

Research paper

Resettlement and Livelihoods of the Settlers in Ethiopia

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Purpose: The objectives of the paper are to appraise the experience of resettlement in Ethiopia, causes, impacts and its contribution especially in Ethiopia.

Methodology: It was undertaken by compiling, analyzing and discussing different secondary materials which are believed to address our scope.

Findings: The causes of resettlement according to this review are inter-regional conflicts, boundary and political conflicts and disaster induced resettlement and its impact on land use, vegetation cover and conservation; and deforestation are presented. The contribution of resettlement based on the reviewed documents are natural capital (land and water), human capital (education and health services), financial capital (access to credit and cash generation), physical capital (livestock, transport, market link and irrigation canals), and social capital (local social institutions).

Practical implication: The results of this article imply that there is a need to closely follow up the settlers to address the impacts of resettlement and appreciate its contribution for the peoples and areas.

Originality value: The potential conclusion that the authors forwarded based on this review is collective engagement to minimize its negative impact and call up to peaceful conflict resolution which is inclusive and participatory by taking from both indigenous and government mechanism that will result in a new long term stability of the peoples at large.

Keywords: Resettlement, Causes, Impacts, Contribution, Ethiopia

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INTRODUCTION

Resettlement or internal displacement definitions were modified from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2004) and African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displace Persons (African Union (AU) (2009). Hence, it refers to persons or groups of persons who are Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa (Volume 13, No.2, 2011) ISSN: 1520-5509 Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pennsylvania 270 forcibly or voluntarily forced to flee or leave their places of habitual

residence in order to avoid the effects of natural and/or human-made disasters and resettle within internationally recognized state borders. Resettlement refers to a planned or spontaneous phenomenon of population relocation (Dessalegn, 2003). Resettlement can be implemented either voluntary or forced. When people resettle in a new place under their own initiative, this may be called 'spontaneous resettlement'. If the resettlement is imposed on people by an external agent in a planned and controlled manner, it may be called 'planned resettlement' (Gebre, 2002).

The history of the country is mostly related to migration

and resettlement process for various reasons and resettlement, whether it is self-or government sponsored, has started long ago. The first government sponsored resettlement took place during the imperial period. The second massive resettlement which was condemned by many authors, took place during the *Derg* regime. This resettlement was said to have claimed the life and desertion of thousands and was a dark spot in the settlement history of the country (Shiferaw, 1986; Tom, 1994; Kassahun, 2000). The current government started the third state sponsored program. The program was covering the period 2003–2006 and planned to resettle about 2.2 million people from drought prone areas to areas of fertile soil and abundant rainfall (USAID, 2007). Many writers have also criticized this program and blamed the government for not learning from the past failures.

Recently, resettlement was took place in Ethiopia because of border conflict between Somali and Oromo, Drought, Disaster and etc. Guji Oromo and Gedeo peoples, benishangul-gumuz and east and west wollega Zones. Generally, the paper was intended to review about the impacts of resettlement on the livelihoods and agricultural activities of the resettlers. So, the objective of the review was: To review the overview of resettlement in Ethiopia, to review the causes behind resettlement and its impacts on agriculture, forest, and land uses; and to review the contribution of resettlement on the livelihoods and food security of the settlers.

The historical background of resettlement in Ethiopia

As it could the case elsewhere in the world, people have been gradually and spontaneously drifting from stressful to more congenial areas in Ethiopia in search of better natural resources, security and hospitality since time immemorial. The drift had been from the north to the south to less populated areas (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), 2004). Regarding planned resettlement, however, Ethiopia has begun to practice population relocation most notably since 1958 when the Imperial Government (1930-1974) established the first known planned resettlement scheme in the present day SNNP Regional State (Cernea, 2000; Gebre, 2004/09; Fosse, 2006).

Resettlement schemes during the Imperial Period involved only 20,000 households (Feleke, 2004). It was also designed to achieve specific and limited objectives. At that time, state sponsored-resettlement was largely undertaken to promote two objectives though failed to meet any. The first of these was to rationalize land use on government owned land and thus raise state revenue. The second was to provide additional resources for the hard pressed northern peasantry by relocating them to the southern regions. However, the results were

generally poor. The schemes failed and most settlers left the project. This was because of inadequate planning, inappropriate settler selection, inadequate budgetary support, and inexperienced planning and executive staffs (Pankhurst & Piguët, 2004).

It was during the Military Government (*Derg*) (1974-1991) that intensive and widespread resettlement schemes took place in Ethiopian history. *Derg* argued that the major objective of the program was to promote economic development and improve the living standards of the rural people. Specifically, it aimed to ease the tension of farmland scarcity in central and northern parts of the country, combat drought, avert famine, and increase agricultural productivity. Initially, it insisted the resettlement program as purely voluntary and only a mechanism to organize the haphazardly drifting population in huge quantities from overworked and drought-stricken areas to more fertile and sparsely populated ones. However, practically the implementation of the program seemed to have the characteristics of forced or compulsory-voluntary relocation. *Derg* implemented it forcefully and even on quota bases without the consent of the potential resettlers (Ofcansky & LaVerle, 2002). Gebre (2004) clearly indicates the forceful mass dislocation practices to the extent of compelling the potential resettlers from market places and farms and sending them off collectively to the new areas where they had no prior information. At the new areas, (for example, Beles Resettlement Scheme) they had been deprived of their basic human rights, such as freedom of movement and social gatherings, thinking that the resettles may get away.

Derg resettled 38,818 households by 1976 in 88 resettlement sites. By 1982, there were 112 planned resettlement center inhabited by more than 120,000 resettlers. During the ten-year development plan period (1984-1994), *Derg* planned to relocate 115,000 peoples. Two months later, however, the government revised its plan and announced to resettle about 300,000 famine victim households (equivalent to 1.5 million peoples) from the most severely affected northern parts of the country to areas in west and southwest that had adequate resources and rainfall (Getachew, 1989; Gebre, 2009). One should note here to what extent it was haphazard and hasty. Of this, the government managed to resettle about 600,000 people (Mberu, 2006), Alula (2009) says 627,000 people, as of 1986 to three settlement areas. More than 250,000 displaces went to Wollega; about 150,000 were resettled in Gambela, and over 100,000 resettlers went to Pawe (Gebre, 2004 says 82,000) in the present day Benishangul-Gumuz National Regional State. In addition, another 78,000 resettlers went to Kafa, Shewa, and West Gonder (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development /MoARD/, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

This work is based on reviewing retrieving secondary sources, in addition to our observation made on resettlement and livelihood of the society and impacts of the resettlement. Therefore, the data that are proposed to be useful for this paper writing were obtained from different published materials, Google search, Google scholars, library plus harvesting, own observation, and word type searching.

Analysis and writing

The above mentioned materials were compiled, analyzed and written systematically based on the scientific write-up requirement of the review paper. First, the data's are organized and searched through searching important concepts related to the issue under consideration. Secondly, the necessary points related resettlement and displacements were identified. Thirdly, they were analyzed and presented accordingly.

Causes of Resettlement in Ethiopia

Inter-Regional Conflicts: Benishangul-Gumuz Region

In September 2018, violence erupted in the Western part of the country, along the border between Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz, an area that had seen simmering tensions in previous years. Kamashi Zone of Benishangul Gumuz Region (an area characterized by a mixed population comprising ethnic Gumuz, Oromo, Amhara, and other groups) saw a major spike of violence at the end of September, reportedly after an attack against Gumuz officials traveling in Oromia Region that occurred on September 25th.³⁸ The violence provoked a major wave of displacement from and within Kamashi Zone, and from neighboring areas of East and West Wellega Zones of Oromia.

Consequently, the number of displaced people reportedly reached over 100,000, with more than 80,000 IDPs living in East and West Wellega and some 20,000 in Benishangul Gumuz, where a complex security situation did not allow rapid access to the affected areas. Two months after the displacement, reported figures had spiked up to 250,000 people between the two Regions, 39 with numbers in East and West Wellega Zones reaching as high as 101,000 and 81,000 respectively.

Boundary and political conflict: Somalia and Oromia

This displacement was reported along the Somali-Oromia border since mid-January/early February 2018 (some of these were not captured by the DTM 9, which

was conducted over the month of January). Ethnic Somalis were reported to be moving out of Negele town and surrounding kebeles in Guji zone of Oromia Region. Most were reported arriving in Hudet woreda (Dawa zone, Somali region), where they congregated in Ceel Maan IDP site, a spontaneous settlement in the vicinity of Hudet town. As of mid-February, NDRMC registered 7,797 newly displaced households in that site. Other sporadic displacements were reported in February, towards Chinaksen woreda in Oromia region, as well as Lagahida, Salahad and Meyu Muluke woredas in Erer zone in Somali region.

Moyale, a border town between Ethiopia and Kenya, has strategic significance as a gateway to Kenya from southern Ethiopia. An asphalt road connects it to Addis Ababa. Before the reorganization of local and regional governments in 1992, it was under the Borana administrative region and served as the capital of the Moyale awraja. Like other towns in southern Ethiopia, the development of the Moyale town was associated with the expansion of the Ethiopian State at the end of the 19th century and the formation of administrative and military centers in newly conquered territories. Thus, the majority of the residents was in the service of the government and largely extracted from the northern and central parts of the country. Since 1992, both the Oromia and the Somali regions claim the town and its surrounding areas. The conflicting claim over Moyale town between the two regions stems from the division that occurred among the three Afaan-Oromo speaking clans over their ethnic identity that is, the Borana, the Garre and the Gabbra.

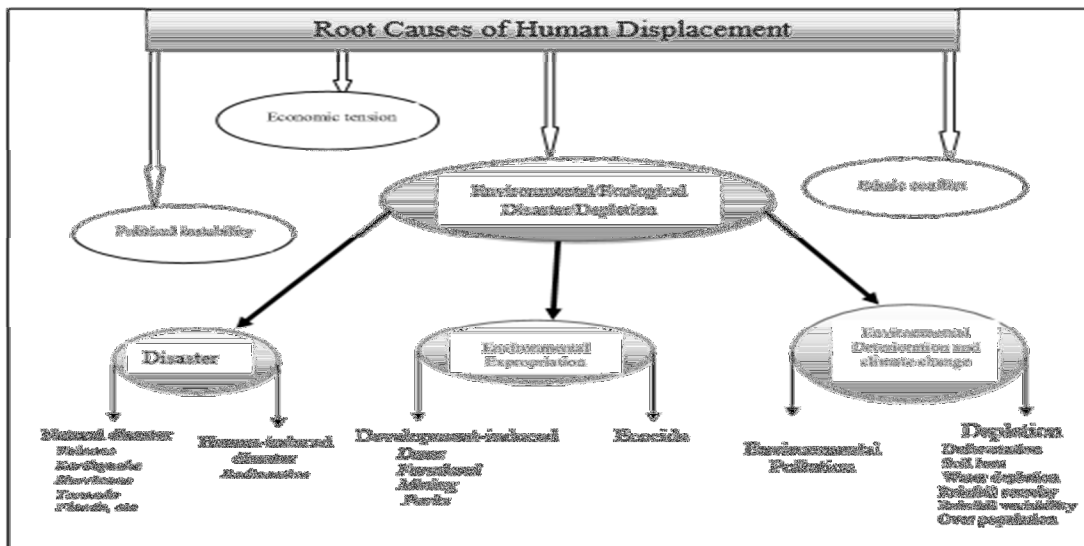
Disaster-Induced Displacement

The United Nations has defined a disaster as “a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources. By this definition, not every fire, earthquake, drought, epidemic, or industrial accident constitutes a disaster, only those where the losses exceed a society's ability to cope and external aid is required. Most classifications of disaster identify two main types: natural and human-made. Natural disasters may be broken down into three sub-categories—sudden impact, slow onset, and epidemic diseases—while human-made disasters include two sub-categories industrial/technological disasters and complex emergencies. Sudden impact disasters include floods, earthquakes, tidal waves, tropical storms, volcanic eruptions, and landslides. Floods are the type of natural disaster most frequently associated with sudden migration of large populations and food shortages. Earthquakes cause the greatest number of deaths and overwhelming infrastructural damage. 2. Slow-onset

disasters include droughts, famine, environmental degradation, deforestation, pest infestation, and desertification (conversion of arable lands to deserts). These disasters are usually the result of adverse weather conditions combined with poor land use. 3. Epidemic diseases such as cholera, measles, dysentery, respiratory infections, malaria, and, increasingly, HIV, generally do not trigger large-scale displacement even during a severe outbreak although they often threaten displaced populations, especially those clustered in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions following a major disaster. 4. Industrial/technological disasters result from a society's industrial and technological activities that lead to

pollution, spillage of hazardous materials, explosions, and fires. They may occur from poor planning and construction of facilities or from neglect of safety procedures. Sudden-onset disasters such as earthquakes and floods as well as human factors such as armed conflict or a terrorist attack may trigger secondary disasters such as fires, industrial explosions, and pollution/contamination. Complex emergencies are usually human-made with multiple contributing factors (these may include war, internal conflict, and natural disaster) and are marked by large-scale displacement, food insecurity, human rights violations, and elevated mortality.

Figure 1: Causes of Human Displacement



Source: Modified from UNHCR (1999), Bates (2002)

Impacts of Resettlement in Ethiopia

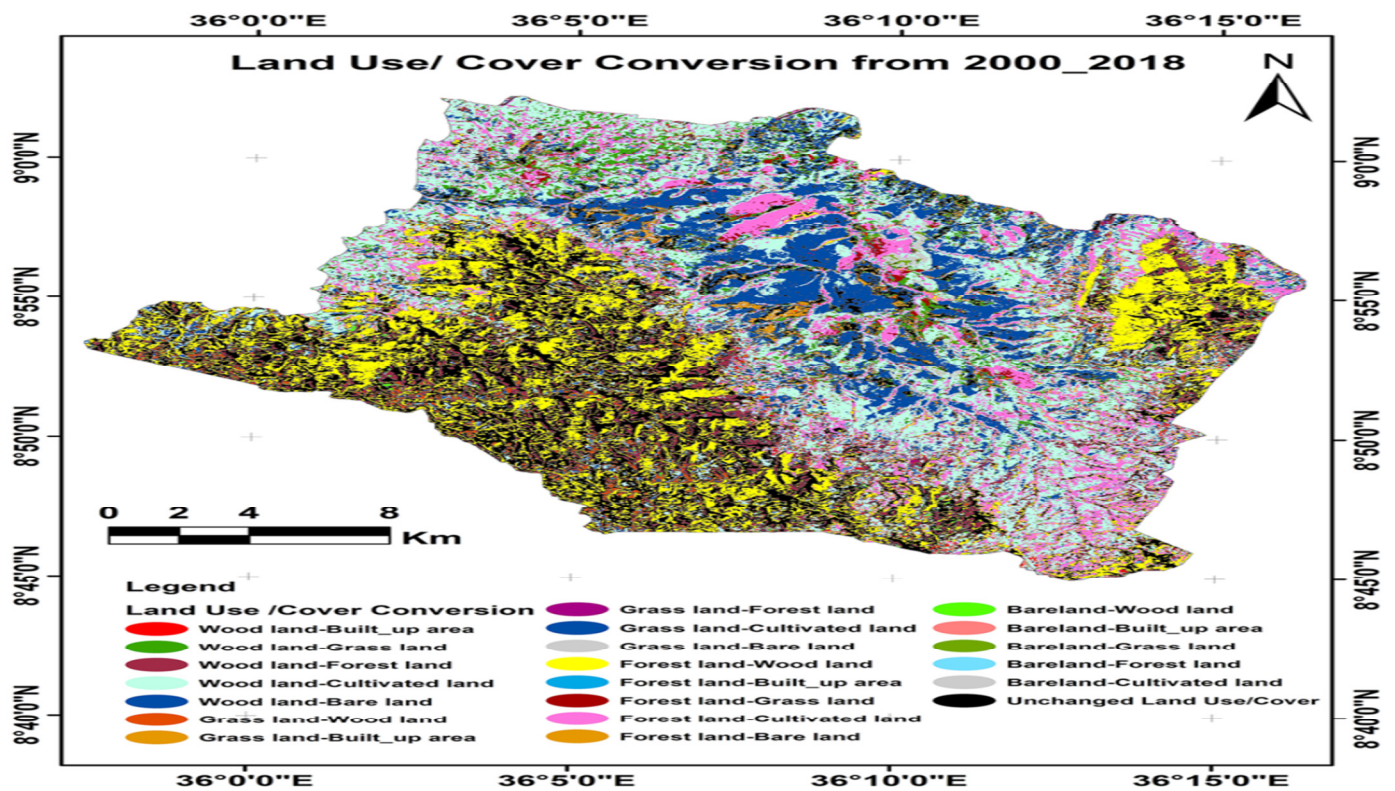
The Impact of Resettlement on Land-Use/Land-Cover Changes

Shrub-grassland was the predominant type of LU/LC (land-use/land-cover) in 1984 and 1999 in the Nonno district. It covered the enormous part of the area in its southern and southwestern sections (5/1984/ and 5/1999/). Shrub-grassland alarmingly reduced to 24.43 percent of the spatial coverage of the district in 2007. Amazingly, cultivated land constituted only 2.34 percent and 3.42 percent in 1984 and 2002, respectively. This makes the area different from the other highland parts of the country where cultivated land has been dominating for over long period of time as noted in Belay (2002) and Solomon (2005) among others.

The proportion of cultivated land increased amazingly to 23.85 percent of the area's spatial coverage in 2007 i.e. within 8 years. These, along with the other firsthand data from the elderly community, confirm the fact that the area has been densely vegetated and sparsely populated until recently. The vast coverage of the northern, northwestern, and the northeastern parts of the area were covered by grassland land-cover types in 1984 and 1999.

The current resettlers' livelihood strategies are found to be crucial driving force for the existing rapid LU/LC changes. Agricultural activities and firewood/charcoal production are among such fundamental conversion forces. The farmers are

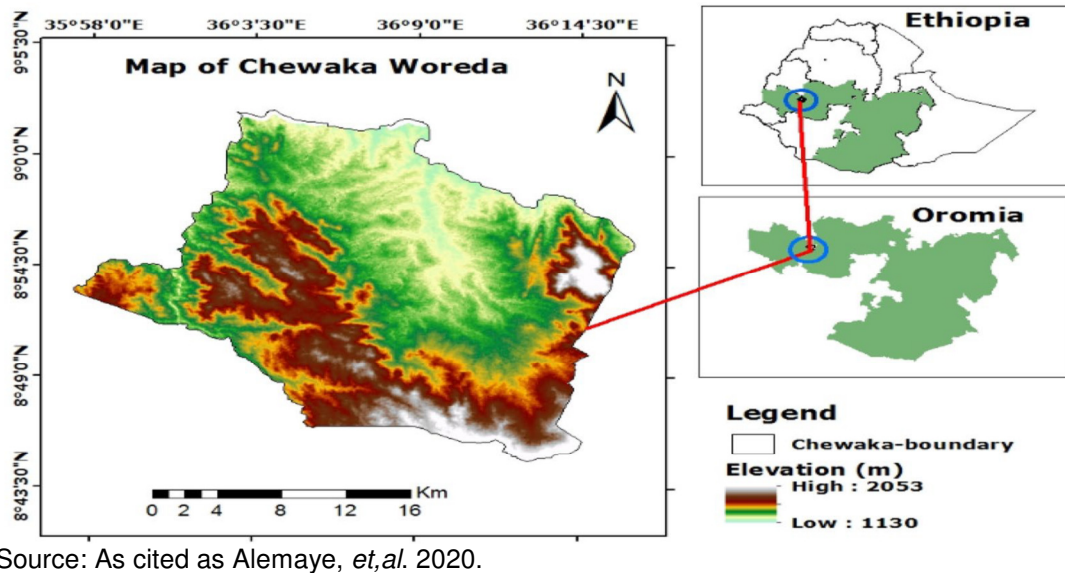
currently alarmingly converting the land into plots of farmlands in order to increase their crop output and cope with the problems of food shortfalls. Meanwhile, some rural households are increasingly engaged in charcoal preparation and firewood extraction as lucrative livelihood strategies. Particularly, those economically dejected households are highly dependent on charcoal and firewood sale to fulfill the livelihood requirements of their family. The combined effect of these factors certainly results in rapid conversion and/or modification of the district's LU/LC. The existing high rate of population growth and the resultant newly emerging households seems exerting another immense pressure on land resources in the area. The emerging young households need cultivable land for livelihood purposes. This, undoubtedly, intensifies the conversion and/or modification processes of the land use types. They may be forced to encroach into vegetated lands for cropping, grazing, and settlement.



Source: As cited as Alemaye, *et.al.* 2020.

Impact of resettlement on vegetation cover and its implications on conservation

Currently, Ethiopian government has carried out large scale intra-regional resettlement programs in four regional states of the country (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNPR) in 2003 to attain food security for 2.2 million chronically food insecure people (Hammond 2008). The programs are carried out in different areas of the four regions. The government resettled massive number of people from drought-hit areas of East and West Hararge zones to Chewaka area as a response to the recurrent droughts, scarcity of farm lands and food insecurity problems (Jaleta *et al.* 2011; Taye and Mberengwa 2013). Besides, deforestation, uncontrolled farmland and settlement expansion, forest fire, unwise use and indiscriminate cutting of trees are the major observable problems in the area.



Major Environmental Impacts

The major negative impact of the resettlement project is due to the construction of new access roads within the resettlement area. That is, from site clearing up to completion there will be a negative environmental impact on the general environment. This will affect some of the permanent indigenous trees. The construction of roads and other structures (mainly houses) will increase flood/storm water generation by reducing on-site infiltration. The likely solid and liquid waste generation from the relocated people will also have a negative impact on the environment especially for the first one to two years until the relocated people construct sanitary facilities and adapt to the area in all circumstances.

Impacts of resettlement on deforestation

In many parts of Ethiopia, the extent of forest cover has reduced through time due to continuous deforestation (FAO 2010). Likewise, it is one of the major threats to the forests and woodlands of Chewaka district due to ongoing population growth. The clearing of land for cultivation, growing demand for household energy and construction materials has aggravated the problem of deforestation in the district.



Source: Cited as Moti Jaleta, *et. al.* 2011

The Contribution of Rural Resettlement to the Livelihoods of Settlers in Ethiopia

Livelihood Assets of Settlers: The main purpose of this study is that exploring the livelihood status of the settlers on the basis of the key livelihood assets. Therefore, based on the analytical framework of the study, the five categories of assets/capitals were examined during to assess the success of the resettlement program in the study area. These are natural capital (land and water), human capital (education and health services), financial capital (access to credit and cash generation), physical capital (livestock, transport, market link and irrigation canals), and social capital (local social institutions). Accordingly, the discussion below addresses all these assets of livelihood.

Human Capital: Here in order to examine the human capital of participants, the study conducted by Terefe Zeleqe (2014) considers the educational status, access to education and health services of the settlers. Regarding the educational status of the participants, the study shows that majority of respondents (42 percent) are illiterate and none of them exceeded grade 10. The study also reveals that only 7.3 percent of them attended grade 9-10. The reason behind this might be the lack of educational access in their place of origin at their age of education and if any, it was far away from their residence. This could be one of the reasons why households in the study area have been engaged on agricultural activity as the dominant livelihood source since it can be undertaken with help of experience gained from family. According to Moser (1998), human capital development is highly related to the economic and social infrastructure provision. The availability of social services such as education and health care services certainly promote the skills/ knowledge and physical capability of people respectively. In this regard, the program document of the government declares that the minimum social services and infrastructure facilities to be established in new resettlement areas prior to the arrival of settlers. It is clear that the establishments of these services like educational and health institutions have paramount contribution for building the human capitals to settlers.

It is clear that the lack of access to adequate health services would affect the capability of the settlers to carry out activities in a sustainable manner during farming periods and deter them to involve in non- farm activities that could help them to generate additional income. In this regard, it can be argued that there would be a better human capital in the resettlement kebeles for the future as far as access to education since they can easily get access from neighbor kebeles and ongoing constructions of schools. In contrast, labor productivity could be a challenge due to poor access to health facilities that would negatively affect human capital for the future to sustain their livelihoods.

Social capital: The extent to which a community itself can be considered an asset that reduces vulnerability or increases opportunities depend on the existence of social capital (Moser, 1998). In line with this argument, the study conducted in chewaka also attempts to go through the existing local relation mechanisms in the area. In this regard, it has been observed that the prominent local institutions in the study area which do have a significant role in maintaining the social relationship among the people are church groups, rotating savings/iqqub, and iddirs/funeral society and labor exchange mechanisms like debbo.

Natural Capital: According to research conducted by Terefe Zeleqe in Chewaka, Land is the main natural capital in subsistence agriculture. This is also supported the fact that almost all people consider land as the main asset either in rural or urban areas. In this regard, the study revealed that the settlers have been selected due to their small landholding size in their origin. In their current resettlement area, they confirmed that they are living in an area where the size of land owned and cultivated is larger than what they had in their origin prior to resettlement. The resettlement program document also indicates that each settler has to be given with 2 hectares of farming land in resettlement areas.

Physical Capital: Given the fact that agriculture is the main activity in the resettlement area using draught animals, oxen have a greater importance of productive utility in the farming. This is to say, households that lack access to oxen face difficulties in farming their land. In line with this argument, Messay (2009) claimed that oxen ownership plays a significant role in improving the livelihood of farming household by ensuring their food security status. Besides, the livestock rearing has paramount contribution in building the physical assets of people. In this regard, different studies have found the appealing increment in production of livestock (cow, ox, sheep, goat and poultry in standard of Tropical Livestock Unit/TLU/ to household heads after resettlement program in the study area.

Financial Capital: In the SNNPR, there is Omo micro finance institute which is the dominant financial institution that provides credit service to farmers and cooperatives to some extent, which are regulated by the local government. In addition, local people borrow money from their relatives, neighbors and friend during adverse circumstances. It is obvious that the availability of access to credit could have its own contribution in solving the financial constraints of farmers. In this regard, many studies addresses the financial capital of settlers with use of their access to credit service of any source within a year and change in their income status before and after resettlement.

CONCLUSION

Resettlement is not a new phenomenon in history of Ethiopia. Recently, resettlement was took place in Ethiopia because of border conflict between Somali and Oromo, Drought, Disaster in Guji Oromo and Gedeo peoples, benishangul-gumuz and east and west Wollega Zones. Generally, the paper was intended to review about the impacts of resettlement on the livelihoods and agricultural activities of the resettlers. So, the objective of the review was: To review the overview of resettlement in Ethiopia, to review the causes behind resettlement and its impacts on agriculture, forest, and land uses; and to review the contribution of resettlement on the livelihoods and food security of the settlers.

Based on some reviewed materials the authors indicated the experience of resettlement in Ethiopia, causes, impacts and its contribution especially the case of Chewaka district in Buno Bedele zone previously the part of Ilu Ababora's zone, Kamashi zone of Benishangul-gumuz region, East and west Wollega zones, East and west Hararge zones, Borena Zone and SNNP region. Resettlement in Ethiopia is not a recent phenomenon. It experienced from the time of the regime up to now even though its prevalence, amount and area of settlers are different. The causes of resettlement according to this review are inter-regional conflicts, boundary and political conflicts and disaster induced resettlement and its impact on land use, vegetation cover and conservation; and deforestation are presented. The contribution of resettlement based on the reviewed documents are natural capital (land and water), human capital (education and health services), financial capital (access to credit and cash generation), physical capital (livestock, transport, market link and irrigation canals), and social capital (local social institutions). The potential conclusion that the authors forwarded based on this review is collective engagement to minimize its negative impact and call up to peaceful conflict resolution which is inclusive and participatory by taking from both indigenous and government mechanism that will result in a new long term stability of the peoples at large. Hence, working towards positive resettlement that improve the settlers livelihoods, political situation and economy need to be appreciated if bringing social as well as national change is required.

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