve as obstacles to women. Ethiopia has followers of Orthodox Christian (about 50%) and Islam (about 33%) Alem Habtu (2003:103-104). There are also other religions in Ethiopia such as Catholic, Protestant and followers of indigenous religions. All these religions, according to her study, especially Orthodox Christian and Islam, propagate and

sustain patriarchal ideology. As far as these religions are concerned, women could not be trusted if they attain knowledge, responsibility or power. Male dominance and female submission were considered sacred. Patriarchal ideology was invested with “sacred legitimacy”. According to Helen Pankhurst (1992), as cited in Alem, women were stereotyped as dangerous, seductive, subversive, unclean, contaminating, deceptive and manipulative. She added that all traditional religious rites and ceremonies reinforce the primacy of privileged male status and all traditional religious teachings and practices represent women as inferior and subservient to men.

Besides the discriminations of religion against women, the other area in which women are represented disproportionately is their poverty situation. The Beijing Declaration and the platform for Action has identified that while poverty affects households as a whole, because of the gender division of labour and responsibility for household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity. Poverty is particularly acute for women living in rural areas (UN: 38). The same material has revealed that, women’s poverty could be attributed to absence of economic opportunity and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources, including credit, land ownership and inheritance, lack of access to education and support services and their minimal participation in the decision-making process.

The other area of the problems in which women have faced is the neglect of their contribution to their household economy. In support of this argument Young, (quoting INSTRAW, 1984), stated that “women who comprise half of the population can and do make enormous contributions to development in all nations. Without adequate statistical description, their current contributions remain invisible and the barriers to promoting their future contributions

to development process remain hidden (Young: 108). Then, she concluded that, due to lack of gender analysis, women's contribution to the household economy continues to go unrecognized because their work is easily counted within the conventional structures, economic policies can result in women's perspectives and being left out of strategies for development.

There is also another problem area in which women are put into disadvantage, i.e., the negative effects of some local institutions and cultures on them. As far as these effects are concerned, Young argued that, "more critically, women in many cultures are socialized in such a way as to lack any sense of having rights or needs except in relations to others; women typically want things for others-their children, their family. Powerlessness not only impedes the powerless from getting their demands placed on the agenda, it often makes articulating such demands unimaginable (Ibid: 148)". To complement this argument if we look at the Ethiopian case, a study commissioned by the Federal Minister of women Affairs and the World Bank has revealed that, the gender-based division of labor makes women incapable of accessing social benefits such as education and eventually lack the necessary knowledge, skill and know-how that would otherwise would have enabled them to qualify for the paid labor force (Genet, 2007: 20).

Therefore, the discriminatory functioning of the existing patriarchal system in our society, the disproportional high number of women in poverty situation, the neglect of their contribution to the household economy, and the negative effects of some local institutions and cultures are the reasons (problem areas) that triggered this research proposal. In the researcher's assumption all these problem could arise from the unbalanced gender relations existing in the

rural areas and need to be curtailed at some point in time. Hence, this particular study is intended to fill this important

gap (i.e., lack of focus on the gender relations and insufficient attention given to female headed households) by focusing on two rural communities and comparing livelihood strategies adopted by female headed and male headed households. By so doing, an attempt was made to assess the role of gender relation in determining rural livelihoods of households by taking the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach as a conceptual framework.

Figure 1: Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach (SRLA) Framework

The SRLA framework is a conceptual model that illustrates the relationship between different components of rural livelihoods. It consists of several interconnected elements:

- Assets:** These are the resources that households possess, categorized into five types:
 - Human Capital:** Skills, knowledge, and experience.
 - Financial Capital:** Money and access to credit.
 - Natural Capital:** Land, water, and other natural resources.
 - Physical Capital:** Infrastructure, tools, and equipment.
 - Social Capital:** Networks, relationships, and community support.
- Opportunities:** These are the chances for households to improve their livelihoods, influenced by external factors like market conditions and government policies.
- Strategies:** These are the actions and decisions that households take to utilize their assets and seize opportunities.
- Livelihoods:** The outcome of the strategies, representing the household's ability to meet its needs and improve its well-being.
- Vulnerability Context:** This is the external environment that affects households, including natural hazards, economic shocks, and social inequalities. It can either hinder or help households in their livelihoods.

- To examine the basis (the determinants) for having access to and control over livelihood resources;
- To assess how the mediating factors are operating across gender;
- To compare livelihood strategies being adopted by female and male headed households;

- To assess the implication of the different livelihood strategies adopted by the different households headed by women and men;
- To examine how traditions and/or cultures affect female headed households access/ownership of livelihood assets;
- To assess the fact that how organization and institutions incorporate rural female headed households ideas and priorities into development initiatives;

4. Research Questions

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives these research questions need to be addressed in the course of undertaking this study. They include:

- Who controls livelihood resources in the community?
- How are rural women making a living (activities they undertake and strategies adopted)?
- Do female headed households have equal access to all the livelihood resources?
- What are the basis to have access and control over livelihood resources?
- How do local institutions and cultures affect the pursuit of rural livelihood for rural female headed households?
- What are the limiting factors for combining livelihood resources?
- How do relevant organizations operate across gender in order to help households secure sustainable livelihood?
- Is there any opportunity that rural women (rural female headed

households) express their need?

- What are the factors affecting access to and control over these resources?
- What are the impacts of gender relations in shaping rural households livelihood?
- Is there a difference in livelihood strategies adopted across religion and agro-ecological zones?

5. Review of Related Literature

5.1 Gender relations

A gender relation, as defined by Ellis (2000: 138), is the social construction of roles and relationships between women and men. These socially constructed roles are usually unequal in terms of power, decision-making, control over events, freedom of action, ownership of resources and so on. For this reason, he confirmed that, gender is fundamentally about power, subordination and inequality in all its social manifestations for women.

In order to understand about the prevailing gender relations in our society, first it will be better to know about patriarchy. Literally patriarchy means “the rule of the fathers”. According to Ruth, patriarchy to a society is in which people ruled by a certain kind of men wielding a certain kind of power – a society reflecting the values underlying the traditional male ideal (Ruth, S. 1995: 53). To complement the above statement Ruth stated that, the place of women under patriarchy is precarious. Women are considered as objects of love and hate, fascination and horror... hence, women may be desired and tolerated by men but only so long as ‘they’ serve and are controlled, like feelings within. She added in her argument that, more than a convenience, the subordination of women is a necessity in patriarchy. Further more,

Ruth (Ibid: 385-393) has described in detail how the patriarchal system has persisted to operate since time immemorial. One of the best mechanisms, as to her, is through the use of mind control as an instrument. This mind control works in such a way that by distorting knowledge and understanding. The means that are used for this purpose include education/curriculum (by teaching patriarchal consciousness), the environment (arrangement of women and men in most institutions – male doctor to female assistants; male manager to clerks or secretaries, etc), the media (by framing attitudes and forming opinions), and religion (by reflecting culture's ideals and attitudes).

In a society which has been governed by the patriarchal system there is an obvious sex preference due to many reasons. In line with this statement, Mascia-Lees and J.Black described that, “while no one denies that men and women differ biologically, there is great variation in the importance placed on these differences by researchers interested in understanding gender roles and the existence of systems of sexual stratification (2000: 20)”.

In order to know the status and situation of both sexes there is a need to analyze the gender relations prevailing in our society. An analysis of gender relations will have some important features to tell us. According to CICA (2008) it will enable us to know who has access to resources, who has control, who is likely to benefit from an initiative and who is likely to lose. Gender analysis asks questions that can lead us in a search for information to understand why a situation has developed the way it has. It can also lead us to explore assumptions about issues such as the distribution of resources and the impact of culture and traditions. It can provide information on the potential direct or indirect benefit of a development initiative on women and men, on some appropriate entry points for measures that promote equality within a particular context, and on how a particular development

initiative may challenge or maintain the existing gender division of labour. With this information measures of equity can be created to address the disparities and promote equality. When discussing on gender relations and what it entails Mascia-Less and J. Black (2000: 11) revealed that, in many societies, significant discrepancies exist between men's and women's access to opportunities and in the quality of their lives. In the United States, for example, women and children continue to comprise the majority of people living below the poverty level; women's wage continue to lag behind men's for comparable work; women continue to hit a "glass ceiling" that constrains their opportunities for advancement in their careers; women are more likely than men to experience the double burden of working outside the home while simultaneously having responsibility for work in the home; and women continue to be physically battered by boyfriends and husbands at an alarming rate. Such patterns are typical of the disparities between men and women in many contemporary societies. One can safely draw some conclusion from the above example that, if women's situation is such bad in the developed countries ours could be more than worse.

Another line argument made by Chris Hunter (2006: 62) indicated that violence against women is a means of social control through which men, individually and collectively, uphold their dominant position in the family and the community. This will result in fear of violence and the necessity of taking precautions which exert a controlling influence on most aspects of women's lives. With regards to the way this unbalanced power relations operated, the same source showed that "the family plays a critical role in perpetuating the social order through socialization. Through socialization, people internalize societal norms, develop the self-discipline to avoid behavior that they understand as anti-social, and acquire an understanding of appropriate gender roles, Snider (1998) as quoted by Chris Hunter (Ibid: 63)". Hunter

added that, the family was not only a mechanism for socialization that perpetuated patriarchal values, but also the foundation for a new social order that perpetuated patriarchal values, but also the foundation for a new social order that dismissed women's issues as subordinate to pressing political issues (Ibid: 64).

To supplement the above argument in relation to the Ethiopia context, Hana argued that as far as the institutions mediating livelihoods are concerned one of them is family. Family as an institution affects women's livelihood in a way that, she described, "it is a major training and employment institution for women. It is within this framework that girls are prepared for their future and women find their vocation as housewives and mothers. Girls marry at a younger age than boys, limiting their opportunities for education or gainful employment outside the household. Traditionally, non-marital alternatives have had adverse social consequences for women (Hana: 59)".

According to Hunter there is also another mechanism that is used by men and the community as a whole in order to maintain male supremacy over women. She argued that "tradition as a 'reconstruction of the past that is unchallengeable' was used to support the system of male dominance. Thus, government policies created the conditions in which men exercised control over their wives (and other dependent women), justified in part by women's reactions and supported by 'tradition' and community structures (Hunter: 64)".

Regarding the unbalanced gender relations Young also showed that, in most countries women from the poorer strata have difficulties in getting effective access to credit, suitable and safe facilities for saving and investment, accessible information about services, raw materials and markets, adequate and equitable access to training and skills acquisition. They rarely get protection, recognition, or support from official bodies. Inadequate institutional provision for

women derives from the ideology of the non-working wife and mother. But women of the poorer strata can rarely afford not to contribute to household finances (Young:101).

All the arguments raised above show that in terms of gender relations women are in a disadvantaged position. These unbalanced gender relations are promoted and reinforced through the use of different mechanisms. Therefore, this section could indicate how important will be to take the issue of gender into consideration in analyzing rural livelihoods just not to over generalize by taking only the case of one sex.

5.2 Livelihood Assets

To begin the analysis of rural livelihood, any one first needs to identify the available assets at the people's disposal. According to Bebbington (1999), as quoted by M.Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002:5) the livelihoods approach is concerned first and foremost with people. So an accurate and realistic understanding of people's strengths (here called 'assets' or 'capital') is crucial to analyze how they endeavor to convert their assets into positive livelihood outcomes. People require a range of assets to achieve their self-defined goals, whereas no single capital endowment is sufficient to yield the desired outcomes on its own.

When making a living access to livelihood assets is a crucial issue. However, some data revealed that rural women are not fortunate with this regard. In his analysis, Ellis has pointed out that gender inequalities make their mark in agriculture as they do in other facets of rural livelihoods. In his example which indicates the case of sub-Saharan Africa, he stated that women's pre-eminence in cultivation and harvesting is not complemented by ownership of resource use, or by decision-making capabilities, all of which tend to remain firmly within the male sphere (2000: 147).

In fact different authors have categorized assets in various ways, example Swift (1989) cited in Ellis, divides assets between the three broad categories of investments, stores and claims (ibid:31). But, for this study the livelihood assets are broadly categorized into five major components based on Ellis' category, and each of them are discussed below:

5.2.1 Human Capital

In the context of the sustainable livelihood framework DFID (2000), as quoted by M. Kollmair and St. Gamper (2002:6) defined human capital as: "Human capital represents the skills, Knowledge, ability to labor and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives". At the household level it varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential, health status, etc and appears to be a decisive factor-besides being intrinsically valuable-in order to make use of any other type of assets. Therefore, changes in human capital have to be seen not only as isolated effects, but as well as a supportive factor for the other assets.

As far as this resource is concerned Ellis (2000: 148) identified that it is usual for women's obligations to provide labor for male or homestead-designated fields to take precedence over their rights to engage in own-account farming or other income generating activities. But, when looking at the men's condition, he described that, men are able to mobilize labor, including the women of the household, and have decision making capabilities over inputs and investments.

5.2.2 Social Capital

This is the most important type of livelihood recourse widely observed in the rural settings, but it is difficult to identify what exactly is meant by the term «social capital» and the aspects it comprises. M. Kollmair and St. Gamper explained that, in the context of the SLF it is taken to mean the social resources upon which people draw in seeking for their livelihood outcomes, such as networks and connectedness, that increase people's trust and ability to cooperate or membership in, or formalized groups and their systems of rules, norms and sanction.

The same source added that quite often access and amount of social capital is determined through birth, age gender or caste and may even differ within a household. Obviously and often parallel to positive impacts social capital also may cause effects that are restrictive for development. For instance the membership in groups always entails excluding other stakeholder; or the social affiliation to a certain caste may be positive or negative depending on the person's hierarchical position within the system. Still, it is important through its direct impact on other capitals, by improving the efficiency of economic relations or by reducing the 'free rider' problems associated to public goods through the mutual trust and obligations it poses onto the community. And for the most deprived, social capital often represents a place of refuge in mitigating the effects of shocks or lacks in other capitals through informal networks (2002: 6-7).

When describing the importance of social capital, Ellis described that evaluation of the social context of rural livelihoods is likely to yield information relevant both to the social capital status of individuals, households or communities, and to the constraints and opportunities represented by local customs, rules and organizations. He added that the community low in social capital as manifested by weak networks and associational activities, poorly performing

and little reciprocity occurring between households, seems also likely to be one that offers little scope for negotiating access to assets, and experiences weak management of common property resources (Ellis:39).

5.2.3 Natural Capital

According to M.Kollmair and St.Gamper (2002), natural capital is the term used for the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and service (such as land, water, forests, air quality, erosion protection, biodiversity degree and rate of change, etc.) useful for livelihoods are derived. It is of special importance for these who derive all or part of their livelihoods from natural resource-based activities, as it is often the case for the poor stakeholders, but also in more general terms, since a good air and water quality represents abases for good health and other aspects of a livelihood. Within the framework a particularly close relationship exists between natural capital and the vulnerability context natural capital.

5.2.4 Financial Capital

Financial capital, according to M.Kollmair and St. Gamper, denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihoods objectives and it comprises the important availability of cash or equivalent that enables people to adopt different livelihood strategies. They identified two main sources of financial capital:

- **Available stocks** comprising cash, bank deposits or liquid assets such as livestock and jeweler, not having liabilities attached and usually independent on third parties.
- **Regular inflows of money** comprising labor income, pensions, or other transfers from the state, and remittances, which are mostly dependent on others and need to be reliable (Ibid:)

5.2.5 Physical Capital

According to Ellis (2000:32-33) physical assets comprise capital that is created by economic production processes. Buildings, irrigation canals, roads, tools, machines and so on are physical assets. Ellis added that it is worth noting that physical or 'man-made' capital can substitute for natural capital in many circumstances. Indeed, the entire long-term process of technological change coupled with industrialization and urbanization is one in which physical capital cumulatively substitutes for natural capital over time. This substitution process can potentially help to take the pressure off natural resources that are being depleted in local contexts. An important class of physical assets facilitate livelihood diversification he identified are infrastructural assets such as roads, power lines and water supplies. Among the five categories of assets financial capital is probably the flexible as it can be converted into other types of capital or it can be used for direct achievement of livelihood outcomes. However, it tends to be the asset that least available for the poor, what makes other capitals important as substitutes.

5.3 Mediating Factors: Institutions and Organizations

This sub-topic is going to answer the questions, how is institutional processes bound together? What structures and processes mediate the complex and highly differentiated process of achieving a sustainable livelihood?

According to Ian scones (1998: 11-12), unless we understand the social structures and processes through which sustainable livelihoods are achieved, a description of the relationships between variables and outcomes is somewhat limiting. For this reason, the framework outlined in figure 1.1 will give particular emphasis to the study of institutions and organizations.

With regards to institutions, Ian Scones sees them as ‘regularized practices (or patterns of behavior) structured by rules and norms of society of which have persistent and widespread use’. Institutions may thus be both formal and informal, and usually subject to multiple interpretations by different actors. Power relations are embedded within institutional forms, making contestation over institutional practices, rules and norms always important. Institutions are also dynamic, continually being shaped and reshaped over time. They are thus part of a process of social negotiation, rather than fixed ‘objects’ or ‘bounded social systems’. Institutions (in North’s terms the ‘rules of the game’) therefore are distinguished from organization –the players (North 1990, cited by Ian Scones), the interplay of both being important in the framework. According to Davies (1997: 24) as quoted by Ian Scones (Ibid: 12):

“Institutions are the social cement which link stakeholders to access to capital of different kinds to the means of exercising power and so define the gateways through which they pass on the route to positive or negative [livelihood] adaptation”

When describing the necessity of considering institutions in the policy of development for sustainable livelihoods, Scones (Ibid: 12-13) forwarded some interrelated reasons:

- Understanding institutional processes allows the identification of restrictions/barriers and opportunities (or ‘gateways’) to sustainable livelihoods. Since formal and informal institutions (ranging from tenure regimes to labor sharing systems to market networks or credit arrangements) mediate access to livelihood resources and in turn affect the composition of portfolios of livelihood strategies, an understanding of institutions and

organizations is therefore key to designing interventions which improve sustainable livelihood outcomes.

- An institutional approach sheds light on the social processes which underlie livelihood sustainability. Achieving sustainable livelihoods is not a deterministic affair; contestations, negotiations and trade-offs are evident at every turn. An insight into social relationships, their institutional forms (both formal and informal) and the power dynamics embedded in these is therefore vital. Interventions in support of sustainable livelihoods therefore must be attuned to such complexity, if suitable institutional entry points are to be found.
- An approach which emphasizes both formal and informal institutions and underlying rules and norms suggests a complex and ‘messy’ institutional matrix mediating the processes of livelihood change. For example, an analysis of an institutional matrix would look at which combinations of the wide range of informal and formal institutions and organizations operating at different livelihood strategies, with what results for sustainable livelihood outcomes. Describing such an institutional matrix in any setting is, not surprisingly, far from an easy task. However, the recognition of such complexity allows scope for innovation in planned interventions at different levels, going beyond the conventional support for formal organization or institutional mechanisms to look at combinations of formal and informal approaches.

5.4 Livelihood Strategies

When describing Livelihood Strategies M.KOLLMAIR and ST.Gamper (2002:8) stated that, livelihood strategies comprises the range and combination of activities and choices that people undertake in order to achieve their Livelihood goals. They have to be understood as a dynamic process in which people combine activities to meet their various needs at different times and on different geographical or economical levels, whereas they may even differ within a household. Their direct dependence on asset status and transforming structures and processes becomes clear through the position they occupy within the framework. A changing asset status may further or hinder other strategies depending on the policies and institutions at work.

In terms of the relationship that exists between livelihood strategies and the SLF in general, the above stated source added that, it is important to recognize that people compete (for jobs, markets, natural resources, etc.), which makes it difficult for everyone to achieve simultaneous improvements in their livelihoods. The poor are themselves a very heterogeneous group, placing different priorities in a finite and therefore highly disputed environment. Compromises are often indispensable. An application of the SLF offers the advantage to be sensitive for such issues in a differentiated manner (Ibid: 8-9).

According to Ellis (2000:40-41) livelihood strategies are a combination of activities that generate the means of household survival. The categories and sub-categories of activities that are potential components of a livelihood strategy are divided between natural include collection or gathering (from woodlands and forest), food cultivation, non-food cultivation, livestock keeping and pastoralist, and non-farm activities such as brick making, weaving, thatching and so on. The non-natural based activities include rural trade (making, of farm outputs, inputs, and consumer goods) other rural services like rural manufacture, remittances

(urban and international), and other transfers such as pensions deriving from past formal sector employment.

5.5 Gender Relations in the Context of Rural Livelihoods

This sub-topic deals with the interplay that exists between gender relations and rural livelihoods. Here an analysis is made on the livelihood of women in general taking account of the prevailing gender relations in our society. In explaining how rural women's livelihood is constrained Moser described that, " even if women and men often own, and have access to income and resources, this is generally structured differently. Although wide regional variations exist in women's access to and control over land in Africa, Asia and Latin America, nevertheless in most rural society's women's access is largely indirect. They acquire land by means of their relationship to individual males such as husbands, fathers or brothers by virtue of their gendered roles as wives or mothers. Men, in contrast, own land in their own right or by virtue of their lineage membership or other systems of inheritance (C.Mosser, 1993: 24)".

The same source revealed how gender has played a role in allocation of livelihood resources. It argued that, "men and women not only have differing access to resources. Gender based responsibilities also result in differences in the management and distribution of resources within the household. Gender division of income allocation varies widely. Cultural traditions determine which aspects of collective expenditure each must cover. In some societies husbands are responsible for housing and children's education. While income to day-today food, clothing needs and domestic goods (Ibid: 24)". The implication of this argument is that the meager income obtained by women is allocated for fulfilling immediate consumption, not for diversifying livelihood strategy.

In terms of accessing important livelihood resources women are facing various problems. To this end Young explicitly stated that, “land is a vital commodity, not just in terms of the food and crops it provides, but as a means of obtaining credit, access to inputs, and participation in rural development schemes. Obviously to be without clear title to land is to be dependent on those who control it, even though use rights alone are recognized.... Men’s use rights were often, however, more clearly defined than women’s whose rights often depended on their ability to bear children (Young: 60-61)’’.

Another author, called whitehead has also discussed on women’s access to resources this way: “women as a whole have less control over the family’s economic resources; they also have less status relative to that of their husbands and wives are marked by the behavioral components of inferiority/superiority, deference, and so on. By and large the family based household is a hierarchical structure marked by the dependency of wives and children on the husband, whose specific role in the household is marked by the bureaucratic definition of him as its head (Whitehead, Ann: 26)’’.

With regards to the context of our country, Hanna discussed that “in the cultural context of rural society, female-headed households are a minority which have little influence and less effect on the ‘normal’ family household. Women’s decision making in family finance and economic activities is limited to income generated from cottage production (crafts, food processing, etc) and possibly to small income generating agriculture and related activities like, horticulture, poultry, bee keeping, etc (Hanna: 64)’’. Normally, she added that, women do not determine what crop to plant, or wither a cow should be sold or not. Women do not participate in decisions to take out loan for the farm or to meet the household’s economic needs.

According to her, the rule still remains that within the family the male makes all the decisions and the female follows his direction (Ibid: 65).

Hana further described the state of rural women in such a way that, "...most rural women have no independent budget, but are part of their husband's household. As far as they have control over money, they derive their income from what little grain or crop the male head of household allocates for their discretionary use. Mostly, this portion is for the women to purchase household goods necessary to sustain the family. A woman may be allowed to use some cash for her own use if she deems it necessary. However, conditions are such that there is scarcely enough to get the household through the season until the coming harvest. So women rarely spend on themselves or their without the approval of the patron, and even then only for specific occasions such as holidays. As of today, most women consider their productive work and income as a means of caring for the entire family, and not as a way of protecting themselves in the marital relationship (Ibid: 64)".

As a whole it could be easily seen that women's livelihood is constrained very much in that it has reduced them to the level of dependence on their husbands. This can be attributed to various reasons. Buhl has described some of the constraints for women's livelihood in this way: "it could be argued that women lack the time, resources or initial capital to pursue other income generating work, or alternatively, that men discourage or even forbid women to gain an independent income. In addition, women had a large workload to tackle. Weaving mats for the construction of their houses was time-consuming, domestic work was hard and took up several hours per day and some women also helped in livestock production, e.g. milking cattle. Time was thus a factor limiting women's possibilities in taking up other work that could possibly provide them with income (S.Buhl: 148)".

Ellis (2000: 158) has stated that gender inequality is pervasive feature of rural livelihoods. Women have unequal ownership or access rights to land, their access to productive resources occurs through the mediation of men, their decision-making capabilities concerning resource use and output choices are often severely restricted. Moreover, women confront narrower labor markets than men and unequal earning prospects in such labor markets are open to them..Therefore, one can conclude that women are really in a disadvantage position due to so many constraints and hence their livelihood could not be promising. The patriarchal system of our society has done a lot in reinforcing women's subordinate position through the use of mechanisms like religion, the media, and the school curriculum. So any development initiative that is aimed to benefit the whole society first needs to handle the issue of gender with great care, otherwise its end result may happen to be widening the already existing gender gap. To this end, this kind of work with special emphasis on rural settings will have good contribution in challenging the age old problem women related to gender relations.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

Study design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. With the aim of making the information collected more reliable, combinations of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection have been employed. The combination of these two research techniques is through to provide a better understanding of the research problem by complementing each other. Quantitative data were collected through the use of fully structured questionnaires. On the other hand, semi-structured questionnaires, interview with key informants, focus group discussion with female and male headed households and observation by the researcher were employed to collect qualitative data.

6.2 Scope of the study

The study will be conducted in Oromia National Regional State, East Shoa Zone Adama woreda located at a distance of 100 kilometers from Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. In order to grasp the full image of the study area under consideration, the entire district will be covered during data collection processes based on appropriate sampling methods. This study area is selected based on the fact that it is accessible to the researcher to easily collect primary data from all relevant primary and secondary sources. It is also much easier to employ transportation and other facilities during the study process. On the other hand, it is the area where the researcher has better knowledge of the local context including cultural set-up, languages, norms and values. Thirdly, it is the area where there is little study conducted on the same issue in the area.

The study is also intended to cover 80 household heads residing in two agro-ecologically different communities in one woreda. Among the five major components of the sustainable livelihood framework (namely: contexts, livelihood assets, mediating factors, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes) the focus of this study will be only on the analysis of access to and control over livelihood resources, the mediating factors that comprise organizational and institutional processes affecting livelihood strategies, and finally an assessment of livelihood strategies adopted by female and male headed households and their implications. For the sake of simplicity the contexts and outcomes of livelihood strategies are excluded from the framework and will not be addressed in this study. Finally, a comparison will be made between the two sexes on their livelihood in order to have understanding on the effects of the prevailing gender relations.



For this particular study two communities were selected as the study areas from two kebeles of adama woreda. The woreda and the two kebeles were selected using purposive sampling technique, taking into account representativeness, affordability (in time and cost) and accessibility. With the assistance of development agents working in the selected kebeles, the list of communities and households found were identified, categorized into female headed and male headed, Christian and Muslim and then using systematic sampling technique a total of 116 interviewees were selected (10% of the households residing in the two kebeles). From the total interviewees 49 of them are selected from the lowland (Bokoji Dawaro) community and the other 67 are from the mid altitude area (Kachama), and interviewees are also chosen according to their religious affiliation, i.e., from Christian and Muslim religions, in their respective communities. The reason behind the categorization of the study areas into mid-land

6.5 Data analysis

From the very beginning of the data collection process, it will be arranged in such a way that the collected data will be easily coded and verified. This will simplify the process of data entry into appropriate software program (SPSS) for statistical analysis. After the finalization of data processing, the researcher will carefully interpret the findings and explain the result by using, different statistical tools like graph and tabular presentation and others case study narration as found important.

7. Chapterization

The final document of this study is to be presented as per the below described chapterization format. The first chapter of this study shall focus on introductory part where the concept of gender, gender Relation and Livelihood is described. The definition of important terms will be presented again in this chapter. The second chapter of the study pay due attention to the presentation of review of related literature on the same subject that conducted by various agencies, researchers and organizations. The third chapter purely deals with the research design and methodology of data collection and analysis tools. The detail data and presentation of the findings of the study will be presented under chapter four of the document. The fifth chapter mainly encompasses about the Conclusion and Recommendations.

References

- Alem Habtu, 2003. Gender Gap in Ethiopian Education (1974-2002), in BERCHI: The Annual Journal of Ethiopian Lawyers Association, Issue 4. Addis Ababa. Ethiopia.
- Buhl, Solveig, 2005. Gender Equality? No! What Do FulBe Women Really Want?, in Katherine Homewood (ed.), Rural Resources and Local Livelihoods in Africa. James Currey Ltd, Oxford.
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), 2008. Equality Between Women and Men. WWW.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/
- Central Statistical Agency, 2008. Statistical Abstract Of 2007. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Central Statistical Agency [Ethiopia] and ORC Macro, 2006. Ethiopia Demographic Health Survey 2005. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Calverton, Maryland, USA.
- Elliot A. Jennifer, 2006. An Introduction to Sustainable Development. Third Edition. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.
- Ellis, F.2000. rural Livelihood and Diversity in Developing Countries. Oxford University Press. Ellis, F. and Freeman, H. Ade (eds), 2005. Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction Policies. Routledge Studies in Development Economics. Antony Rowe Ltd, Eastbourne.
- Frances E. Mascia- Lees and N.J. Black, 2000. Gender and Anthropology. Waveland press. Inc. prospect Heights, Illinois.
- Genet Ashabir, 2007. Women as Victims/ Perpetuators of Patriarchy: A case of women Vendors in to Localities in Addis Ababa. A Masters Thesis in the partial Fulfillment

of Requirements for MA Degree in Gender Studies. Institute of Gender Studies, AAU. Unpublished.

Hana Kebede, 1990. Gender Relations in Mobilizing Human Resources. Siegfried Pausewang, et al. (eds.), in Ethiopia: Rural Development Options. Zed book Ltd. London and New Jersey.

Hunter, Chris, 2006. The Master's Tools Revisited: Can Law Contribute to Ending Violence Against Women? Rosalind Eyben, et al, (eds.), in Exploring Power for Change. IDS Bulletin. Vol. 37, no. 6, Nov. 2006.

Indira Gandhi National Open University, School of Continuing Education: Field work and Dissertation in Rural Development, New Delhi 2005.

Indira Gandhi National Open University, School of Continuing Education: MRDE 101 Rural Social Development, Development of Rural women, re-printed December 2007, New Delhi 2005.

Kabeer, N., 2003. Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals: A handbook for policy-makers and other stakeholders. International Development Reserch Center. Ashford Color Press, Ottawa

M. Kollmair and St Gamper, 2002. The sustainable Livelihoods Approach. Development Study Group, University of Zurich.

Mirutse, D., Gebregiorgis H., and Selam A., 2006. Female-Headed Households and Livelihood Intervention in Four Selected Woredas in Tigray Ethiopia. Dry land Coordination Group Report No. 44

Moser, Caroline O. N., 1993. Gender Planning and Development: theory, Practice and Training. Printed by Routledge, New York.

- Mosse, J. C., 1994. *Half the World Half a Chance: An Introduction to Gender and Development*. Alden Press, oxford.
- Ruth, Sheila, 1995. *Issues in Feminism*. Third Edition. Mayfield Publishing Company, California.
- Scones, Ian, 1998. 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for analysis' IDS Working paper 72, Brighton: IDS.
- Sernau, Scott, 2006. *Global Problems. The search for Equity, peace and Sustainability*. Pearson Education, Inc. united States of America.
- UN, the Beijing Declaration and The Platform for Action, 1996. Fourth World Conference on women. Beijing, China.
- United Nations Economic and Social Council, Economic Commission For Africa, 1995. *Empowerment of women: Progress Report on the Proposed African Bank for women and Promotion of women Entrepreneurship*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Whitehead, Ann, 2006. Some preliminary Notes on Women's Subordination, in Devereux, S. and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Challenging Orthodoxies: influencing Debates*. IDS Bulletin Volume 37, No. 4, September 2006.
- Yigremew, A., 2001. *Land Redistribution and female- headed Households: A Study in Two Rural Communities in Northern Ethiopia*. Forum for Social Studies, Discussion Paper No. 5. Addis Ababa
- Young, K., 1993. *Planning Development with Women. Making a World of Differece*. MACMILLAD Development Studies Serious. Printed in Hong Kong.

Annex 1

Questionnaire for Household Survey

The main aim of this survey is to collect data on the effects gender relations on rural livelihoods, and then forward some appropriate solutions and intervention as a way-out. To attain this purpose, dear respondents, your provisioning of genuine responses and sharing of your experience is very much valuable and highly appreciated. For the sake of confidentiality, your name will not be revealed on the questionnaire, multiple answers for some of the questions is possible.

Thank you in Advance for your kind cooperation!

II. Household Information

Code of the respondent _____

1. Kebele _____ Community name _____

2. Sex: a. Male b Female

3. Age: _____

4. Religious Back ground

 a. Muslim b. Christian c. Other (please, specify) _____

5. Marital status: a. Married b. Single c. Divorced d. Widow e. Separated

6. Family size (number of persons in the household)

 a. Male _____

 b. Female _____

 c. Total _____

7. What is the main occupation of the household head?

- a. Farming
- b. Animal husbandry
- c. Mixed farming
- d. Hand craft
- e. Daily labor
- f. Petty Trade
- g. Selling wood products (fire wood and charcoal)
- h. other (please, specify) _____

8. Level of education for the head of the household

- a. Illiterate
- b. Read and write
- c. Primary School completion (1-8)
- d. Grade 11-12
- e. Grade 9-10

9. Level of education for the family members

No.		Sex	Age	Level of Education
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

II. Livelihoods

10. Which of the livelihood assets do you consider the most important than others?

- a. Natural assets
- b. Social assts
- c. Physical assets
- d. human assets
- e. Financial/Economic assets

11. What do you think the chosen asset is so important?

12. How much total size of land the household owned?

_____ Hectare or _____ in local unit

13. How could you get the above stated amount of land?

- a. Provided by peasant association b. Inherited from my parents c. Purchased it d. Leased it
e. Through share cropping f. Others (please, specify) _____

14. Is there any problem related to having your own land?

- a. Yes b. No

15. If your answer is yes to the question, what are the reasons?

- a. Due to the existing land tenure system b. Due to cultural barriers
c. Others (please, specify) _____

16. Is your farm land situated in a favorable site?

- Yes b. No

17. If you answer is no, what is the reason?

- a. It is as a chance b. There is discrimination between household heads
c. Others (please, specify) _____

18. What has happened to the size of your land holding over the past five years?

- a. Increased b. Decreased c. No change

19. If it has increased, how it becomes so?

- a. due to shared cropped in b. Increased due to purchase c. Increased due to renting land
d. Other (please, specify) _____

20. If has decreased, why that happened?

- a. Decreased due to land distribution due to by PA

b. Decreased due to sharing with children

c. Other (please, specify) _____

21. Do you have access to communal land?

a. Yes b. No

22. If yes, for which of the communal land do you have access?

a. Grazing land b. Communal forest c. Communal water point

d. other (please, specify) _____

23. Please, indicate the type and number of livestock owned by the household

No	Type	
1	Oxen	
2	Cow	
3	Heifer	
4	Bull	
5	Calves	
6	Horses	
7	Mules	
8	Donkey	
9	Goats	
10	Sheep	
11	Chicken	

24. What are the major problems related to owning livestock?

a. shortage of capital b. Lack of man power c. Lack of grazing land

d. Others (please, specify) _____

25. Does your income increased in the past five years?

- a. Yes b. No

26. If the answer is yes to question number 25, what are reasons?

- a. Engaged in off- farm activities b. Got remittance from relatives
c. Got additional land for farming d. Other (please, specify)

27. If the answer is yes to question number 25, what are reasons?

- a. Have been doing the same thing b. Faced with health problem
c. Due to increased family size d. Others (please, specify) _____

28. Is there any opportunity for your family to engage in non-farm activities?

- a. Yes b. No

29. If yes to the above questions, specify the major ones.

30. If the answer is no to question number 28, why not?

31. What are the main constraints you faced in pursuing your livelihood?

- a. Lack of know how b. Lack of capital c. Lack of market facilities
d. Lack of family labor e. Lack of transportation f. Other (please, specify)

32. Is you income enough to sustain your family all the year round?

- a. Yes b. No

33. If it is not enough, how do you supplement it and sustain your family?

- a. Borrow money or grain b. Move to other places (migrate)
c. Sell fixed assets d. sell livestock e. Daily labor

- f. Sell fuel wood/charcoal g. Hunt wild animals
- h. Others (please, specify) _____
34. How far is the nearest market from your village (round trip)?
- Please specify in hour _____ or Kilometers _____
35. What means of transportation do you use?
- a. vehicle b. pack animals c. walking
36. Which month (s) of the year you experience shortage of income?
- a. May b. Jun c. July d. August e. September f. October g. Other _____
37. What are the main factors that adversely affect your livelihood (please, rank them by order of severity)?
- a. Shortage of rainfall b. Too much rain c. Pest infestation (crop disease)
- d. Shortage of farm land e. Lack of agricultural inputs
- f. Lack of labor g. Traditional farming method h. Lack of oxen
- i. Animal Disease j. Others (please, specify) _____
38. Do you take loans?
- a. Yes b. No
39. If yes to the above question, from where do you get the loans?
- a. MFIs b. Local lenders c. Relatives d. Friends me. others (please, specify) _____
40. for what purposes do you take loans most of your time?
- a. To buy agricultural inputs b. To buy consumables c. To buy fixed assets
- d. For medical treatment e. Others (please, specify) _____
41. If you have never taken loans, why not?

- a. High interest b. Due to lack of collateral c. Not in need of taking loan
 - d. others (please, specify) _____
42. Do you have access to agricultural extension services?
- a. Yes b. No
43. If not the above question, what are the reasons?
- a. Have no interest to the services provided b. Non-existence of the services
 - c. Due to sex preference (gender bias) d. Others (please, specify) _____
44. Are you a member of any traditional institutions?
- a. Yes b. No
45. If yes, in which of the institutions do you involve?
- a. Debo b. Idir c. Equb d. Mahiber (senbete)
 - e. Others (please, specify) _____
46. What are the areas of support these institutions provide for their members?
- a. Mutual assistance at times of economic crisis (like crop failure)
 - b. Assistance at times of death of household members
 - c. Assistance at different ceremonies (like wedding)
 - d. Others (please, specify) _____
47. What are the criteria to be member of local institutions?
- a. Kinship ties b. Religion c. Duration of stay in the community
 - d. Social group e. Others (please, specify) _____
48. If you do not belong to any local institutions why not?
- a. Because I am poor b. Lack of trust c. There is nothing to cooperate with
 - d. Some criteria for membership and exclusion

- e.Others (please, specify) _____
49. What crises the household has faced in the past?
- a. Health crises the b. Natural disasters c. Crop failure d. Animal disease outbreak
- e. Indebtedness f. Others (please, specify) _____
50. Do you think that you are vulnerable?
- a. Yes b. No
51. If yes, to what kinds of problems are you vulnerable?
- a. Drought b. Food shortage c. Price fluctuation of agricultural products
- d. Others (please, specify)_____
52. What do you think that causes or aggravates your vulnerability to some of the above problems?
- a. environmental condition (erosion, infertility...)
- b. population increase c. water logging
- d.unfavorable government policy e.others (please, specify)_____
53. How do you try to cope with some of your problem related to your vulnerability?
- a. through aid b. Through social networks (like, Equb, Mahiber, etc.)
- c. Through seasonal movement to other pleas d. Remittance
- e.Through loan f.Others(please,specify) _____

III. Gender Issues

54. How are women perceived in the community?

- a. As equal with that of men
- b. As inferior and subservient to that of men
- c. As useful only for reproduction
- d. Others (please, specify) _____

55. Who is entitled to have land holding rights?

- a. Women
- b. Men
- c. Both have equal rights

56. If both sexes have no equal rights of entitlements to land holding, what are the grounds?
for not entitled equally?

- a. Religious
- b. Cultural
- c. Land tenure system
- d. Others (please, specify)

57. Do both women and men have the same rights of inheritance of properties during?

- a. Yes
- b. No

58. If your answer is no to the above question, what are the reasons?

59. Do all of your children attend school?

- a. Yes
- b. No

60. If your answer is no to the above question, what are the reasons?

61. What priorities govern decisions of household heads to engage in some specific activities?

- a. Maintaining the survival of the household
- b. Accumulation of wealth

- c. Others (please, specify) _____
62. To which of the consumption and other items does the bulk of your income goes?
- a. Food b. Clothing c. On another income generating activities d. Medicine
- e. Social obligations f. Loan Repayment g. Fixed assets h. Household utensils
63. Do you think that there are harmful traditional practices in your community?
- a. Yes b. No
64. If your answer is yes, what are these harmful traditional practices?
- a. Early marriage b. Physical and verbal abuse of women c. Child labor
- d. Others (please, specify) _____
65. What do you think is the impact of these harmful traditional practices will be?
- a. Demoralizing and reduce women to dependence status by subordinating
- b. Constraining women not to have ownership and inheritance right
- c. Health risk

Annex 2

Checklists for FGD, key Informant Interview and Observation

i. Discussion topics with Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office

- Demographic profile
- Socio-economic situation of the communities
- Opportunities and challenges of households in the communities under study in achieving sustainable livelihood
- The organizational arrangements in assisting households to make a living
- Livelihood contexts of the communities

ii. Discussion topics with Woreda Women Affairs Office

- What kinds of services are they providing for different households in the communities?
- How do they perceive the existing gender relations in the woreda?
- What are the major problems they are dealing with?
- What are the major causes of the problems raised above?
- What do they think about the implications of these problems on the livelihoods of the household?
- What kind of organizational arrangements exist to assist to households pursue a sustainable livelihood?

iii. Discussion topics with Religious Leaders/ Community Elders

- How do they view the existing gender relations in the communities?
- What are the cultural or religious bases for the existing gender relations?
- What could be the role of religion in creating equality among community members?
- What is the impact of the existing gender relations in pursuit of livelihood by different households?
- How do they view the prevailing livelihood contexts?

iv. Discussion topics with Development Agents

- How do they perceive the existing gender relations in their respective communities and what do they think it is so?
- What are the challenges and opportunities available in the communities in pursuing livelihoods for female headed households and male headed households?
- What are the bases for treatment of households in providing services for them to have a sustainable development?
- What should be done to create equality among community members so as to achieve a sustainable development?

v. Discussion topics for the Focus Group Discussion (both for FHHs and MHHs)

- How do they observe the existing gender relations in their respective community?
- What are the major challenges/ constraints of making a livelihood?
- What are the opportunities that exist in to improve their livelihood?

- What needs to be done by different stakeholders (relevant government offices, religious leaders and community elders, etc) to improve situation so that sustainable livelihood could be ensured

vi. Check list for Observation

- What are the activities households are doing to make a living?
- Who does what in the respective communities?
- What kind of institutions exist and how they are operating?
- What kind of social services are available to the community?
- Resource base, potential and opportunities for the households to make a living?