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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNSMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN IMPROVING
THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE RURAL COMMUNITIES: THE CASE OF
MENSCHEN FUR MENSCHEN IN MERHABITE WOREDA OF THE AMHARA
NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIERMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER IN RURAL LIVELHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT

BY
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Title

***The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in
Improving the Livelihoods of the Rural Communities:
The case of Menschen Fur Menschen in Merabhebeta
Woreda of the Amhara National Regional State.***

By

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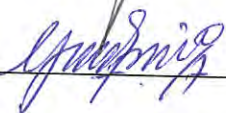
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Acronyms

AIDS: Acquire Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

ANRS: The Amhara National Regional State.

CRDA: The Christian Relief and Development Association.

CSA: Central statistical Agency.

CSO: Civic Society Organizations.

DA: Development Agent.

DPPC: The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission.

EPRDF: The Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front.

FGD: Focus Group Discussion.

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation.

HIV: Human Immune Virus.

KA: Kebele Administration.

KII: Key informant Interview.

MOJ: the Ministry of justice.

MWARDO: Merhabete Woreda Agricultural and Rural Development Office.

MWEO: Merhabete Woreda Educational Office.

MMFSMA: Menschen fur Menschen Foundation Statistics of Main Achievements.

MWHO: Merhabete Woreda Health Office.

MWIO: Merhabete Woreda Information Office.

NGO: Non-Government Organization.

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

PASDEP

SLA: Sustainable Livelihood Approach.

SNNPR: Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples Regional states

SPSS: Statistical Packages for Social Science.

UNDP: The United Nations Development Program.

UNO: The United Nations Organization.

Abstract

In Ethiopia there are relatively large numbers of NGOs that are engaged in development activities in different parts of the country these days. However, there are contradictory views about the potential roles that NGOs can play in the improvement of the livelihood of the rural communities. In view of this fact the study has assessed the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the rural communities by taking Menschen fur Menschen's roles as a case study.

The study was conducted in Merhabete Woreda of the Amhara National Regional State. The Woreda is among the areas that have experienced consistent interventions of Menschen fur Menschen for the last 15 years. The study used Sustainable Livelihood Model as a conceptual framework.

Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete was engaged in five related areas, by embracing the major livelihood challenges in the Woreda in to five components. These are the educational, health, infrastructure and the women and development components. Each component had other sub-component under it.

In its development intervention Menschen fur Menschen was privileged by winning the trust and willingness of the people of Merhabete to work with it. Equally, both natural and manmade challenges have been stood in the ways of Menschen fur Menschen development endeavors in the Woreda. Some of these challenges were the topography of the Woreda, dependency of the local population and the problems related with the sustainability of the development projects.

In face of the opportunities and challenges Menschen fur Menschen have successes and limitations. The successes were resulted from partially from the exploitation of the opportunities. Some of the main areas of the successes of Menschen fur Menschen were in the areas of facilitating access to education and health institutions to the rural communities by constructing schools and health centers.

The limitations of Menschen fur Menschen are highly related to failures to promote the sustainability of its development projects mainly the potable water sources, the preservation and rehabilitation of the natural environment and the credit and saving service. Moreover, Menschen fur Menschen's records in promoting comprehensive participations of the local communities in all its development projects were limited. Other limitations of Menschen fur Menschen were failure to diversify the economic activities of the population and failure to adopt right advocacy approach.

Keywords: Roles, NGO and Livelihood.

Chapter One

General Background

1.1 Introduction

Ethiopia is one of the poor African nations. It is located in eastern Africa with a total surface area of 1,112,000 square Kilometers. The topography of the country is a mixture of a variety of landscapes including mountains, gorges, dense forests, lowlands and plains. The average temperature of the country is between 55 and 73 Degree Fahrenheit. Hence, it is highly affected by the various levels of altitude of the regions in the country (Addisu, 2008).

Ethiopia is the second populous country in Africa next to Nigeria with a total number of population 73.9 million. From the total population 85 percent is residing in the rural parts of the country with agriculture as a primary economic activity (CSA, 2008).

In Ethiopia despite efforts of the government, Private sector and NGOs, poverty is still the major challenge of the country. The country is suffering from huge resource exhaustion and human distress because of a variety of manmade and natural calamities.

On the other hand, although there is no endorsement from different stakeholders, the current government of Ethiopia claims that it has achieved great success in improving the life of the poor. However, there is wide range of consensus that the majority of the population of the country is living in poverty.

The level of poverty in Ethiopia is worse in the rural parts of the country compared with the urban centers. This is one of the justifications for giving more weight to the rural parts of the country in the development philosophy of the current Ethiopian government (PASDEP, 2006/7). In addition to its efforts, the government of Ethiopia encourages the involvement of the private Sector, foreign investment and there are large numbers of NGOs that are engaged in the development processes in Ethiopia. Hence, in order to alleviate the problems of under development, mobilizing available resources-human and

material is required. Consequently, there comes the need for integrated endeavor from the community and different developmental institutions to work on it as it seems more challenging for poor countries like Ethiopia to fulfill these goals without seeking the support of other stakeholders such as donors, NGOs, local community and the private investors. Although this is the case, the concern of this study is mainly on the role of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the rural communities with particular reference to Merhabete Woreda.

According to a report by OECD (1983), Non –Government organizations constitute the third major channel through which development assistance is provided to peoples of the Third World after bilateral and multilateral aid agencies. In addition to this, nowadays NGOs are considered as important development partners of the Third World. In connection with this, Tegegn (1994: 16-17) states that:

Today it would appear strange to talk of the Third world development without mentioning NGOs with the increasing number of NGOs entering the development field and with growing recognition and support they are getting from the public, rich governments and donor agencies around the world, NGOs have increasingly become important in the development process of the Third world.

In Ethiopia the number of NGOs (both local and international) has showed tremendous increase in the past few decades. These NGOs have been working on different sectors in different parts of the country. Their involvement ranges from provision of immediate needs in the form of relief assistance to rehabilitation and development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Recurrent drought and environmental crisis coupled with deep-rooted poverty have made the living condition of the people of Merhabete Woreda difficult. The governments of Ethiopia and NGOs have tried to avert the problems of poverty by mobilizing huge amount of resources. In addition, Relief and Rehabilitation Programs have been implemented to bring positive changes in the life of the rural communities for many decades. Different development programs such as Integrated Rural Development Program, Food Security Programs, and Safety Net Program were implemented in the

areas to address the problems of the rural population. However, all these attempts hardly succeeded in bringing changes in the livelihood of the rural community. Still the communities are dependant on rain feed subsistence agriculture. On top of that, there is high level of dependency on donor agencies like NGOs and the government. Even though a number of NGOs have been contributing their outmost efforts to combat the problem, their intervention approaches, in most cases, were not participatory. Meanwhile, the problems of the poor communities are also multi-folded.

Development is a complex process that needs the participation of all parts of the society. History has clearly manifested that governments alone rarely succeeded in improving the livelihood of the poor and eradicating poverty. Besides the efforts of the current government of Ethiopia, there are large numbers of NGOs involved in different parts of the country in various development activities. Their roles are claimed to be additional forces to increase the impact to development programs and activities in grassroots development and poverty alleviation (Browne, 1999).

Despite their efforts being made, the role of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the poor and disadvantaged people is highly criticized. Many of the criticisms resulted from: addressing the short term needs of the society and focusing on food aid. This in turn discourages hard working habit and creates dependency in the society. Moreover, they are unable to reach the poorest of the poor (Abera, 2006). In relation to this Riddle and Robinson in Shiferaw (2002:19) assert that:

In general, while NGO projects reach poor people, they tend not to reach to the very poorest. Furthermore, as NGO projects tend to be small scale, the total numbers assisted are also small. It is also rare for NGO projects to be financially sufficient. At times too, the NGO's concern to keep costs down the minimum has meant that the level and quality of the benefits have been adversely affected.

Moreover, there are also NGOs that are working in the Third World with implicit objectives. These implicit objectives could be either making themselves rich in the name of the poor or realizing their political and religious objectives in the recipient country (Hancock, 1989).

On the other hand some scholars (see OECD, 1988) and the NGOs believe that –NGOs are playing significant roles in improving the livelihood of the poor and in the overall development of the Third World. They are claiming that NGOs are playing important roles in poverty reduction through delivering different services, building capacity, advocacy programs etc. (OECD, 1983).

Despite these views there are demands among different stakeholders to use all possible opportunities and options on how the government, NGOs and local communities can work as partners to improve the livelihood of the rural community. Different alternatives should be investigated to enhance participations of the rural communities to solve their day-to-day problems, and to benefit the usually forgotten and vulnerable sections of the communities.

In view of the ideas discussed above, and in connection with the contemporary developmental strategies of the government, this study has assessed the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the poor with particular emphasis on ‘Menschen fur Menschen’ in Merhabete Woreda of the Amhara National Regional State.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the rural community in the case of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete Woreda of Northern Shewa in the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS).

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- assess the roles NGOs are playing in improving the livelihood of the poor in

Merhabete Woreda by identifying their intervention mechanisms in the areas of education, health, potable water supply, construction of roads, credit and saving service and the conservation and rehabilitation of the natural environment.

- identify the major opportunities and/or challenges in the participation of NGOs in the improvement of the livelihood of the poor of Merhabete Woreda.
- assess the level of participation by the local population, and the sustainability of the development activities that has been done by the NGOs.
- identify and forward possible recommendations on the ways of improving NGOs' contribution in improving the livelihood of the communities of Merhabete.

1.4 Research Questions

The study raises some key questions related to the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the poor rural communities in the Woreda. Some of these questions include.

- What significant roles did NGOs make for the improvement of the livelihood of the poor communities of the Merabete Woreda?
- What are the challenges and opportunities that NGOs faced in their interventions to improve the livelihood of the people of Merabete?
- What important roles did the local population play in the development of their region in line with the NGOs?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will benefit different bodies in many dimensions:

- Theoretically, NGOs will gain deep insight on how to go about improving the livelihoods of the rural communities, poverty reduction etc.
- Practically, it brings valid and reliable community based development activities to the scene by NGOs and the Government.
- It also invites other researchers to undertake deep and rigorous investigations in the area.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was concentrated in the assessment of the contributions of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the poor communities of Merhabete Woreda. Due to financial and time constraints the study could not make comprehensive study about the involvement of NGOs in all other Weredas that have experienced NGOs intervention in Northern Shewa.

1.7 Structure of the Study

This thesis is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter is background information that consists of the research problem, the objectives, significance and limitations of the study. Chapter two provides a review of related literature relevant to the subject under study. The third chapter is about the various methods and methodologies applied in the research. In this chapter the sampling procedure, methods of data collection and analyses are explained. Chapter four is concerned with the background information about the socio-economic features of the study area. Chapter five and six are concerned with the analysis of the research findings. The final chapter, chapter seven presents the summary and the recommendations of the study.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Participation in Development

The participation of the local population in the development process was originated among international development agencies in the 1970s. The need for participation was arise due to a desire to improve the effectiveness of the development process through greater inclusion of the rural poor (Campbell and Salagrama, 2000).

Despite the wide consensus among the various development agents about the importance of participation of the local population in the development process, there is no one comprehensive definition that describes what participation of the local population means and how it works in development. But there are some attempts to give definition of participation of the local population in development. According to the World Bank, *Participation is a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them* (UNDP, 1994). With regard to rural development, *participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs.* (Cohen and Uphoff, 1977 in UNDP, 1994). Ideally participation means *putting the beneficiaries at the centre of a development process that they will drive and continuously adjust, according to their own learning processes and needs* (UNDP, 1994).

Degree of Participation

There are various degrees of participation of the local population in the process of development of their respective regions. The level of participation can vary from simple consultation to controlling the development projects. There are five major stages of participation of the local population in development (UNDP, 1994). These are:



Source: adopted from UNDP 1994.

Information

Giving information relevant to intervention by any development agent from the local population is the first of the degrees of participation in development. People can participate in the development process as informants about the socio economic and political profiles of their regions that have relevance for the development interventions by any development agent.

Consultation

The second stage in the participation of the local population in the development of their respective regions is consultation. Here they are expected to discuss issues related with the major livelihood problems in their regions and solutions, resource bases of their regions and the likes with the development agents.

Joint Planning

The third level in the degree of participation of the local people in development is joint planning. This stage leads to action plans of multiple perspectives based on the information from the local people and analysis of findings by the development agents. In addition the local people have say on the analysis of the major livelihood challenges.

Decision Making

The vital level in the degree of participation by the local population in development is the power of decision making. In this stage upon negotiations and then consensus among the local population and the development agents' collective decision is made about the

development interventions and the role of the local population in the development process. This stage marked the initiation of shared responsibilities for better results of the development interventions.

Empowerment

Like joint decision making this stage is vital. This stage determines the fate of the development projects that are run by agents that have relatively short stay in the region such as NGOs and especially following the evacuation of the development agents. People participate in joint planning and analysis, which leads to action plans and the formulation of new local groups or strengthening of existing ones. Hence, it gives wider experience to the local population. The local population takes control over local development initiatives and determines its sustainability.

2.2 Civic Society Organizations (CSOs)

Civic society organizations are known in different names such as the non-state sector, non-governmental actors, Voluntary associations (sector), NGOs etc. There is no an all agreed definition of Civic Society Organizations (CSOs). But there are attempts to give workable definitions. The definitions are various and based according to the contexts of each state. According to Konjit Fekade (Taye and Bahru, 2008) *civil society is the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests*. The group may include development oriented Non-Governmental Organizations, Women and Youth groups (associations), faith based groups, trade unions, professional associations, human rights advocacy groups, labor unions, consumer organizations, etc according the political and economic profiles of state (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

In Ethiopia CSOs include informal and formal organizations. Informal or traditional associations are loosely structured and not registered according to the law of the country. Such kind of organizations included iddirs, *iqubs*, *senbetes*, *mehabers* etc. The formal or modern CSOs are organizations with legal recognition and structures. The formal CSOs are registered in accordance with the rules and regulations of the country. Such organizations included cooperatives, NGOs, Associations advocacy groups' etc. The largest organizations

in Ethiopia, however, are cooperatives (credit and saving organizations state-sponsored peasant cooperatives) followed by NGOs and the least once are advocacy groups (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

2.3 Non-Government Organization (NGO) an Overview

The term non-government organizations (NGO) become a common term following the establishment of the United Nations Organization (UNO) in 1945. The establishment of the Union of International association in 1950 by 132 international NGOs was an important even that marked the expansion of NGOs in the global level. The term NGO became a common UN and international term mainly from the early 1970s onwards (Willems in Abera, 2006).

One of the major problems concerning NGOs among scholars is finding a standard and universally agreed definition of NGO. According to Tegegn (1994:6) this is because of: *the diversity in nature and purpose of NGOs and the varied interest groups and ideologies they represent...* However, attempts have been made to define NGOs from different perspectives. These definitions share the following things -NGOs are non-profit, Non-governmental, self-initiated, self-motivated etc organizations. In addition, they include the ideas and motives of voluntarism, altruism, commitment to help the poor, the needy, the weak, independence from outside interference and control. They engage in such areas as international and local relief, development, environment or other advocacy or service programs. Mayer in Abera (2006) and Tegegn (1994) defined NGOs as: *"All such organizations including all kind of clubs, work teams, association, Cooperatives, charities, campaigning groups and so on...."*

Based on their involvement and major sources of funds NGOs can be classified into two- International and Local NGOs.

International NGOs: are transnational NGOs with headquarters and funding base in one or more countries. Many of the International NGOs provide direct funds for indigenous organizations.

Local NGOs: are organizations engaged in different activities including service delivery, advocacy etc. They receive finance directly or indirectly from donors and serve as intermediaries between donors and the needy.

However, it is not possible to categorize all NGOs as a homogeneous organization even though they have many similarities. Concerning this Esman and Uphoff in Tegegn (1994:7) stated that

NGOs are formed voluntarily, the character of most of NGOs is charitable in that they give benefit to the community and embody the idea of altruism and not-for-profit, yet NGOs are too diverse to treat them as a homogenous set of organizations. They have similarities in their organic structure and functioning but are different in objectives and purposes.

The emergence of NGOs in Africa can be traced back with the involvement of Christian missionaries in the early years of the colonial era. In this time their main role was focused on the expansion of Christianity (Regassa in Abera, 2006). The period of discovery and exploration of new lands and the period of colonialism increased the role of missionaries tremendously and at the same time helping the poor and the needy also emerged.

In the post Second World War years many NGOs were committed to alleviate mass poverty in the Third World but the majority of them remained in relief and welfare activities. The declaration of independence by many African countries in 1960s was accompanied by shift in the role of NGOs from relief to development activities. In addition, ex-colonial countries and western states that had no colony came up with plans to help the newly independent states. This situation created a suitable condition for the shift of the role NGOs from relief to development activities.

2.4 NGOs in Development

NGOs are so diverse in nature that they may be religious organizations and their involvements in development activities are an extension of their missionary work. They may be secular. They may act individually or in collaboration with other NGOs. Some of them are engaged in a specific sector such as health, agriculture, education etc other have a multi sector approach. Some are given focus to a specific group like women, children, the handicapped etc. Some of them work independently or in alliance with local NGOs as partners (OECD, 1983).

According to Tegegn (1994) the role of NGOs as partners of the Third World development has passed three phases. These phases were accompanied by shifts in their concern and involvement. The phases are:

The pre-Second World War period: in this period NGOs were mainly concerned with *religious and ethical matters*. Their philosophy at this time was dominated by Christian ideas and ethics mainly *equality of human beings in the eyes of God*, helping the weak, the poor and the disabled etc.

The post Second World War period (the era of relief, welfare and philanthropic voluntary period): In this period new NGOs together with the old ones were mainly concerned with relief or rehabilitation activities mainly in Europe. In the Third world they also involved in tackling of the sufferings of human beings where recurrence of famine, war and natural disasters were high. This development marked the beginning of huge and long-term secular international aid and assistance efforts by NGOs.

The era of development (from the 1960s to the present): in this period many of the NGOs gave their attention to the problems of the Third World. This period is further characterized by the emergence of a large number of NGOs which realized the multifold problems of the peoples of the Third World. They developed a *new interest* of eradication of mass poverty. Based on this motivation and because of the growing realization that governments only could not tackle the challenges of under development, NGOs have

been engaged in many sectors that they believe that they can contribute for the improvement of the life of the Third World people. The areas that got the attention of NGOs in the Third World include but not limited to improve infrastructures, like roads, provision of education, health, promoting food security etc.

In their development interventions in the Third World, NGOs adopted different approaches and methodologies. These approaches were shaped by the reflections of the various thinking and development paradigms in the Western World about the improvement and transformation of the life and economy of the population of the Third World, such as emphasis on agricultural extension and dissemination of high yield innovations, participatory development, sustainable development etc (Tegegn, 1994).

However, the role of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the population of the Third world is an area of controversy. There are two paradigms concerning their roles. For some NGOs are instruments for the enrichment of few individuals in the expense of the poor and the needy. In relation to this Graham Hancock (1989: xv) stated that *...despite the expenditure of hundreds of billions dollars, there is little evidence to prove that the poor of the Third world have actually benefited.*

NGOs are also criticized because of their huge administrative costs even bigger than the costs of their projects. In addition, they are criticized of being too secretive about their operations, politically controversial with unchecked and unaccounted power and autonomy that can be easily abused. In general, NGOs are unable to bring social transformation and development in the Third World (Tegegn, 1994).

On the other hand, others considered NGOs as real partners of the poor and marginalized parts of the society. NGOs are indeed the best instruments for the improvement of the livelihood of the population of the Third World. Some scholars and the NGOs themselves supported this idea and based their arguments on the following points. They are grassroots based, participatory, efficient, they are giving focus to the poorest segments of

the society who are marginalized by governments deliberately or unintentionally or because they are located in remote areas, etc OECD (1983 and 1988).

Despite the existence of controversies about the Roles of NGOs in development, they are operating in different parts of the Third world and their number is growing from time to time.

2.5 NGOs in Ethiopia

Ethiopia, similarly with other African states has a long history of associational life. Traditional society organizations have existed for centuries. Some of such traditional organizations are *iddir*, *maheber*, *senbate*, *iqub*, etc. However, their roles in development activities were limited. Their emphasis was restricted to social and religious activities.

The non-traditional civil society organizations (CSOs) mainly Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) began to emerge in 1950s (Tegegn, 1994).

2.5.1 NGOs-During the Imperial Regime

Outside of the traditional and informal, there were few non-state organizations during the imperial era in Ethiopia. Some of these government approved non-state organizations were Ethiopian Women's Associations, the Ethiopian Red Cross, the Ethiopian Medical Association and the likes (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

It was during the imperial era, in 1960 that the first law related to the non-state organization was introduced. It became the major code of conduct of non-state organizations until it was replaced recently by the new proclamation of associations, in 2009. Even though, the 1960 law of association did not prohibit the formation of public interest or service delivery organizations, all of the non-state organizations were focused on the provision of welfare. According to Dessalegn Rahemeto the reason behind the restriction of the non-state organization only on welfare delivery was that *other forms of engagement were viewed with a great deal of suspicion by the authorities at the time*. Despite the inclusion of freedom of association in the then constitution of the country, the

imperial government was not in a position to recognize any other influential body other than the government (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

In 1970s, partly due to the famine that hard hit the country, a number of foreign NGOs and local faith based organizations were allowed to work in Ethiopia. From the local faith based non-governmental organizations the Christian Relief Fund was emerged in 1973 as a uniting body. Later on the Christian Relief Fund was turned into Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA). CRDA became the first umbrella organization of NGOs in Ethiopia. However, this development was interrupted as a result of change in government in 1970s. Hence, a new military government replaced the imperial regime (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

2.5.2 NGOs under the Military Government

The rise of the military government (Derg) was witnessed by a new era for NGOs. That was characterized by attempts to suppress all forms of non-state associations. The few non-state organizations that were able to survive the imperial era were replaced by government sponsored organizations such as Youth, Women and Peasant associations. Other associations were either assimilated into the Derg's system such as professional associations or they were disbanded after confiscation of their properties (Taye and Bahru, 2008). However, Derg's attempts to a total eradication of the non-state actors in the country were unsuccessful because of some crucial factors. In relation to this Dessalegn Rahmeto states that: (Taye and Bahru, 2008:86-87)

".... the crisis of livelihood affecting the rural population grew to be serious and widespread as the effects of the radical land reform wore out, and as the government continued to pursue ill-advised and damaging agrarian and economic policies. Food shortage became more pervasive and the devastating famine of the mid-1980s claimed far more lives than that of the 1970s.... The result was to make the country and the military government increasingly dependant on external, particularly western, food aid...[but] many of these donors were reluctant to provide food shipment directly to the military government, preferring instead to channel their aid through international agencies ...or through western NGOs. Thus, food dependency forced the [Derg] authorities to allow international [non-governmental]

organizations into the country to under take, initially relief and rehabilitation work, but later development programs as well.

Despite restrictive and oppressive measures of the military government, the number of NGOs showed steady increase in 1980s in Ethiopia. There were some fifty international NGOs in the country. Most them were faith based NGOs. Their primary concern was similar with the NGOs during the Imperial Regime, that was service delivery and welfare works for the society that was suffering from the periodic disasters (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

2.5.3 NGOs under the Current Government

The fall of the military government in 1991 was an important event that opened a new chapter in the history of the non-state organizations. The authorities of the new government, the government of EPRDF similarly with their compatriots in the imperial era and the military period were suspicious of non-state organizations in general and Civic society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs in particular. Thus, they tried to put some restrictive measures against non-state actors in the country in the 1990s. Once again, however, the non-state was able to survive the repressive measures of the current government (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

Dessalegn Rahemato identified three major factors for the endurances that were responsible for the survival and expansion of the non-state sector in Ethiopia despite the repressive measures of the current government. The first of causes was the determination of the non-state sectors for their survival. Second the pressure that was exerted against the government from international donors. The third factor was the war against Eritrea that forced the government to mobilize huge resources (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

In the second half of 1990s the number of CSOs in general and NGOs in particular showed tremendous increase. In 1996 the number of CSOs including NGOs was less than 250. This number had been grown to nearly 600 in 1996. From this number more than 66 percent was taken by NGOs. In 2003 the number had reached 1259 CSOs. From the total CSOs in 2003 56.2 percent were NGOs. The number of the non-state sector in 2007 has reached 2305.

From these CSOs 85.7 percent were NGOs, both local and international. It is said that the number of CSOs could be higher if CSOs that had been operating only in one regional states of Ethiopia were included. Hence, the figures above are concerned with CSOs that were registered in the Ministry of justice (MOJ) and CSOs that had been licensed to work in more than one regional sates of the country. The other CSOs that were operating only in one region were not expected to be registered in MOJ rather in their respective state's concerned bodies (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

Until recent times CSOs including NGOs were concerned with service delivery and welfare works. However, in the current situation especially as of 2000, CSOs are experiencing some shifts and greater program specializations in their method involvements. This shift is from service delivery and relief and rehabilitation programs to poverty reduction and the 'right advocacy' approaches (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

According to Dessalegn Rahemeto (Taye and Bahru, 2008: 122-123) right advocacy approach is:

...action taken on behalf of a legitimate cause, to defend rights and freedoms guaranteed by the country's legal and constitutional framework, to bring about policy change and to support disadvantaged or unjustly treated individuals and population groups. Advocacy is a set of targeted actions directed at decision makers, public officials and the citizens at large in support of a specific issue, cause or reform agenda.....[it should be] undertaken peacefully and within the law.

The rapid increase of NGOs is also accompanied by inclusion of large number of beneficiaries either in their development or relief and rehabilitation programs. Based on the information he got from CRDA and DPPC, Dessalegn Rahmeto has accounted the overall expenditures and the number of population that were benefited from the NGOs' interventions. Accordingly only up to 1994, 20 million people were benefited directly or indirectly from the NGOs' interventions. Between 1997 and 2001, 3.2 million people were benefited from the emergency relief supports by the NGOs in the country. The sum total of NGOs expenditure between the same years was 3.5 Ethiopian Birr. In addition, the NGOs were able to generate job opportunities for more than 9800 persons only up to 2002. Out of

the beneficiaries of the job opportunities 98 percent were Ethiopians. From the Ethiopian NGO workers 36 percent were women (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

The major areas of involvement of the NGOs that are working in Ethiopia are, promoting accesses to health, education and clean water supplies, the construction of main and access road networks, HIV/AIDS protection and public awareness programs, in areas related with the promotion of food security, promotion of soil and water conservations and rehabilitation of degraded environment. More over, they are also engaged in the development of small-scale irrigation schemes (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

Regarding to their operational places, until the introduction of the decentralized administrative system in 1991 most of the NGOs in Ethiopia were concentrated in Addis Ababa. Since then, however, a large number of NGOs have moved into the newly organized national regional states. In addition a large number of new NGOs were founded in the new regional states (Taye and Bahru, 2008). One of the many NGOs that are working in Ethiopia is Menschen fur Menschen. This study is concerned about the role of this NGO.

2.6 NGOs under the Ethiopian Associational Laws

It was during the imperial era, in 1960 that the first law related to the non-state organization was introduced. In 1966 the Associations Registration Regulation Proclamation was introduced. The two proclamations became the major code of conduct of non-state organizations until they were replaced recently by the new proclamation of associations, in 2009. The mandate of supervising associations by the laws of 1960s was given to the then Ministry of Interior. However, the mandate was transferred to the ministry of justice in 2005. Moreover, in 1995 the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission has taken the responsibility of coordinating and supervising relief activities that were rendered by NGOs. Regional states were guaranteed to supervise associations in their regions through their Justice Bureaus (Taye and Bahru, 2008).

The current government of Ethiopia has recently introduced a new controversial proclamation that has replaced all the former proclamations of CSOs, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009. The new law was issued in February, 2009. It is designed to govern Charities and Societies (Negarit Gazeta, 2009).

The new proclamation allowed the establishment of four types of CSOs in Ethiopia (Negarit Gazeta, 2009). These are:

1. Charitable Endowments
2. Charitable Institutions
3. Charitable Trust
4. Charitable Societies

In addition the CSOs are further categorized into four groups (Negarit Gazeta, 2009). These are:

1. **Ethiopian charities or Ethiopian Societies:** According to the new proclamation the CSOs under this group refers to Charities and Societies:

“that are formed under the laws of Ethiopia, all whose members are Ethiopians, generate income from Ethiopia and wholly controlled by Ethiopians. However, they may be deemed as Ethiopian charities or Ethiopian societies if they use not more than ten percent of their funds which is received from foreign sources”.

2. **Ethiopian Residents Charities or Ethiopian Residents Societies:** These are Charities or Societies *“that are formed under the laws of Ethiopia and which consists of members who reside in Ethiopia and who receive more than ten percent of their funds from foreign sources”.*

3. **Foreign Charities:** are charities *“that are formed under the laws of foreign countries or which consists of members who are foreign nationals or are controlled by foreign nationals or receive funds from foreign sources”.*

4. **Mass-Based Societies** include “*professional associations, Women’s associations, Youth associations and other Ethiopian societies*”.

The categorization of charities and Societies is accompanied by assigning and restricting activities that will be carried out by these groups of CSOs (Negarit Gazeta, 2009). Accordingly the non-Ethiopian charities and societies cannot take part in the following activities:

1. *The advancement of human and democratic rights;*
2. *The promotion of equality of nations, nationalities and peoples and that of gender and religion;*
3. *The promotion of the rights of the disabled and children’s rights;*
4. *The promotion of conflict resolution reconciliation and*
5. *The promotion of the efficiency of the justice and law enforcement services.*

In addition, the proclamation established a new agency, Charities and Societies Agency, which is responsible to license, register and supervise charities and societies in accordance with the proclamation. Legal recognition to CSOs will be given up on registration (Negarit Gazeta, 2009).

Some scholars and institutions (such as Amnesty international) are underlining the potential destructive impacts of the new proclamation on CSOs in Ethiopia. According to Tsehay Wada it will hinder the proper functioning of CSO in Ethiopia; due to first, it does not allow the involvement of foreign Societies in Ethiopia. Secondly, it puts fund base or source restrictions on Ethiopian charities and societies. Thirdly, it limited activities that are expected to be carried out by foreign Charities (Taye and Bahru, 2008) and (Negarit Gazeta, 2009).

The new proclamation does not include institutions or organizations that are operating in Ethiopia based on agreement with the government of Ethiopia such as the UN agencies and other NGOs (Negarit Gazeta, 2009). Menschen fur Menschen is also not included by the new proclamation.

2.7 Menschen fur Menschen in Ethiopia

Menschen fur Menschen foundation is one of the many non-governmental, humanitarian and development organization working in Ethiopia. The then renowned film actor Karlheinz Bohm established it in Germany in 1981. The organization became operational in Ethiopia by responding to the emergency needed in Erer valley (Harar) in 1982 (Ethiopia-Karl, 2006). It is working only in Ethiopia.

Menschen fur Menschen started its operation in Erer, Harar but soon it expanded its working area into different parts of Ethiopia. Currently Menschen fur Menschen is operating in the four of the Ethiopian national regional states, namely Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples Regional states (SNNPR). In Amhara and Oromia Menschen fur Menschen is implementing Integrated Rural Development activities ranging from the provision of advocacy trainings to the construction of health and education centers and road networks. In Tigray and SNNPR Menschen fur Menschen is engaged in outreach services. It has some 783 Ethiopians as permanent workers and provided temporary job opportunities for other thousands (MMFSMA, 2008).

Menschen fur Menschen as an organization has vision, mission, strategy and goal and value statements (MMFSMA, 2008). These are:

Vision: to empower the people so that they run life with out poverty by contributing towards social and economical development.

Mission: to ensure the community in the target areas empowered and start developing in their own context using the practical tools for accomplishing the vision.

Strategy: help towards self development; giving people the chance to take the leading step in developing their lives.

Goal: improve the life of the grassroots people through integrated development interventions that are geared towards alleviating poverty.

Menschen fur Menschen has some value statements or principles in its operation as a development agent. These are value (respect) the people regardless of their diversity, maximum efficiency with minimum operating cost, accountable to the community it serves and grass roots strategy for development through indigenous knowledge.

Menschen fur Menschen is working in eight related development programs in Ethiopia aiming at alleviating poverty (MMFSMA, 2008). These development programs are:

1. The Educational program-is aimed at ensuring access to quality and equity of educational facilities to school aged children and illiterate adults. Under this program Menschen fur Menschen is mainly engaged in the construction of schools, training centers and conducting literacy campaigns and short-term trainings. In addition, the constructions were accompanied by furnishing all the schools with the necessary educational materials.

Accordingly until December 2008 Menschen fur Menschen has constructed 220 schools in all levels (from KG to preparatory), four farmers' training centers and four vocational education training centers in their operational areas in Ethiopia. In addition to the construction of school and training centers, it is also engaged in the provision of trainings and conducting literacy campaigns. In this program 65,000 farmers were trained in various agricultural technologies, crop and animal productivity and natural resource conservation. Further more, 168,681 individuals were also embraced in its literacy campaigns.

2. The Agro-ecology program-is concerned with the improvement of crop and animal productivity and the conservation and rehabilitation of natural environment. Under this component Menschen fur Menschen is undertaking soil and water conservation through terraces, stone and soil bunds, by establishing nurseries for fruits, trees, forage plants and distributing seedlings to the peasants in its working areas. In addition, within this program Menschen fur Menschen has also engaged in the introduction and distribution of modern beehives with trainings, introducing and funding the construction of improved houses. Moreover, Menschen fur Menschen also has closed afforestation sites.

According to Menschen fur Menschen's operational summary report of December 2008 there are 226 nurseries for fruits, trees, forage plants; 93 million seedlings were distributed for the people in Menschen fur Menschen's working areas; 35302 kilometers of water and soil conservation works have been carried out through terraces. They founded 27 veterinary service stations. It has distributed 3530 modern beehives. In addition, 2594 hectares of land has been closed as natural afforestation sites. Moreover, 4910 improved houses have been constructed.

3. The Infrastructure sector: this program is concerned with the provision of basic infrastructure mainly the construction of roads, bridges, and potable water grounds, provision of diesel and manual grain mills and development of irrigation systems.

According to Menschen fur Menschen's statistical report on main achievements until December 2008, it has developed 1332 clean water (potable water) sources (hand dug wells and springs) and 65 water reservoirs (Artificial ponds). In addition, Menschen fur Menschen has constructed 2186 kilometers of road networks including all kinds of road (dry and all weather roads) and 10 bridges. Moreover, Menschen fur Menschen has provided the local population with 331 grain mills in its 26 years of development interventions in Ethiopia.

4. The Medical sector: this sector is aimed at improving access and quality health services. Under this component Menschen fur Menschen has engaged mainly in the

construction of health centers, the provision of medications, and medical treatment campaigns for some major health problems. Based on these motives Menschen fur Menschen has constructed newly or renovated 49 health posts, 37 clinics 7 health centers and 3 Hospitals. In addition, it has facilitated access to free eye operations for 40,543 individuals in all over Ethiopia. Besides all these, Menschen fur Menschen has also donated 24 Ambulances for various health institutions that were constructed by Menschen fur Menschen (all health centers were furnished with at least basic instruments by Menschen fur Menschen).

5. The Women's Project: under this sector Menschen fur Menschen's intervention is targeted in improving the living condition and income status of the rural women and eradicating or at least reducing harmful traditional practices against women. Based on these targets Menschen fur Menschen has engaged in facilitating access to credit services, organizing training packages in saving, hygiene, health, vegetable gardens and improved hand crafts.

According to the December, 2008, Menschen fur Menschen's statistical achievement report there were 12,994 small credit takers, all women, 32505 training participants in sewing, hygiene, health, vegetable production etc and 3,590 trainees in improved handicrafts. In addition, 83,880 improved stoves made from either mud or concrete were distributed among the various rural households.

6. The Social Institutions: this component is related with extending support to parts of the society that are in serious problems such as orphans and elders. Accordingly Menschen fur Menschen has constructed and still run directly nine Kindergartens and extended its financial support to some of local NGO's who are working in nursing Orphans and elders. These NGO's are Abebech Gobena Orphanage and School and Alpha School for the deaf in Addis Ababa and Abraha Bahta Elderly home and orthopedic workshop in Harar.

7. The Anti-HIV/AIDS Program: this sector is concerned with prevention, awareness, care and support to vulnerable communities from/ to HIV /AIDS. In addition, it has engaged in various activities including establishing and conducting voluntary counseling and testing service centers, organizing mass meetings against HIV/AIDS, organizing Anti HIV clubs, adolescent reproductive health training, and income generation trainings programs for people who are living with HIV/AIDS and prevention and care. In addition, they are also engaged in provision of direct support to people who are living with HIV/AIDS and HIV /AIDS orphans.

The 2008 Menschen fur Menschen's statistical achievement report states that Menschen fur Menschen has organized 102 anti HIV/AIDS mass meeting, established 11 voluntary counseling testing centers, carried out counseling and testing services for 172,716 people, organized 2171 anti HIV/AIDS clubs, 5450 adolescent reproductive health training and 664 income generation trainings for people who are living with AIDS. In addition, it also gave support to 520 HIV/AIDS patients and 2931 orphans.

8. Family Planning: this component is aimed at improving access to modern family planning methods. The main services that are provided under this sector are the provision of different contraceptives including pills, Depo-Provera and condoms.

Until the end of 2008 it is stated in the annual report of Menschen fur Menschen, in aggregate 76610 women have guaranteed access to the contraceptives and more than 32,023 persons were confirmed to take condoms.

2.8 The Theoretical Framework of the Research

2.1 Sustainable Livelihood Approach

In analyzing the livelihood of the people of Merhabete, the study has used a Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA). Hence, SLA shows how "in different contexts, sustainable livelihoods are achieved through access to a range of livelihood resources which are combined in the pursuit of different livelihood strategies". In addition it gives a strong

understanding of the diverse and complex livelihoods of rural people in different contexts (Scoones, 1997).

A sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) uses a distinctive perspective on the understanding of poverty and how to mediate to improve the conditions of the poor (Chamber and Conway, 1992).

2.8.2. Livelihood

A livelihood consists of the assets, activities and entitlements that enable people to make a living (Chamber and Conway, 1992). According to Ellis (2000: 10) a livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social), the activities, and the accesses to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that determine the living gained by the individual or household.

Livelihood Asset: are resources and stocks (tangible assets), and claims and access (intangible assets), which a person or household commands and can use towards a livelihood. Increased assets can empower people to influence the policies, institutions and processes that affect their livelihoods.

In sustainable livelihood the types of livelihood assets are human, natural, financial, social and physical capital. They range from social assets, such as relationships of trust, and membership of informal organizations to physical assets such as infrastructure and manufactured goods.

Natural capital: are the natural resource stocks and environmental services from which resources flows and services, which are useful for livelihoods, are derived. There is a wide variation in the resources that make up natural capital. From intangible public goods such as the atmosphere and biodiversity to divisible assets used directly for production (land, trees...).

Financial capital: refers to the capital bases (cash, credit or debt, savings and other economic assets), which are essential for the pursuit of any livelihood strategy. It denotes the financial resources that people use to pursue their livelihoods.

Human capital: refers to the skills, knowledge, ability to labor and good health and physical capability important for the successful pursuit of different livelihoods. At a household level human capital is a factor of the amount and quality of labor available which varies according to household size, skills levels, leadership potential, health status etc.

Social capital: refers to the social resources, social relations and association upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihoods. These are developed through network and connectedness, membership of more formalized groups, and relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that facilitate co-operation, reduce transaction costs and provide the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor.

Physical capital: refers to the basic infrastructure and production equipment and technologies essential for pursuing any livelihood strategy. Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods. Infrastructure consists of changes to physical environment that help people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive. The following components of infrastructure are usually essential for sustainable livelihoods: affordable transport, secure shelter and buildings, adequate water supply and sanitation, affordable energy supply and access to information and communications.

2.8.3 Livelihood Diversification

It refers to attempts of individuals and households to find new ways to raise incomes and reduce environmental risk, which differ sharply by the degree of freedom of choice (to diversify or not), and the reversibility of the outcome. Ellis (1997) defines livelihood diversification as the processes by which rural families construct a diversified portfolio of

activities and social support capabilities in their struggle for survival and in order to improve their standard of living.

2.8.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is one of the concerns of development endeavor mainly among development agents that have relatively short stays in a region such as NGOs. Sustainability of development has many dimensions that are vital for the sustainability of the livelihood of the population under concern. According to Ellis (1997), livelihoods are sustainable when the population is resilience to external shocks, when they are not dependant on external support, when the development process is able to maintain the long term productivity of the natural resource and preserve environmental, social, economic and institutional systems of the society in a sustained way. This includes, environmentally it should not undermine the livelihood of the coming generations. Economically it should maximize productivity in the expense of expenditures spend in the development process. Socially it should combat social exclusion and maximize social equity among the beneficiaries of the development endeavor. Institutionally sustainable development should promote the proper and continuous functioning of the existing social structures and processes. (Chamber and Conway, 1991).

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The researcher believed that using these two methods concurrently enabled him to collect quantitative and qualitative data to tackle problems under the study. Hence, the use of multiple methods filled in the gap between some of the limitations of either of the methods since both qualitative and quantitative methods have their own inherent weaknesses. Consequently, combining the two methods enabled the researcher to have a better understanding about phenomena, which have multi-dimensions like livelihood.

3.2 Selection of the Study Area

The researcher selected Merhabete Woreda mainly because;

1. The Woreda is among the areas that experienced a long period of NGOs intervention. Hence, Menschen fur Menschen has been engaged in development activities such as the provisions of education, health, and other basic facilities in the Woreda.
2. Merhabete is one of the Woredas of the Amhara Regional State that suffers from the challenges of poverty.
3. So far there is little research conducted in the Woreda related to the contribution of NGOs in the improvement of the livelihood of the rural communities.
4. Accessibility, that is, geographical proximity of the Woreda for in depth investigation.

3.3 Sampling Design and Procedure

The cohort nature of the Woreda's kebeles in most of its aspects: economic activities of the population, climatic condition, and religion etc. enabled the researcher to consider ten percent of the households as samples as the subjects of the study seem reasonable. In order to select the subjects, Multi-stage sampling technique was employed. As the result, the following parties took part in the study: For administrative purpose, Merhabete Woreda is divided into 23 rural Kebeles/KAs/ and two urban settlements. In all of the KAs Menschen fur Menschen has been engaged in different development activities. Among the 23 rural KAs, three were selected purposively based on the following criteria.

1. The degree (intensity) of NGOs' involvement in the development activity in the Kebeles and the number of beneficiaries. Hence, in the some of the Kebeles there are large numbers of peoples that were targeted by Menschen fur Menschen in their development interventions.
2. Geographical proximity and accessibility of the kebeles. On the other hand, most of the Kabeles are remote from the nearest road so that the researcher faced financial and time constraints to asses such areas.
3. Attempt was also made to include all climatic zones of the Woreda.

The three kebeles that have been selected for the survey were Yesa, Zeytta and Geb-Zemoy. The nearest, Geb-Zemoy, is three hours far from Alem Ketema, the capital of the Woreda to travel on foot. One could imagine that this an average travel by an average healthy young man. The Kebele has more than 680 households living in 10 villages (*gotte*). The climate of the kebele included all the three climates in the Woreda, Dega, Woina Dega and Kolla. But Woina Dega is Dominant. Yesa is four hours far from Alem Ketema. It has nearly 400 households and some 6 villages. The investigation included all the climatic Zones of the Woreda although Dega is dominant. The other Kebele, Zeytta is four and half hours far from Alem Ketema. It has 400 households and 6 villages. Kolla is dominant climate in this area.

In each kebele there are eight villages (*gotte*) in average. From the three kebeles the researcher selected nine villages (three from each kebele) purposively following thorough

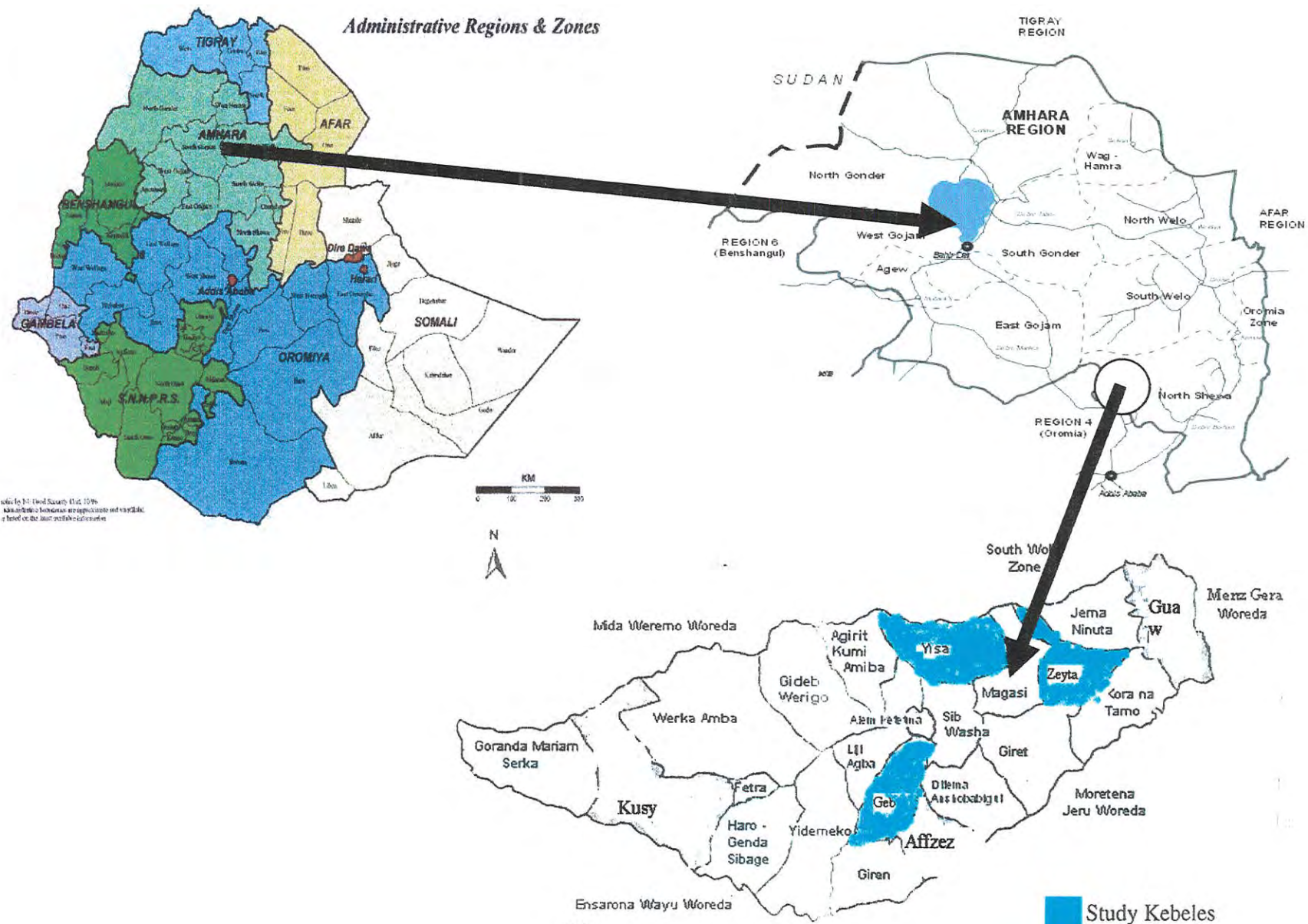
discussions with development agents, officials of NGOs and related expertise in Merhabete Woreda. The criteria for the selection of the villages were the number of households and climatic situations. Accordingly, Senael-Weha, Tega-Amba and Menged-Weha from Yessa kebele. Atlefegn, Lay-Zemoy and Kera from Geb Zemoy were chosen, while Addis-Amba Aba-Libanos and Tena-Adis were selected from Zeytta.

The next step following the selection of kebeles and the villages was the selection of individual households from the nine villages. The selection of the households was made through simple random sampling method. The researcher selected the names of 100 household heads from the list of the village's population from the Woreda's documents. The rest 20 names were purposively assigned to female households to attain gender balance.

Table: 1 Number of households taken as samples.

Kebele	Village		Male	Female	Total
Geb-Zemoy	Atlefegn		12	3	14
	Lay-Zemoy		12	2	14
	Kera		11	3	14
Yessa	Senael-Weha		10	2	12
	Tega-Amba		11	2	14
	Menged-Weha		11	2	13
Zeyta	Addis-Amba		11	2	13
	Aba-Libanos		11	2	13
	Tena-Adis		11	2	13
Total			100	20	120

Source: own survey 2009



3.4 Method of Data Collection and Data Sources

Primary Data Collection

In this study, the researcher was interested to use qualitative data generation methods for various advantages in it. These methods included Key Informant Interviews/KII/, Focus Group Discussions/FGDs/, and Observation. In addition, the researcher also used quantitative methods of data gathering technique to conduct survey of the households.

Key Informant Interviews/KII/

Key informants were people who were anticipated to have particular opinion about the topic under study. They were ordinary people who might not be necessarily specialists, or enlightened ones as well as, those assume some positions. The issue to be carried out here was to obtain information on the roles and contributions of Menschen fur Menschen in the Woreda. Therefore, the informants were community elders', development agents, women, government officials and NGOs personnel. To get the needed information in-depth semi-structured checklist was prepared. The people needed for key informant interviews were purposively selected in close contacts and consultation with the respective village administrators and development agents working in the area.

Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

Focus group discussions were conducted in the study area using semi-structured interview schedule. The researcher has conducted three focus group discussions in the three KAs (one in each KA). The participants of the focus group discussions were elders, members of the youth association and women -to maintain gender balance.

Observation

Observation was one of the major ways of data gathering tool used in the study. The researcher was, therefore, able to observe many of the works of Mension in Merhabete

Wereda through transect walk-field observation, which includes road network, health centers, schools and irrigation projects.

Household Survey

The household survey was carried out to generate quantitative data about the general socio-economic conditions, access and use of land and other major resources of the population. Moreover, it was able to generate some additional information about the attitude of the local population towards Menschen fur Menschen. It was also used to generate data about the level of participation in the development projects of Menschen fur Menschen from the local population. The survey also helped the researcher to generate demographic data (sex, age etc.).

To conduct the household survey five enumerators who knew the Woreda and the life standard of the population with a minimum requirement, that is, Grade 10 completion were selected from the Woreda. Then training on how to conduct the survey was given to those enumerators by the researcher. Before conducting the actual survey, pre-testing of the questioners was carried out. Then the enumerators were deployed to their respective villages and conducted the survey with close supervision and consultation of the researcher.

Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data were collected from different sources like reports of the regional, zonal and Woreda line offices, from the archives of Mension for Mension, research and other official and unofficial studies and reports on socio-economic political, ecological conditions, national and area specific statistics, articles from journals and newspapers, archives and files. In addition, the researcher has reviewed Ethiopian government policy of NGOs that are being implemented in the country.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The gathered data through different instruments concerning the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the rural community were analyzed qualitatively (describing and narrating) and quantitatively using descriptive statistics.

The data generated through household survey was coded and entered into computer for analysis using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS). Procedurally, the data were refined for correctness before it was entered to the computer. The data was encoded in numerical format and edited for any error or missing value.

The specific method of data analysis was involved tabulation and cross tabulation, computation of frequencies and percentages, and computation of descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency and percentage.

Chapter Four

Description of the study area

4.1 General Profile of the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS)

The Amhara Regional National State (ANRS) is one of the nine regional states in Ethiopia. It is the second largest regional state both in terms of its area coverage and the size of its population next to Oromia. The total number of the population is 19.2 million. It is located between 9 Degree 21' to 14 Degree 0' North latitude and 36 Degree 20' and 40 Degree 20' East. It is bounded by Afar and Oromia regions in the East, Oromia in the South, Benishangul and the Sudan in the West and Tigray in the North. It covers a total area of 17,752 km square. Bahir Dar is its capital. It is divided into eleven administrative zones and 114 Woredas (Addisu, 2008).

4.2 Basic Features of Merhabete Woreda

4.2.1 Location and population

Merhabete is one of the 114 Woredas of the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS) under the Northern Shewa Zone of Administration. It is located in the central parts of Ethiopia, 180kms North of Addis Ababa. It covers 1,121kmsquare. According to the 2007/8 national population census Merhabete has above 126,470 populations. Nearly 90 percent of the population is living in rural areas and the rest 10 percent in urban areas (CSA, 2008). The Woreda consists of 23 Rural Kebele Administrations (KAs) and two Urban Kebeles. It is surrounded by five other Woredas of the Zone, namely, Mida-Woremo in the North, Dera Woreda in the West, Moretna-Geru and Menz-Gera in the East and Ensaro Woreda in the south. (MWARDO, 2007/8)

4.2.2 Topography

The Woreda has a mountainous with difficult terrain and dissected topography. According to the Woreda's Agricultural and Rural Development Office, 60 percent of the total area of the Woreda is characterized by a rug mountainous, full of ups and downs and undulating in character. 20 percent is plain and the rest 20 percent is gorgy in nature. Most of the people live in areas, which are not easily accessible (MWARDO,2007/8).

4.2.3 Agro-Ecology

The Agro-ecological zone of the Woreda includes all the three traditional common agro-ecological zones of Ethiopia. From the total size of the Woreda 74 percent is Woina Dega (sub-tropical), 20 percent Kolla (tropical) and the rest 6 percent is Dega (temperate) (MWARDO, 2007/8). In all the climatic zones the topography loudly speaks that it has mercilessly been exploited for centuries without major conservation. The soil has been suffering from all forms of erosions (water and wind). Hence, this hints that there has nothing been done to protect it until the interventions made by NGOs. As a result, forests hardly exist in the Woreda.

Once again, the Woreda has all the three common seasons of Ethiopia with an average rainfall between 900 and 1200 mm per year. These are Bega, the dry season (from November to February), Kiremt, the main rain season (from June to September) and Belg, the small rain season (from February to May). The two rainy seasons in Merhabete are, Kiremt and Belg. Because environmental changes, however, the Woreda ceased to exercise the Belg rain in the past three or four years. The temperature of the Woreda is highly affected by altitude but the mean annual range of temperature is between 19 c and 32 c (MWIO, 2007/8).

According to the Woreda's Agricultural and Rural Development Office, out of the total geographical size of the Woreda only 40 percent is arable. From the total cultivable land while nearly 98 percent is used for the rainy seasons the remaining land is used for irrigation from the two rivers, Jamma and Wonchit.

4.3 Socio-Economic Conditions of Merhabete Woreda

4.3.1 Major Economic Activities Agriculture

Except the very few urban centers, the majority of the population of Merhabete lives in a rural setup with agriculture as their main form of subsistence. More than 98 percent of the population is engaged in agricultural activities. Nearly 90 percent of the agrarian population of the Woreda is engaged in mixed farming, crop production and animal rearing. Only one percent is involved in crop production and the rest of the agricultural population in non-farm and off-farm activities (MWIO, 2007/8).

The major crops produced in the study area are cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables. Cereals and pulses accounted more than 95 percent of the crop production in Merhabete Woreda. Finger millet, maize and *Teff* are the most produce cereals in the woreda (MWARDO, 2007/8).

Non-Agricultural Activities

In the rural Merhabete it is safe to conclude that non-agricultural economic activities are hardly existed. There are few shops; few of the rural population are engaged in selling firewood, traditional alcoholic drinks. Other few individuals are involved in the making and selling of products of hand crafts such as different household stuffs made from clay, traditional clothes etc. (MWIO, 2007/8).

4.3.2 Natural Capital

Access to Land

Land is the vital livelihood capital for agrarian communities like the population of Merhabete Woreda. However, nowadays access to land, above all, is a serious problem in Merhabete Woreda. The underlined cause for this challenge is the population growth that forced the rural communities to share or give part of their agricultural lands to their children. Hence, agriculture is the major economic activity in the Woreda.

The average size of landholding in the Woreda lies between one and two hectares (MWARD0, 2007/8). However, there are variations in the size of landholdings from Kebele to Kebele even within a Kebele. The variation in the size of landholding in the Woreda is the result of land redistributions that were carried on in the Woreda as parts of land reform policies in the national and regional levels. Before the rise of the Military regime land the size of land owned by an individual farmer was subject to the strength and ability of the person. A person capable of clearing the forest on the unused land could have access and ownership right to any size of land. However, with the growth in the number of population and changes in the political systems land ownership right was revised twice by the military and the current governments. In Merhabete land distribution was implemented twice in 1980 and in 1991. The military government in 1980 introduced the first land distribution endeavor. This land distribution effort was included all the agricultural lands in the Woreda. However, the land redistribution program that was introduced in 1991 by the current government had not been implemented in all kebeles of the Woreda. The Kebeles that are called *Lay Bet* were not included in the 1991 rural land redistribution policy (MWARD0, 2007/8).

Livestock

The total number of livestock in the Woreda in 2007 is estimated to be 165,000 heads out of that nearly 37 percent are cattle, 11 percent to pack animals, 22 percent sheep and goats and 30 percent chickens (MWARD0, 2007/8).

4.3.3 Human Capital

Education

In Merhabete Woreda there are 30 regular schools, 11 alternative schools and 1 vocational training center. From the 11 regular schools 4 schools are kindergartens all in the two urban kebeles, Fetra and Alem Ketema, 17 lower primary schools (from grade 1-4), 8 higher primary schools (from grade 5-8) and 1 preparatory school. Alternative schools are purposefully arranged for the rural students that are not able to attend regular classes because of either distance from the school or families' reliance on the labor of

their children. Alternative schools are seasonally flexible; classes are conducted in the times when the students are not needed for agricultural and domestic chores (MWEO, 2007/8).

According to the 2007/8 educational report of MWEO, the total number of students in the Woreda is nearly 30,000 and nearly 500 teachers in all levels. The report claims that the Woreda is experiencing a rapid improvement in the level education manifested in the number of enrollment of school-aged children whose age is seven and above. Accordingly the enrollment rate is reached 97percent.

4.3.4 Physical Capital

Health

In Merhabete Woreda there are 5 clinics (*tabia*), 19 health centers (*kela*) and 1 referral hospital. The total number of medical doctors is 5, and there are some 22 nurses and 46 health extension workers in the Woreda (MWHO, 2007/8).

Road Network

In Merhabete Woreda there is poor road network that connect the various Kebeles with each other and with the Woreda's capital, Alem Ketema. In the Woreda there is only 33km all weather and 205 dry season (access) road net work that connect the Kebeles of the Woreda and Kebeles with the Woreda and the Zonal capitals, Alem Ketema and Debre Birhan respectively. There is a main road that connects Merhabete with Addis Ababa. None of the roads are asphalted (MWARDO, 2007/8).

Potable Water Supply

In the study Woreda there are 266 potable water sources. 174 of them are hand dug wells, 79 springs and 13 ponds (water reservoirs). In addition, a large segment of populations is using Jemma and Wonchit rivers as the major source of water supply (MWARDO, 2007/8).

Telecommunications, Electricity and Transportation Services

Only 12 Kebeles have access to automatic telephone service and the two urban Kebeles, Fetra and Alem Ketema have access to diesel drive electric power. Few of the Kebeles have access to transportation to Alem Ketema twice a week on the market days. But most of the Kebeles of the Woreda have no access to transportation (MWIO, 2007/8).

4.3.5 Social Capital

Like the other parts of Ethiopia in Merhabete there are strong social relations. There are large number of traditional social institutions such as *iddirs*, *mehabers* *Iqqub* and practices such as *debo*. However, these traditional informal institutions and practices did not yet grow into strong instruments for better socio-economic developments. Hence, they are limited to solving the immediate social and economic problems of their members.

4.3.6 Financial Capital

In the rural Merhabete access to a credit services is poor. There are two financial institutions involved in the provision of small scale credit services for the rural population. The first of the two small scale credit providers is the one that is run by Menschen fur Menschen. This organization, however, is limited in the provision of credit services only for female members of the population in the Woreda.

The second financial institution in the Woreda is the Amhara Credit and Saving Organization. However, this one is implemented in the Woreda by the end of 2008. Hence, its operation is not yet expanded into the rural parts of the Woreda.

4.4 Major Livelihood Problems in the Woreda

The major livelihood problems that are identified in the Woreda by the various sectarian offices are diversified. And the challenges range from agricultural to infrastructural problems.

4.4.2 Fragmentation and Size of the Agricultural Lands

The agricultural lands that are held by an individual farmer in the rural Merhabete is fragmented in to three plots. All the three pieces are located in different places within a given Kebele regardless of its size. According to the MWARDO officers this is in order to maintain equity in distributing all the fertile, moderate and poor lands among the agrarian communities during the period of land distribution. For this reason, almost all the farmers that have access to farm land have the share in all the categories of land (MWARDO, 2007/8).

4.4.3 Poor Road Network

The road network in the study area is so poor. The poorness is further complicated by the mountainous, gorgy and remoteness of the topography of the Woreda. Consequently, the rural population is suffering from the long journey to travel in search of some basic needs. Moreover, the settlement pattern of the population is located in the relatively plateau surrounded by hills or gorges. Thus, no matter how they might be closer to the nearest road, they are forced to travel long distance because of the topography. .On top of that, in Merhabete, it is only 34 kilometers of all weather road networks and 205 dry weather road networks are available.

4.4.4 Fluctuation of Rain

Agricultural productivity in Merhabete is, above all, relied on the regularity of the seasonal rainfall. According to the MWARDO officers, the Woreda has experienced a long period of fluctuation of the seasonal rainfall. This irregularity is one of the major challenges that the rural agricultural communities have ever encountered.

4.4.5 Low Level in the Use of Modern Agricultural Inputs

Merhabete has a poor experience in the use of modern agricultural inputs that can boost up productivity. Some of the major causes for low level in the use of modern agricultural inputs are: the topography of Merhabete Woreda, the poverty of the rural population, popularity of bad cultural beliefs and lack of awareness about the importance of the

modern agricultural inputs and small size of agricultural lands that is held by individual farmers.

4.4.6 Shortage of Grazing Lands

In Merhabete most of the plateau and parts the hills are used as crop production grounds. The size of land preserved for pasture is negligible. Even the existing grazing lands are gradually cultivated by the near by farmers as part of their agricultural lands. As a result animal raring is becoming so difficult in the Woreda (MWARDO, 2007/8).

4.4.7 Education Related Problems

Merhabete Woreda's educational level is one of the poorest in Ethiopia (Zelalem, 2008). There were several factors accounted for the prevalence of poor educational status in the Woreda. According to the key informants, the first factor was existence of less awareness and negative attitude toward the benefits and values of education among most of the rural population.

The second factor for poor level of educational status was relative the distance of the schools from child's home. As most of the schools are located at far distances from the residential places of the potential students in most of the rural Kebeles of the Woreda, most parents refrain themselves from sending their children, especially females, to schooling. If at all they should send their children to school, they should wait until the children could able to travel the long journey to the nearest school. The situation was even worse for school aged girls because of the existence of harmful traditional practices such as abduction and rape. The lack of standard road network in the Woreda, thus, led the children to drop-out schooling and stay home with family whose life style is no more encouraging to pursue with.

The third factor that played vital role for poor educational status in Merhabete Woreda was that the rural population needed their children for household or agricultural works. Thus, most school aged children in general and girls in particular were deprived of attending schools.

The fourth factor for poor level of education in Merhabete Woreda was early marriage. It was a common practice in rural parts of Ethiopia. Many girls were forced to marry before they were allowed to attend classes. In Merhabete once married, access to education is almost impossible.

4.4.8 Health-Related Problems

According to the MWHO the major health-related problems in Merhabete Woreda are shortage of medical stuff, medicine and other related materials. Even though, the last two decades were characterized by the relative improvement of health facilities in general still many of the health related problems are not yet resolved in the Woreda.

4.4.9 Problem Related with Potable Water Grounds

Merhabete has relatively good potable water supplies. Almost all villages have access to potable water in one or the other sources. Information from the Woreda's water development office under MWARDO, ascertains that it only takes 20 minutes to travel to the nearest water source from any village in the Woreda. However, the recent trend indicates that the continuity of the existing water sources is endangered. This is because of either pressure from the growing number of the population or termination of the service durations of the clean water grounds and in proper usage of the water sources.

Chapter Five

Research Results and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the descriptions of the major socio-economic profiles and the major livelihood problems in the study area identified by the respondents of the household survey and participants of FGDs and key informants. Accordingly, this unit is concerned with the description of the various livelihood aspects of the study population and identification of their major livelihood challenges.

5.2 Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics

5.2.1 Sex and Age Profiles

From the total 120 households that were included in the survey 21 (17.5%) were female and 99 (82.5%) were male headed households. The respondents that were included in this study came from different age groups. Most of the respondents 40(33.3 %) were aged between 37 and 47. From the total 120 household heads included in the survey 35 (29.9%) were between 26 and 36 years old. Another 34 (28.4%) were between 48 and 58 years old. The other age group that was included in this study was between 59 and 69 with 7 (5.8%) household heads. The smallest number of individuals was included under the age group 15-25 years old with 4(3.3%) household heads.

Table 2: Age distribution of the heads of the households included in the survey

Age group	Frequency	Percent
15-25	4	3.3
26-36	35	29.2
37-47	40	33.3
48-58	34	28.4
59-69	7	5.8
Total	120	100

Source own survey

5.2.2 Family Size and Marital Status

The average size of family of the respondents that were included in the household survey is six. From the total respondents 38 (31.6%) households have a family size of one to three. Other 74 (61.7%) have family members of four to seven. The rest 8 (6.7%) have eight and more family members. For marital status of the respondents see table 3.

Table3: Marital status of the respondents of the household survey

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	87	72.5
Single	10	8.3
Divorced	10	8.3
Widowed	12	10
Separated	1	0.8
Total	120	100

Source: own survey.

5.2.3 Ethnicity Religion and Language

The ethnicity, Religion and language of the population under the study are the same all are Amhara, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and Amharic language speakers.

5.2.4 Education

More than 79(65.8%) have never attended any kind of school in their life time. 38(31.7%) attended the traditional church schools, thus they can read and write. Only 3(2.5%) of the household heads have attended regular classes in the primary schools.

From 79 illiterate individuals in the study 61(77.2%) were male and 18 (22.8%) were female household heads. From those who can read and write 35(92.1%) were male and 3 (7.9%) were female household heads. The rest 3 household heads that attended elementary schools were all male household heads.

Table 4: Educational status

	Educational status	Sex		Total	percent
		Male	Female		
	Illiterate	61	18	79	65.8
	Read and write	35	3	38	31.7
	Primary classes	3	0	3	2.5
	Total	99	21	120	100

Source: own survey.

5.3 Access to and Use of Livelihood Assets

Livelihood Assets are resources and stocks which a person or household commands and can use towards maintaining their livelihood. In this section the major livelihood assets important in the lives of the rural communities of Merhabete are discussed. In Merhabete the major livelihood assets of irreplaceable importance are land and livestock. Their major economic activity is agriculture.

5.3.1 Landholding by Respondents

For agrarian society like the rural population of Merhabete Woreda land is the major and the most important livelihood asset. In the household survey that was conducted under this study 117 (97.5%) have access to agricultural land either their own plot or through other means such as rent, share cropping. From 117 household heads 113 (96.9%) have their own agricultural land. Three others (2.6%) have got access to agricultural land through sharecropping. An individual (0.8%) has access to agricultural land through rent.

Most of the households included in the survey 54 (46.2%) has agricultural land between one and two hectares. From the total number of households that were have access to agricultural land 53 (45.3%) have land size that is less than a hectare. The rest 10 (8.5%) households have agricultural land with more than two hectares.

Among the total number of household heads (117) that have access to agricultural land 21(17.9%) were female-headed households. That accounts all female-headed respondents that were parts of the survey. The rest 96(82.1%) were male-headed households. From

the female-headed households 16(77%) have agricultural land that is less than a hectare. The other 4(19%) female-headed households have agricultural land with its size lied between one and two hectares. Only a single female-headed household has an agricultural land that is more than two hectares.

From the total number of households that are married all 87 (100%) have access to agricultural land. From the 10 unmarried individuals that were included in the survey 8 (80%) have access to agricultural land. The rest 2(20%) individuals have no access to land. From the rest 23 divorced, widowed or separated head of households 22 (95.7%) have access to agricultural land. However, an individual that belongs to this group has no access to land.

Table 5: Land ownership among households (N=117).

Size of land	Male headed households	Female headed households	Total	Percentage
Less than one hectare.	37	16	53	45.3
From one to two hectares.	51	3	53	46.2
More than two hectares.	9	1	10	8.5
Total	97	20	117	100

Source: own survey.

From the total number of respondents included in the household survey 100 (85.5%) noted the fertility of the soil of their agricultural land as “moderate”, 10 (8.5%) household heads called it “poor” whereas the rest 7 (6%) classified their land as “good” (fertile).

Table 6: The fertility of the soil by respondents (N=117)

The fertility of the soil	Frequency	Percentage
Good	10	8.5
Moderate	100	85.5
Poor	7	6
Total	117	100

Source: own survey

5.3.2 Access to and Ownership of Livestock by Respondents

Animal rearing is another major economic activity in Merhabete next to crop production. The common animals that are vital in the livelihood of the rural communities of Merhabete are oxen, cows, sheep, goats, donkeys and chicken.

From the total number of households included in the survey 18 (15.3%) have no oxen. Among the households that have no ox 13 (72.3%) were female and 3 (16.7%) were male-headed. Another 44 (36.7%) households have a single ox each. Out of the total households with a single ox 7(15.9%) were female and 37(84.1%) were male-headed. The other 43(35%) households, all male headed have a pair of oxen each. Another 11(9.2%) households have three oxen each. One of the eleven households with three oxen was a female-headed household. The rest ten households with three oxen each were male-headed households. The rest, 4(3.3%) households, all male-headed have more than three oxen each.

Among the households included in the survey 41(34.2%) have no a single cow. From these households 27 (65.9%) were male and 14 (34.2%) were female-headed households. From the total female-headed households only 7 (33.3%) have a single cow each. A single female household head have two cows. Another 37 (30.8%) male-headed households have a cow each. From the total number of male-headed households 60 (60.6%) have a single cow each. Other 9 (9.1%) of the male respondents have two cows each. The rest 3 (3%) of the male headed households have three and above cows each.

The average number of sheep and goats that were owned by the respondent household heads is 0.8 and 1.7 respectively. The distribution of sheep and goats in relation to female and male-headed households is 0.3 and 0.9 for sheep and 0.5 and 1.9 for goat respectively.

From the total number of households 1915.8%) have no chicken. However, all of the female-headed households have at least a chicken. The average number of chickens per household is 2.9 per household.

Donkey is the most important pack animal in the Woreda. Hence, its vital role for the transportation in difficult terrain to market centers should have to be underlined. From the total number of the households that were included in the survey, only 29 (24.2%) have no donkey. From these households 25(86.2%) were male and 4 (13.8%) were female-headed households. From the total households 87 (72.5%) have one donkey each. Seventy (80.5%) of the total households with one donkey were male and the rest 17 (19.5%) were female-headed households. The rest 4 (3.3%) of the households, all male headed households have more than two donkeys each. The average number of donkeys' per-household is 0.8.

From the above figures of the distribution of the livestock it is possible to make some important remarks. First, there is great disparity between female and male-headed households in terms of access and ownership the livestock. In all, ownership and access to livestock, the male have better advantages. The second observation is the prevalence of low level of access and ownership to some of vital animals in the livelihood of the rural population of Merhabete.

One of such assets is ox. Ownership and access to oxen have several significances in the lives of the rural population of Merhabete. First, it is so crucial in the time farming. Second, it is an important way of storing asset. Individual farmers are able to sale their oxen at any time and in most case the prices of oxen are relatively high except in times of drought. Thirdly, the number of oxen that an individual owned is one of the indicators of

economic status in the Woreda. Fourthly oxen are important sources of income for their owners in the harvesting seasons. Most of the farmers owned a single ox; therefore they have to rent another ox to pair for the cultivation purpose. The case of individuals that have no oxen of their own is worse. They have to rent a pair of oxen to cultivate their agricultural land. The base of the rent could be either direct cash payments or rendering other kind of services to the oxen owners. The common kind of service that is rendered by farmers that owned oxen of their own is cultivating the lands of the oxen owners.

The other animal of great importance is donkey. In regions with difficult topography like Merhabete, the importance of pack animals is immense. Unfortunately it is donkeys only that are in massive use in Merhabete. The rural communities of Merhabete are using donkeys widely in their day-to-day activities. Carrying different agricultural products and goods to and from market centers or the nearest road is the duty of donkeys. However, bad to the rural communities in the Woreda most of them had poor level of ownership to donkeys.

5.4 Major Economic Activities of the Respondents

Rural Merhabete is inhabited entirely by agrarian communities few are engaged in the non-agricultural activities but their number is negligible. Most of the agrarian communities are practicing mixed farming. Few of them are engaged only in either farming or animal rearing as their economic activity.

5.4.1 Agriculture

The major economic activity among the sample population is agriculture. All the respondents that were included in the household survey are engaged in agricultural activities. From the total respondents 117(97.5%) are engaged in a mixed agricultural activity. That is crop production and animal rearing together. The rest 3 (2.5%) household heads are engaged only in crop production.

5.4.2 Non-Agricultural Economic Activities

In the rural Merhabete it is safe to conclude that non-agricultural economic activities are poorly existed. There are few shops; few of the rural population are engaged in selling firewood and traditional alcoholic drinks. Other few individuals are involved in the making and selling of products of hand crafts such as different household stuffs made from clay, traditional clothes etc.

5.5 Major Livelihood Challenges in Merhabete Woreda

Most of the livelihood challenges in the Woreda are directly or indirectly related with the hilly, gorgy and escarped nature of the topography of Merhabete. For the better understanding of the livelihood challenges the discussion will be carried out by dividing the challenges into two; agricultural related and non-agricultural challenges.

5.5.1 Agricultural Related Livelihood Challenges

Agricultural activity that is mainly run by obsolete technology, in highly degraded environment, with small holdings etc like Merhabete's is full of challenges for the farmers. Some of the major agricultural related challenges in the Woreda are discussed below.

5.5.1.1 Poor Fertility of the Soil

According to the officers of MWARDO, Development agents and participants of FGDs the agricultural communities of the Woreda are suffering from the poor fertility of the soil. Hence, for several years major organized conservation and rehabilitation programs have not been carried out in the Woreda. Furthermore, the hilly topography of the Woreda and the absence of forests facilitated the easily wash away of the soil especially in the rainy seasons.

5.5.1.2 Fragmentation and Size of the Agricultural Lands

The agricultural lands that are held by an individual farmer in the rural Merhabete is fragmented in to three plots. All the three pieces are located in different places within a given Kebele regardless of its size. According to the MWARDO officers this is due to attaining balanced distribution of all the fertile, moderate and poor lands among the agricultural communities during the period of land distribution. Almost all the farmers that owned agricultural land have access to all the categories of land.

The size of Land that was held by the agricultural communities varies from Kebele to Kebele and even with in a single Kebele. The average land size according to the Woreda's agricultural and rural development office lies between one and two hectares of land. The variation in the size of land that is held by individual farmers in the Woreda is the result of land redistributions that were carried on in the Woreda as parts of land policies in the national and regional levels.

The size of the average agricultural land that is held by an individual farmer is even by far less than the average according to participants of the FGDs. This is because most of the household heads have already given their use rights or partitioned their plots of land among members of the male members of their respective families. This is done without informing the officials of the Woreda. The grant of land to the male member of a family by the head of the household is done in most cases when he is married.

5.5.1.3 Fluctuation of Rain

Agricultural productivity in Merhabete above all relies on the regularity of the seasonal rainfall. According to the MWARDO officers the Woreda has experienced a long period of fluctuation of the seasonal rainfall. This irregularity is one of the major challenges that the rural agricultural communities have faced. According to participants of FGDs fluctuation of rain is one of the most important causes for reduction of agricultural production in different periods. For instance, in the past three or four years the Woreda has experienced the absence of rainfall in the *Belg* season (the short rainy season).

5.5.1.4 Low Level in the Use of Modern Agricultural Inputs

Merhabete has a poor experience in the use of modern agricultural inputs that can boost productivity. Some of the major causes for low level in the use of modern agricultural inputs are: the topography of Merhabete Woreda, the poverty of the rural population, popularity of bad traditional beliefs and poor awareness about the importance of the modern agricultural inputs and small size of agricultural lands owned by individual farmers.

The poverty of the rural agricultural communities of Merhabete is one of the major causes that hindered the wide use of modern agricultural inputs. Hence, most of the inputs are expensive by the standard of the rural communities of Merhabete.

According to the DAs in addition to the expensiveness of the inputs, low level in the use of modern agricultural inputs is further reinforced by the popularity of bad traditional outlooks. For instance the prevalence of pests is considered as “*Yegzeabher Kuta*”, God’s wrath, thus they are discouraged from using pesticides.

The hilly nature of the topography of Merhabete is another cause for poor application and use of modern agricultural technologies and inputs. Poverty on one hand and the topography on the other hand for instance are among the causes for low level in the use of artificial fertilizers. Hence, the fertilizers can be easily washed away by flood following every rainy moment due to the hilly nature of the Woreda. Attempts were made by the DAs and other agricultural experts in the Woreda to expand wide use of natural fertilizers, mainly animal manure; however, there has been no great success. The cause for poor usage of manures is that most farmers’ agricultural lands are located far from their quarter places. Thus, it is difficult to transport the animal manure from the resident places to the agricultural grounds.

5.5.1.5 Poor Level of Irrigation

The hilly nature of the Woreda and the absence of exploitable water grounds do not allow the expansion of irrigation schemes in the Woreda. The two rivers in the Woreda, Jemma and Wenchit are partially used for irrigation agriculture. However, they are not exploited to the maximum potentials of the rivers. First, the rivers are flooding in the remotest, gorgy and agriculturally in-conducive parts of the Woreda. Thus, it needs new and expensive technologies to pump out the water in to the agricultural fields.

5.5.1.6 Shortage of Grazing Lands

In Merhabete most of the plateau and parts of the hills are used as crop production grounds. The size of land preserved for pasture is negligible. Even the existing grazing lands are gradually cultivated by the near by farmers as part of their agricultural lands. As a result animal raring is becoming so difficult in the Woreda. As a solution the farmers devised methods to continue the practice. Hence, it is one of the most important elements in their livelihoods. Other methods are using their agricultural grounds for pasture in the non-harvesting seasons and selling their animals.

5.5.2 Non-Agricultural Livelihood Challenges

Non-agricultural economic activities in Merhabete are poorly existed. The rural populations are forced to travel long distances to meet their needs. The problems are further aggravated by the absence of other basic infrastructures such as road network and electricity.

5.5.2.1 Education Related Problems

The level of literacy in Merhabete is poor due to the factors that are discussed under chapter four. However, in the recent times Merhabete is experiencing positive changes in the improvement of the level of education. According to the Woreda's educational office experts the enrollment rate in elementary level is growing rapidly. The net enrollment of school-aged children, seven years, is reached 97 percent. In addition, there is a cutback in the age of starting elementary classes from the average 12 to 8 years. The causes for the

improvement are the results of advances made in tackling the long-lived problems for the expansion of education in the Woreda. But all education related problems are not yet eradicated from the Woreda totally.

There are several factors for the improvement of school enrollment and educational level in the Woreda. The first and the most important factor is the growth of the awareness of the rural communities of Merhabete about the beneficial values of education. Education is now perceived as a way out of the main livelihood challenge. That is the rising decline of hope of getting agricultural land or the shrinking in the size of agricultural land acquired from parents. Thus, being educated is alleged to guarantee access to other non-agricultural works.

The second cause for the rise of attendances in schools among school aged-children is the relative improvement of the basic infrastructures such as the road network and the construction of large number of schools in the Woreda. The advent of Menschen fur Menschen brought significant, but not enough changes in the construction of road networks and schools. In addition, the construction of schools in a relatively closer to the residence places of the rural population, especially the first cycle schools has its own contribution for the growth of school enrollment in the Woreda.

The third factor for the growth of school enrollment by school-aged children is the engagement of the government of Ethiopia and NGOs, such as Menschen fur Menschen in advocacy works about the importance of education among the rural population. Now days it is believed that parents are responsible to let their school-aged children to attend schools.

The fourth factor for the improvement of the educational level is the introduction of "Supportive schools". These schools are flexible unlike the regular schools. Hence, the schools are open when students are free or in the times when they are not needed badly for agricultural works by their parents. Classes are closed in harvest seasons. When the students are relatively free from their duties, classes reopened and began their operation.

In Merhabete there are eight such schools. Supportive schools are located in the remotest parts of the Woreda. However, the services of supportive schools are limited to elementary classes.

However, this remarkable increase in the enrollment of the number of school-aged children in elementary level is not accompanied by an impressive number of students that completed elementary classes or reaching high schools. According to the Woreda's educational officers there is high level of school drop outs. However, there is no document in the Woredas educational Office about the exact figure about the rate of school drop outs.

There are several factors for school dropouts in the Woreda at all levels. To begin with despite the construction of large number of schools by Menschen fur Menschen and the government there is severe problem in the distribution of second level elementary and secondary schools in the Woreda. The case of the first cycle elementary schools is better. Most rural Kebeles of Merhabete Woreda has easy access to such schools. According to the experts of MWEO and participants of FGDs the remotest of the first cycle of the elementary schools would take 30 minutes to travel for a healthy school-aged child. However, the second cycle of the elementary schools would force the young student to travel additional one hour to the nearest of such schools. In most Kebeles there is no road that connects villages to the nearest schools to make things worse. The case of secondary schools (high school) is even worse. There is only one high school in the Woreda at Alem Ketema. Except for few students in Alem Ketema most of the students came from the rural Kebeles of the Woreda. Hence, they are not able to travel to their homes every day thus they are known in the Woreda *Yesenq temarewoch* (those who brought their daily needs from their resident places for a period of a week). In addition, the high school is not in a position to accommodate all the students that are able to complete primary classes.

The other factors for school drop outs are marriage and migration. Female students are by far the most victims of school drop outs because of marriage compared with their counter

parts, male students. Some students also left schools because of change in the resident places of their parents or the students themselves were sent to other parts of the country. However, unfortunately there is no data about the number of students that drop out schools because of marriage and migration in the (MWEO, 2007/8).

The third cause that was identified as a factor for school drop outs in the Woreda by participants of FGDs is social responsibilities that were bestowed on the students following the death of one or both of their parents. The death of mothers reside huge burdens on the eldest female member of the household. Thus, they are expected to quit attending schools. The death of fathers in most cases left the responsibility of running the household business to the first born sons. In such cases they are expected to give up their education and concentrate only on the proper handling of their social responsibilities.

The other cause for school drop outs is seasonal and temporary absences from classes due to the harvest seasons or in the case of the *Belg* rainy seasons. This was because the students are seriously needed for agricultural activities. These seasonal and temporary absences in some cases are accompanied by a temporary dismissal of students at least for that academic year. (MWEO, 2007/8).

5.5.2.2 Poor Road Network and Transportation

Ensuring road network has a vital role in the daily activities of any populations in rural settings like Merhabete. Access to the main trading centers, the nearest health centers etc. are subjects to accessibility of the road network. The road network in Merhabete, however, is poor. The poor network is further reinforced in the making of the lives of population difficult by the hilly and gorgy nature of the topography of the Woreda. The distance that is expected to travel to the nearest road and then to the nearest city from the residences of the population is further elongated by the hilly, mountainous and gorgy nature of the topography of the Woreda. Traveling under such situation with pack animals, mainly donkeys with goods are even worse.

The topography in addition, is an obstacle in the construction of roads. Compared with plateau areas the cost of construction is so huge. Moreover, it needs the involvement of other complex construction machines. Thus it is hard to construct roads through the involvement of the local population only.

The poorness of the road network is causing gigantic problems on the population of Merhabete especially in the rainy seasons. Hence most of the roads in the Woreda are dry weather roads. In the rainy seasons the movement of the people is so poor between the Kebeles and between the Kebeles and the Woredas Capita, Alem Ketema. This is because of the absence of transportation and secondly the people are busy in their agricultural duties.

Alem Ketema is the commercial center of the Woreda. As a result all the major road networks and transportation services are directed towards Alem Ketema. Some of the Kebeles have access to land transportation twice a week in the market days. But most Kebeles have no access to transport services. The population has to travel a long journey to the nearest Kebele that have transport access.

5.5.2.3 Problem Related with Potable Water Grounds

Merhabete relatively has good potable water supplies. Almost all villages have access to clean water in one or the other sources. Information from the officers of Woreda's water development office under MWARDO and participants of FGDs witnessed that the remotest of the water sources is only 20 minutes far from the nearest village. However, the recent trend is indicating that the continuity of the existing water sources is endangered. This is because of either pressure from the growing number of the population or termination of the service durations of the clean water grounds and in proper usage of the water sources.

5.5.2.4 Health Related Problems

Despite the construction of many health institutions, access to proper health facilities is the major health problem in the Woreda. This is mainly due to according to MWHO

shortage of health officers and health experts. In addition, there is turn over of the existing experienced health officers. The other health problem in the Woreda is shortage of medicines.

5.5.2.5 Absence of Strong Credit Services

In Merhabete there are two small credit service associations. The first one was introduced by Menschen fur Menschen. This institution, however, is limited to the provision of credit services only for the female members of the rural Merhabete. To take credits the rural women were expected to organize themselves in to groups. The groups were responsible for its members. No need for collateral from individual members rather the group has taken the responsibilities.

According to the Menschen fur Menschen's officials, there were 19 women groups (associations) that have benefited from the credit services. Each association had some 20 members on the average. The amount of money that an individual can lend was based on the ability of the woman to pay it back. The highest amount that was borrowed by a woman in the past 15 years was 7000 Ethiopian Birr in six rounds.

The officers in the credit associations had the responsibility of organizing the credit service and supervision of the credit takers. According to the Menschen fur Menschen officials before allowing the credit for the women there were some pre-requisites that had to be fulfilled by the credit takers. The first criterion was the credit takers had to a small investment plan to take the credit. They had to state what they would do in the money that they had borrowed. The most frequent expenditure of the rural women by the money they borrowed from the Menschen fur Menschen's credit association were purchase oxen, small business in sealing of cereals, raring and beef-up animals and sealing traditional alcoholic drinks. The second criterion before providing the credits was taking training about business management including risk management and the small businesses in profitable lines.

The second small-scale credit association in the Woreda is the Amhara saving and credit Association. However, this association came to Merhabete in 2007 and its service is limited to the few urban centers of the Woreda.

5.5.2.6 Limited Access to Market

In Merhabete like the other parts of Ethiopia there are two fixed trading days in a week. There are variations in the weekly market days from village to village. This is due to; according to the elders of in the Woreda facilitate exchanges between traders of the various villages. Hence, there are strong relations among the peoples of the various villages in the Woreda. In addition to the local people other traders from urban centers, mainly from Alem Ketema attended the local markets.

According to the participants of the FGDs it is the merchants that came from the urban centers who are by far beneficiaries from the exchanges in the rural Merhabete. They buy agricultural products from the farmers in the Woreda in relatively cheap prices. Then they sell the products in the urban centers with great profits. This is due to the inaccessibility of the urban markets to the rural population because of the poor road and transport networks in the Woreda.

Chapter Six

Lessons from Menschen fur Menschen

6.1 Introduction

Under this chapter the major successes, opportunities, advantages and challenges of Menschen fur Menschen manifested while it was operating in the Woreda are discussed. The discussion is mainly focused on the interactions between Menschen fur Menschen in one hand and the local communities of Merhabete and the government bodies in the Woreda on the other hand. The discussion is primarily based on the information that was provided by the participants of FGDs, Officers and experts of both Menschen fur Menschen and the various government bodies in the Woreda and some individuals from the local communities. The lessons that are considered as important by the researcher are discussed below.

6.2. Menschen fur Menschen in Merabite Woreda

Menschen fur Menschen has operating in Merhabete Woreda since 1991. The overall target of this NGO is clearly stamped in its quarterly achievement reports to the various governmental offices in the Woreda as follows:

By implementing integrated rural development, Menschen fur Menschen plans to make sure the provision of health, education, clean water, grain mills etc to the rural communities in their respective localities. Improve the production level of the rural communities through the conservation of the natural resources by using balanced agricultural technology and by doing so guarantee food security and improve their life standard.

As stated in its mission statement Menschen fur Menschen has been engaged in many development activities in Merhabete. Its involvements range from the provision of grain mills to the construction of schools, health centers and road networks.

In Northern Shewa Menschen fur Menschen is working in three Woredas namely Merhabete, Mida and Dera. In Merhabete Woreda it was engaged in development

activities that had been divided into five related components. The five components were Education, Health, Infrastructure, Agro-Ecology and Women and development. Each component had different departments that were specialized in different development activities (Ethio-Karl, 2006).

1. The Educational Component: the focus of this component was mainly on the construction and furnishing of schools with the necessary educational materials. In Merabite Menschen fur Menschen has constructed many schools from kindergarten to vocational training center. Based on the information from Menschen fur Menschen's office in Merabite and confirmation from the Woreda's educational office Menschen fur Menschen has a history of success in education related areas.

Accordingly Menschen fur Menschen has constructed 28 schools between 1992 and 2007. Two of the schools are kindergartens, 17 lower primary schools (from grade 1-4), 7 higher primary schools (from grade 5-8), 1 vocational training center and 1 preparatory school with a total number of classes 288. In addition to the construction and furnishing the school Menschen fur Menschen was also involved in the provision of housing for teachers of each school (MMFSAM, 2008).

Most of the schools were constructed on the ruins of old sites by demolishing the old uncomfortable mud classrooms to the ground. The new schools are standardized in most of their structures (MMFSAM, 2008).

2. The Health Component: Under this component Menschen fur Menschen has undertaken three major operations. These were the construction of health centers, creating awareness about prevention of diseases and giving free medication to the health institutions in the Woreda. In Merhabete Menschen fur Menschen has constructed and furnished 14 health posts, 5 clinics and 1 referral hospital, Enat Hospital in Alem Ketema (MMFSAM, 2008).

3. The Infrastructure Component: under this section Menschen fur Menschen has engaged in the provision of some of the basic-infrastructures, including provision of clean water, the construction of road networks and expansion of irrigation schemes.

In Merhabete there are 266 water grounds of all kinds, 174 hands dug wells, 79 springs and 13 ponds. Of these water sources 180 hands dug wells, 59 sprigs and 11 pounds were developed by Menschen fur Menschen (MMFSAM, 2008).

The other important element under this component is the construction of road networks. In the Woreda except the Merhabete -Addis Ababa main road all the all-weather roads, with a distance of 24 kilometers are constructed by Menschen fur Menschen. In addition 205 Kilometers of access (dry weather) road network were also constructed in the Woreda by Menschen fur Menschen (MMFSAM, 2008).

Another element under this component was the introduction and expansion of irrigation systems in the Woreda. The only two rivers in the Woreda are Jemma river which bounded Merhabete in the south and Wonchit river boulder the Woreda in the North. From theses rivers Menschen fur Menschen has developed five irrigation projects that are benefiting more than 250 households (MMFSAM, 2008).

4. The Agro-ecological Component: this section focused on the conservation of the natural environment and the introduction of modern technologies in the Woreda. The main activities under this component were seedling distribution, terracing, beehives, improved houses, closed a forestations and farmers training in different activities (MMFSAM, 2008).

5. The Women and Development Component: under this program Menschen fur Menschen was engaged in a number of activities such as provision of small-scale credit services for the rural women, organizing trainings for the rural women in house management, awareness creation trainings on harmful traditional practices, dissemination of modern stoves for the rural women etc (MMFSAM, 2008).

6.3 Successes of Menschen fur Menschen

The successes of Menschen fur Menschen in its development intervention in Merhabete Woreda are so encouraging; however, the researcher has identified the following ones so as to meet his research objectives. Therefore the issues that are discussed below are only some of the successes of Menschen fur Menschen including identification of the major livelihood problems and designing the methods of intervention, guaranteeing access to some of the basic infrastructures, introduction some new ideas and practices.

6.3.1 Problem Identification and Methods of Interventions

Perhaps the most important success of Menschen fur Menschen with vital role in its development intervention in Merhabete was the identification of the major livelihood challenges of the population in the Woreda. According to the officers of Menschen fur Menschen, their development interventions in the Woreda were the result of thorough preparations. The preparations included deep studies by experts, continuous discussions with the local populations and the experts and officials of the Woreda and the regional government. In addition, Menschen fur Menschen's experiences in the other parts of the country were also considered. The studies and discussions were revolved around the major livelihood challenges in the Woreda, the best method of intervention by Menschen fur Menschen and the roles that were expected to be played by the local population and the various government bodies in the Woreda. Accordingly from the discussions the various government bodies have promised to extend all the needed supports to Menschen fur Menschen in its operation and would not intervene in the internal affairs of Menschen fur Menschen. On the other hand Menschen fur Menschen has promised to work in accordance with the rules and regulations of the government. The representatives of the local population were also promised to participate in the development programs that would be implemented in the Woreda by Menschen fur Menschen.

The subsequent chore to be engaged on was identification of the major livelihood problems in the Woreda and then developing a workable development programs to tackle the challenges. Once again all the three stakeholders, Menschen fur Menschen,

government bodies and representatives of the local population have been involved in problem identifications and formulating a sound intervention methodology.

The identification of the major livelihood challenges was reasonably successful. Hence, all the livelihood challenges that were identified by participants of FGDs and key informant interviews and discussed under chapter five have been identified by Menschen fur Menschen in the early stage of its development intervention.

Following the identification of the major livelihood challenges in the Woreda, the next task that took the attentions of the Menschen fur Menschen's officers and experts together with the representatives of the local population was designing efficient and workable methods of tackling the major identified livelihood problems in the Woreda.

Up on extensive studies a method that was perceived as having potentially maximum success in development was devised. This approach was Integrated Rural Development Approach. It was believed by the various stake holders this approach was the best one because it included all aspects of life, social and economic.

Then areas of Menschen fur Menschen's engagements were identified and categorized in to five related areas revolved around the tackling of the major livelihood problems. The areas of intervention were categorized under five "core problems". These were the Educational, the Health, the Infrastructure, the Agro-ecological and the Women and Development Components.

6.3.2 Tackling of Some of the Major Livelihood Challenges

The tasks of problem identification and adopting the method of intervention were soon followed by introducing the development projects among the local population in general and about their expected roles in the development process. The aim of this task was to familiarize the projects among the rural population and getting their trust on the development process. This task was done through mass meetings at various Kebeles of the Woreda.

The first two components were above all concerned with the construction of schools and health centers. In addition, the two components have been engaged in the provision of basic internal materials such as chairs and blackboards for the schools and basic medical instruments to the health institutions. These components have got prior attention due to the observable educational and health related problems in the Woreda. Moreover, the provision of such services was believed to be the foundation and instrumental to conquer the other livelihood challenges in the Woreda. The villagers according to the participants of FGDs and key informant interviews are 1.5 kilometers and 2 kilometers far from the nearest school and health center respectively in average.

The infrastructure component was designed to guarantee basic infrastructures such as access to clean water and road networks. As a result of Menschen fur Menschen's enthusiastic efforts and the involvement of the Woreda in building sources of clean water, now in every village there is at least one clean water source. The maximum distance to the nearest clean water source in every village is 1.5 kilometers.

The other element under the infrastructure component was the construction of the road networks. The road network that was constructed in the Woreda mainly linked the rural Kebeles with Alem Ketema, capital of the Woreda aimed at alleviating the problem of access to market, health centers for major health problems and higher education. In addition to the roads that linked the rural Kebeles among themselves. The target of these roads was promoting intra commercial activities in the Woreda. Accordingly Menschen fur Menschen has constructed 24 kilometers of all weather road network linked more than eight Kebeles with Alem Ketema and more than 205 access roads networks linked many Kebeles with the main roads (all weather roads) and among each other. In addition, the all weather road networks are enabled more than ten Kebeles to have access to transportation that linked with Alem Ketema at least twice a week in the weekly market days.

The fourth component was concerned with the conservation and rehabilitation and conservation of the degraded natural environment of the Woreda. This component was aimed at rehabilitation of the degraded environment to boost the production levels of the agrarian communities in the Woreda. The tasks under this component included were building terraces, afforestation, seedling distribution etc. Trainings and display centers were introduced to promote the zealous involvement of the rural communities in such activities.

The last, but not the least component was the women in development component. This component was mainly concerned with reducing or if possible alleviating the social burdens of rural women and enabling them to benefit from the fruits of development. The tasks under this component prioritized the demands of women. Some of the services under this component provided by Menschen fur Menschen were provision of credit services to the rural women, giving trainings in house management and hygiene etc. In addition, Menschen fur Menschen has also engaged in the awareness programs about the potential advantages of education for the rural population in general and the women in particular. The focus on women was based on the belief that empowering women would eventually bring the end of some the major livelihood challenges.

6.3.3 Integration of the Development Projects of Menschen fur Menschen

According to the officers of Menschen fur Menschen all of its development projects under the five components are related among each other in one or another way. They stated that tackling the multifaceted problems of the rural communities needed a multi-dimensional and related development approaches. Let us see the relations and integrations among some of the Menschen fur Menschen's development projects.

The women in development projects were related with education, health and the agro-ecological components. It is clear that the level of female school-aged children's enrollments of schools is lower than their counter parts. Some of the root causes for lower enrollments of girls in schools were; they were badly needed for the incessant domestic

(household) works. Hence, some of the domestic works are perceived to be the responsibilities of women such as grinding grain, fetching water, collecting firewood, cooking food, looking after children and elderly people, milking cows etc. After the identifications of the major challenges of the rural women in general and girls in particular Menschen fur Menschen has tried to tackle the challenges and facilitate opportunities to them mainly education.

The provision of clean water supplies in relatively near places, the provision of grinding mills and better stove for cooking food were planed to reduce the burdens and times that were spend for such activities from the rural women. Thus, the female school aged children could attend classes. In addition the trainings and campaigns that were carried out against harmful traditional practices such as anti early marriage and anti-FGM were once again aimed at alleviating the barriers to attending girls in schools.

The introduction and provision of better stoves that are capable of reducing the amount of firewood used in the process of cooking, was aimed at reducing the time that has been assigned for the collection of firewood and cooking food by the rural women. Hence, the improved stove, unlike the traditional one is able to avoid the wastage of energy. Therefore school-aged girls were relatively freed from their two common domestic burdens (collection of fire wood and cooking food) and they could attend classes in one hand and the rate of deforestation was reduced in the Woreda on the other hand.

The other area of Menschen fur Menschen's involvement is its engagement in sponsoring the construction of houses to avoid deforestation in the Woreda. Here, unlike the traditional way the owners of houses under construction were not allowed to use wood except for some irreplaceable parts of the house. The houses were constructed according to the standard that was set by Menschen fur Menschen and using other non-wood materials in most case from stone. In this case Menschen fur Menschen has sponsored the costs of covering the roof with corrugated metal. The intention behind this engagement was discouraging the deforestation process among the rural communities in the Woreda.

Menschen fur Menschen believes that the empowerments of women would be one of the ways of tackling the livelihood challenges of the rural communities. Accordingly they tried to empower women in the Woreda financially by facilitating access to credit and saving service that was rendered by Menschen fur Menschen. The financial empowerments, according to Menschen fur Menschen's officials were calculated to unchain the Women from financial difficulties and dependency on men.

The provision of clean water and education and trainings on hygiene was calculated to bring changes and eradication of some of the common easily avoidable diseases such as trachoma. In addition, the trainings about prevention of malaria, family planning were given in occasions that the women had their own meetings such as in the case of the meetings of the credit and saving associations.

6.3.4 Introduction of New Ideas and Practices

Menschen fur Menschen as a development agent has introduced new ideas and practices with great importance in the livelihood of the rural communities of Merhabete. Some of these ideas and practices are becoming common in Merhabete. The first one is the introduction of the credit and saving service among the rural women. This service benefited many rural women and nowadays it is not a new idea in the Woreda.

The other important material that Menschen fur Menschen introduced in the region is the gabion (gully control) for building terraces and the *vetiver* grass for controlling the erosion of soil by water. However, following the departure of Menschen fur Menschen from the Woreda both are not in wide use.

Another important contribution of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete is the expansion of the production of various fruits and vegetables that were not common in the Wereda. Menschen fur Menschen has distributed the seedlings of such uncommon crops among the farmers of the Woreda and now these crops are becoming common in Merhabete.

The introduction of modern beehives, improved stoves and houses all were first introduced by Menschen fur Menschen. Once again these materials are becoming common among the rural communities of Merhabete. These items were introduced with the objectives of boosting the production of the farmers and promoting the rehabilitation of the natural environment.

6.4 Opportunities

In any development interventions by external agents, the attitude and involvement of the local population and the government bodies are crucial for the success of the intervention. The responses of the local population for the needs of the development agents can be constructive or destructive for the success of the endeavors of development agents. Under this part some of the opportunities of Menschen fur Menschen in its development interventions in Merhabete are discussed. Some of the opportunities were exploited properly and others have not been used by Menschen fur Menschen in its stay in the Woreda. The opportunities were partially responsible for the success of Menschen fur Menschen in its development works in the Woreda.

6.4.1 Participation and Trustworthiness

The voluntary sector in general, particularly NGOs in Ethiopia are suffering from an image problem. Hence, they are perceived in the eyes of the people as being corrupted and stood for the benefit of their staff members in the name of the poor (Taye and Bahru, 2008). However, this is not true in the case of Menschen fur Menschen in Merabite. Trust from the local population towards Menschen fur Menschen was the major asset that Menschen fur Menschen has developed. It is known as Karl among the local population named after its founder. They gave all the credits for the changes that have been introduced in their livelihoods to Menschen fur Menschen.

According to the officers of Menschen fur Menschen the people of Merhabete by far was willing to work with Menschen fur Menschen and they have a positive image about this organization especially after having experiences of some of the fruits of the development

projects. In most of the development projects the people has participated actively. At the initial stages there were some reservations from the local population to participate in the development projects. However, Menschen fur Menschen has experienced a rapid increase in the level of participation of the population in its development interventions.

The level of participation was relatively high in the development of the potable sources, access roads and the conservation and rehabilitation projects. From the total respondents included the household survey under this study, 115 (95.8%) has confirmed that they had their contribution in the development of the potable grounds. From the 115 household heads 97(84.3%) has participated in labor works and the rest 18 (15.7%) has extended their support in either material or cash payments.

The other component with a relatively high participation from the local population was the construction of access roads. From the total respondents, 120 households 114(95%) has participated either in extending free labor or in material in the construction of the roads. Similarly 98(81.7%) has actively participated in the conservation and rehabilitation of the natural environment projects of Menschen fur Menschen in the Woreda.

However, the rate was participation from the local population of Merhabite was poor in the construction of the schools, health centers and the main (all weather) roads. The reason for the poor level of participation by the local population was, these projects were given to construction companies and the local population was engaged in paid labor work only.

6.4.2 Relations with the Woreda Regional and Federal Governments

According to many writers in Ethiopia there is no enabling environment for CSOs especially following the introduction of the new CSOs proclamation (see Taye and Bahru, 2008). However, Menschen fur Menschen's relation with the government bodies

at all levels was relatively healthy. According to the officers of Menschen fur Menschen there is no serious intervention from the government bodies in its development endeavors as far as it works in accordance with the policies of the government. One factor for this health relation is Menschen fur Menschen is restricted itself with non-political development activities. Menschen fur Menschen has not yet engaged in the right advocacy programs. As a result its image among the government bodies is positive.

6.5 Challenges

Menschen fur Menschen's fifteen years development intervention was not free from challenges both from the beneficiaries, the government bodies in the Woreda and other natural challenges. However, under this section only the challenges that came from the society and the government bodies (dependency, problem of sustainability and relation between Menschen fur Menschen and the government bodies) in the Woreda are discussed where as the natural challenges are discussed in the other parts indirectly. These challenges are responsible for the limitations of Menschen fur Menschen's success in its development intervention in Merhabete.

6.5.1 Dependency and Sustainability

Dependency

Despite huge attention from the organization to avert the development of dependency mentality among the rural population in its development intervention in its operational areas, still there are some inclinations of the rural population towards this unwanted attitude. Menschen fur Menschen has never engaged in free food aid and the provision of other basic needs for free in its operational areas. This was due to; according to its officials preventing the possibility of developing dependency mentality among the beneficiaries of its development interventions.

In Merabite Menschen fur Menschen has involved the provision of pesticides, improved mud or concrete made stoves and modern beehives to the rural population of Merhabete. However, none of these materials were given for free. This was to avoid the development

of a dependency or a “wait and see” mentality among the receivers. Instead the farmers were expected to cover up to 40percent of the costs of the materials.

On the other hand Menschen fur Menschen has involved in the organization of several trainings and awareness creation programs in the Woreda. Most of the trainings and awareness creation programs were accompanied by cash payments in most case in the form of par-dimes despite the programs were organized in the localities of the participants. Here we can see some contradiction, the beneficiaries of such programs were the participants and the rationale behind the cash payments is unclear except the claims of the officers of Menschen fur Menschen. The first justification that was forwarded by the officers was that in the due course it is possible to attract a large number of populations in the programs especially in the awareness programs such as anti-HIVAIDS programs. Secondly, the payments were temporary up to a point when the participants realized the importance of the programs and up to the time the rural population tested the fruits of such programs. Moreover the payments were too small.

Equally the officers in the various government bodies in the Woreda are complaining about the growth of par-dime oriented mentality of the population in Merhabete. They have stated that now days it is almost impossible to manage public gatherings to discuss on development or other agendas unless the public meetings are accompanied by cash payments in the Woreda. The officers feared that this orientation will have negative impacts on any future participatory development interventions in the Woreda.

After five phases and fifteen years Menschen fur Menschen has left Merhabete in December 2007 by handing over the development projects to the responsible government bodies in the Woreda. Accordingly MWARDO took all the agro-ecological rehabilitation works, the road network, water projects and the irrigation systems that have been carried out by Menschen fur Menschen. The credit and saving association was put under the control of the Woreda’s women’s affair Office and small-scale industries expansion office. All the schools and health centers were handed over to the Woreda’s educational and health Offices respectively.

The rural population of Merhabete is not happy about the departure of Menschen fur Menschen from the Woreda. On the other hand Menschen fur Menschen's officers boldly believe that they have done enough development works in the Woreda. However, despite some success Menschen fur Menschen has left Merhabete well ahead of finalizing its developmental missions. Hence, the development of strong and reliable institutions to secure the continuity of the ongoing development has not been properly handled.

A large number of the population in the rural Merhabete has participated in the development projects of Menschen fur Menschen from planning to implementation according to its officers. Menschen fur Menschen has engaged in the provision of large number of trainings about the maintenance of the water grounds and roads and there are large numbers of demonstration centers. Menschen fur Menschen's officers have strongly convinced that the population would be the front runners in the development of their regions and the preservation of the development projects especially following the evacuation of Menschen fur Menschen from the Woreda. However, the reality is the opposite. It seems the population has developed a "wait and see" mentality. Splendid examples of this are the current situations of the water sources, access roads and the terraces.

Following the finalization of the water sources Menschen fur Menschen has handed over the water projects administration to the Woreda's water office under MWARDO. Besides the use right on the water sources the local population was made responsible to care about the water sources. In addition, Menschen fur Menschen has organized a "water committee" of 5-7 individuals from the beneficiaries up on training and provision of some key instruments important for maintaining minor technical problems. From the total water grounds 54 are hands-dug wells. From the hands dug wells 41 are not working. Some of the 41 hands dug wells can be maintain and restore to service. However, according to participants of FGDs most members of the water committee are not willing to involve in the maintenance of the water grounds in case minor technical problems. There are some major factors for retreating of the water committee from its responsibility

identified by participants of FGDs and members of the water committee. The first one is there is no any payment for their services. The second one is they were not trained well.

The case of roads, mainly the access roads is another manifestation of the rural populations' dependency or "waits and sees" mentality. All the all weather roads were constructed by construction companies under the sponsorship of Menschen fur Menschen. The rural communities in the Woreda were participated as laborers. Thus, they had no or limited contribution. However, in the construction of the access (dry weather) roads the rural communities of the Woreda played vital roles. Thus, it is possible to conclude that they have experiences at least to maintain the roads.

Because of the hilly nature of most parts of the Woreda, the road network is susceptible. Thus maintenance of the roads after the rainy seasons in most case is mandatory. The responsibility of maintenance of the road networks was shared by Menschen fur Menschen, local population and government bodies while Menschen fur Menschen was operating in the Woreda. However, this situation is changed following the end of Menschen fur Menschen's operation in the Woreda. The responsible government body is providing limited maintenance of the roads but it is not comprehensive because of budget constraints. The local population is becoming an observant either waiting the left Menschen fur Menschen or any other organization.

Another exemplary case is the situation of the dependency of the local population is the situations that use to attract the attention of Menschen fur Menschen's development endeavors, the rehabilitation and conservation of the natural environment. Menschen fur Menschen in its 15 years stay has trained the local population of Merhabete about the importance of the conservation of the natural environment such as through the construction of terraces and forestations.

The conservation and rehabilitation of the natural environment works following the evacuation of Menschen fur Menschen, except the government sponsored ones are not continued. Participants of FGDs argued this is because of lack of the gabion that used

provided by Menschen fur Menschen. Observations from the DAs indicated that on contrary some of the farmers are taking the gabion wire for other purposes such as the making of beds and chicken houses by dismantling from the constructed terraces. Furthermore the DAs stated that even though it is possible to build terraces with out the gabion wire the farmers are not willing to cooperate in the construction of terraces.

Another manifestation of dependency of the local population on Menschen fur Menschen is the continued complaint and melancholy about the departure of Menschen fur Menschen from the Woreda. Menschen fur Menschen has left Merhabete by the end of 2007 after 15 years of integrated development interventions in the Woreda. It is said that its departure was based on mutual agreement between Menschen fur Menschen and the regional government. According to the agreement Menschen fur Menschen has done enough in the Woreda. However, the populations of the Woreda are not happy about its evacuation and are suspicious of the existence of external intervention for Menschen fur Menschen's departure. Here it is possible to observe the absence or weakness of self develop orientation among the rural communities of Merhabete.

Sustainability

Despite the multi-directional intervention of Menschen fur Menschen in the development endeavor of Merhabete, the sustainability of the development projects is a point open for discussion. According to the expertise in the various government bodies in the Woreda, Some of the factors that impeded sustainability of Menschen fur Menschen's projects in Merhabete include: First the heavy reliance of the local population on technical assistances that were provided by Menschen fur Menschen mainly in the construction of the roads, clean water sources and the terraces. Secondly, the relative short duration of programs to establish institutions that could absorb the projects into regular institutions of the society. Thirdly, the failure of Menschen fur Menschen to use the existing traditional institutions to handle the projects. Finally, in some of the projects there are low level of community involvement and lack of sense of ownership such as in the all weather roads and terraces.

The question of sustainability is clearly noticeable above all in the road networks, potable water sources, the environmental rehabilitation and conservation projects and the credit and saving service projects that have been introduced and run by Menschen fur Menschen.

In spite of the investment of millions of Birr in the construction of the rural road networks, the continuation of the roads in rendering their services is under question mark. Because of the hilly nature of the topography of the Woreda, the roads are susceptible and therefore they need proper maintenances regularly, mainly after the rainy seasons. The roads were transferred to the Woreda's road authority under MWARDO when Menschen fur Menschen left Merhabete. Thus, the responsibility of carrying-out maintenances by default is transferred to this government body. However, the office is not in apposition to perform its responsibility mainly because of shortage of the needed budget, expertise and machineries. The communities are complaining about the absence of an organizing body to involve in the maintenance of the roads. Therefore unless some measures are taken the roads, mainly the all weather roads will be out of rendering services in the near future. The failure to maintain the roads by the local population is resulted mainly because of the need of machineries beyond the access of the rural population and lack of sense of ownership.

The area with big problem of sustainability is the provision of clean potable water projects. From the total number of 266 sources of clean water 54 are not giving service now. From the total 54 water sources 41 are hands-dug wells. Three major factors were raised by the experts of Menschen fur Menschen and officials in the Woreda for ceasing services in these water sources. The first one is increase the number of population-produced pressure on the water sources. Secondly, the service duration of the hands-dug wells is ten years in maximum. Thus most of the died-out water sources have more than ten years of services. The third factor for the service termination of these water sources is miss-use by the local population. However, the researcher was unable to find out the exact number of water sources that gave-up giving services due to each of the factors discussed above.

In addition, following the evacuation of Menschen fur Menschen the development of new water grounds is hardly continued. This is due to budget constraints. Hence the only concerned body in the region is the woreda's government body. Thus unless the concerned body is make some serious concern the relatively better clean water supply in the Woreda will be in danger.

The rehabilitation and Conservation of the natural environment is another area with obscure future. This is due to two factors. The first one is there is no strong organization that could maintain the continuation of the projects that have been initiated by Menschen fur Menschen. The Woreda's government bodies are not in a position to maintain this duty due to the usual budget constraint. Secondly, some of the materials for the conservation works are either expensive or are not available in the local markets such as the gabion.

The sustainability of the Credit and saving service is again doubtful. This is due to, even though the responsibility of promoting the continuation was given to the government bodies in the Woreda, the concerned bodies are located in the Alem Ketema far from the resident places of most of the beneficiaries. Thus, it is difficult for follow up and closer contact with beneficiaries.

6.5.2 Menschen fur Menschen's Relation with Government

Bodies in the Woreda

Though there is no intervention from the Woreda's government bodies in the involvement of Menschen fur Menschen's development operations, the relation between the two was not free from problems. The degree of success of the development interventions of Menschen fur Menschen was partially limited by the absence of smooth, strong and full-hearted cooperation between Menschen fur Menschen and the government bodies in the Woreda and the absence of other development agent in the Woreda.

According to Menschen fur Menschen's officials, it was Menschen fur Menschen that took the initiative in the making of most of the development projects. Even there were

reluctances from the Woreda's government bodies to co-operate with Menschen fur Menschen in times of need. But this does not mean that there have not been occasions in which Menschen fur Menschen and the local government bodies worked together. Menschen fur Menschen has extended its financial, material and expertise supports for the various requests made from the regional offices for assistances such as the Woreda's health Office has got medicine supports when they conducted vaccinations campaigns and in case of malaria epidemics. In addition, when it has organized awareness creation programs like anti-HIV/AIDS mass meetings. The educational Office too have guaranteed financial supports when it has conducted a literacy campaigns.

The other problem in relation with Menschen fur Menschen and the local government bodies was the frequent turnover of the government officers at various levels. Development projects that have been started in agreement and recognition of the officers in the Woreda would face some challenges with the advent of new officers that were not familiar with projects.

On the other hand Government officers in the Woreda complained that Menschen fur Menschen has lacked proper follow up of its projects and it was extremely suspicious of the government bodies in the Woreda. Even some government officials has labeled Menschen fur Menschen as "A government within a Government" to mean that Menschen fur Menschen was not willing to obey the government officers and to work in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Woreda.

It is observable that both Menschen fur Menschen and the government bodies in the Woreda are competing to take the credit for the development achievements in the Woreda.

6.6 Limitations

The 15 years Menschen fur Menschen's development intervention in the Woreda have its own limitations. The limitations were caused by the multi-folded livelihood challenges, both natural and man-made problems in the Woreda. To begin with the natural

livelihood challenges, the topography of Merhabete according to the experts of Menschen fur Menschen and the governmental offices are the greatest obstacle for the provision of some of the basic infrastructures such as road network, transportation and clean water supplies. The provision of such services needed the investment of huge sum of money and the use of sophisticated construction materials.

The dissemination of modern agricultural technology was also highly hindered by the topography in two ways. First most parts of the Wereda are impenetrable because the absence of road network and transportation. The second one is the hilly nature of the Woreda dose not allow the use of modern inputs mainly fertilizers. Hence, the fertilizers could be easily washed away while raining.

Menschen fur Menschen as a development agent has made great contributions in the improvement of the livelihoods of the rural communities of Merhabete Woreda. However, the degree of success is highly countered by both natural factors discussed above and failures of Menschen fur Menschen's approaches that have lacked concern to some determinants of development. Some of the weaknesses that have reduced the success of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete are discussed below. The identified factors are forwarded by the various experts that were addressed in the key informant interviews and participants of the FGDs.

6.6.1 Promoting Comprehensive Participation

Development projects that are introduced by an external development agent, such as NGOs needed wide ranged participation of the local population. Without the participation of the local population development is a mission impossible in most cases. Therefore, the inculcation of the local formal and traditional institutions and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge is an important determining factor for the success of the development endeavors.

In Merhabete like the other parts of Ethiopia there are large numbers of informal traditional institutions of wide acceptance and mass based. The most common traditional institutions are *Iddirs*, *Mehabers*, *Debo* and *Iqqub*. *Iddir* and *Mehabers* have large number of permanent members. Members are liable to pay a fixed amount of money on monthly bases. *Iddiri* is a traditional association usually among peoples that live in the same localities. The main concern of *Iddirs* is extending financial and labor support to members in case of deaths of a member's or relatives of households. *Mehaber* is a traditional association on either kinship or religious bases. On the other hand *Debo* and *Iqqub* are traditional method of social co-operations. The former is a non-permanent member traditional seasonal hand-giving (collective labor) method among the near-by farmers mainly in the harvest season. The second one is a traditional circular financing system. It has a short duration until all members benefited from the circular financing. Members of *Iqqub* are subject to pay an amount of money that eventually returns in to the pockets of members.

These traditional and finance institutions could be important assets to accelerate the development process in various ways. Some of the potential contributions of these institutions are emanated from their nature and wide acceptance among the population. Some of the diversified roles that such institutions are capable to render are discussed below.

Firstly, these institutions are so common in Ethiopia for instance in Merhabete there are large numbers of *Iddirs* and *Mehabers* at least one *Iddir* one *Mehaber* in every village. Therefore, it is possible to reach every household through these institutions. Secondly, some of these institutions have some resemblance with the modern and formal institutions. So it is possible to up grade such institutions in to the modern system. By doing so it is possible to develop local institutions. Thirdly, they have trustworthiness mainly among their members and the general public at large. Therefore, it is possible to mobilize large number of the population in time need by the development agents especially for labor intensive works. Fourthly, such institutions have long lived durations since they came in to existence. Therefore, they have the needed indigenous knowledge

about the socio-economic foundations of the major livelihood challenges in their respective regions and the best method of interventions to tackle such challenges by the external development agents. The fifth potential role that could be extended by these traditional institutions emanates from their independence from other bodies such as the government. As a result those who have reservations to participate in the projects of the government could be easily embraced in the development projects. The sixth potential role of these institutions is the result of their long experience of financial managements. For several years they have effective handling of their finance. Every member is alleged to pay a fixed amount of money on the monthly bases. So it is possible to intervene in this sector to promote a development project by allowing the local people to handle the funds of the project. Finally, these institutions have a convincing and a compelling power of the local people. Hence, the members of such institutions have a great deal of social and economic reliance on these institutions. All the above discussions revolve around the irreplaceable potentials of the traditional institutions in the development process. Above all it is concerned with the promotion of some vital elements for the success of development interventions by agents of development. Some of these elements are; promotion of mass participation and developing a belongingness mentality about the development projects and trustworthiness on the development agents. In addition, it would able to diminish a dependency mentality among the beneficiaries through allowing them to participate in the development process.

The other importance of using local institutions next to the promotion of full-hurt participations from the local population is the endorsement of the sustainability of the development process especially in the case of short-lived intervention of the development agents. Guaranteeing the sustainability of the development project by the local population could be achieved in two major ways. The first one is through handing over the finalized development projects to the beneficiaries by giving the responsibility of supervising the project to these institutions. The second one is by sharing experiences and knowledge to the local population through trainings by the development agents. The institutions will organize the development initiatives in their localities up on the departure of the development agents based on their experiences.

Menschen fur Menschen's record in the inclusion of these traditional institutions in its development intervention in Merhabete was relatively poor. There were some successes in the participation of some local institutions such as the church in the anti-traditional harmful campaigns and anti-HIV/AIDS campaigns. It is said that harmful traditional practices were so common in Merhabete before the advent of Menschen fur Menschen. Some of these practices were FGM, abduction young females, early marriage, etc. But after 15 years of Menschen fur Menschen's development interventions these practices are highly reduced to nearly zero. The credit for such success is not fully Menschen fur Menschen's the government also has vital contributions by imposing legal punishments that are included in the new family law against perpetrators of such crimes.

Despite sharing the success in reducing harmful traditions Menschen fur Menschen's record in mobilizing the local population using the local institutions is poor. It is true that Menschen fur Menschen has used other methods or ways to mobilize the people of Merhabete in its development projects. Such as mass meetings and government meetings, however, according to the FGDs participants there were no major initiatives from Menschen fur Menschen to use the local traditional institutions.

According to Menschen fur Menschen's officers the main reasons behind the failure of Menschen fur Menschen to exploit the local traditional institutions were first the population is suspicious of any external body that contact with such institutions. Secondly, the local population is unwilling to accept the engagement of the institutions in other activities that were assigned traditionally to them. Thirdly, these institutions are poorly organized and financially they are weak. Therefore it is better to keep the traditional organizations with out any external intervention and instead it was better to use other mechanisms to bring the population in their side in the development of the Woreda.

6.6.2 Capital Formation

Menschen fur Menschen's success in the development or in the strengthening of the existing capitals was limited or poor. Despite its success in the relative development of Merhabete especially in the areas of education, health and road networks, Menschen fur Menschen has left Merhabete without finalizing its mission. Above all Menschen fur Menschen has failed in the development of a full-fledged awareness and responsibility of the local population towards development. In addition, the creation of capitals should have to get priority to maintain the sustainability of the development process in general and projects in particular

Development is comprehensive and its sustainability could be promoted through empowerment of the beneficiaries and the formation of different capitals among the beneficiaries. The capital formation or promotion has to include social, financial, human, physical and natural capitals.

Menschen fur Menschen had some success in developing and promoting capitals. Social capital was promoted through the endorsement of working together among the rural population in Merhabete in some of its projects such as the road network and development of the sources of clean water supplies. Financial capital through the establishment of the Menschen fur Menschen credit and saving association and through the provision of credit services to the rural women in the Woreda. Human capital was addressed through the expansion of education, health and other facilities. The physical capital was promoted through the construction of road network, potable water grounds, etc. The promotion of the natural capital (land, trees, soil water etc) was included in the agro-ecological component of the development project. However, all these successes are shadowed by the problem of sustainability except the education and health sectors.

6.6.3 Right Advocacy

Menschen fur Menschen's record in the area of empowerment mainly political empowerment of the Woreda is poor. It did not follow the right advocacy approach. None of Menschen fur Menschen's programs were included political advocacy programs. It is said

that NGOs should play the roles of mediators between the state and individuals. Their role is to open up the political space and to make the possibilities open for the prevalence of freedom of action of individuals and opening the space for the respect of choices. In addition they should facilitate the emergence of independent choices (Taye and Bahru, 2008). However, Menschen fur Menschen's role in such activities is so poor.

6.6.4 Diversification

Failure to diversify the economic activities in the Woreda is another big failure of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete. Hence, agriculture is the major economic activity in the rural Merhabete Woreda. Menschen fur Menschen has created temporary job opportunities for the rural population in Merhabete in the course of the construction of the schools, health centers and the road networks.

The introduction of small businesses in the rural Merhabete is a key to bring diversification of the economic activities. Small retailer shops, barber etc. with training hence, most of the rural Merhabete traveled to Alem Ketema or Fetra, the nearest towns to get such services. Menschen fur Menschen's record in promoting small businesses in rural Merhabete is poor. Even the credit and saving services in the Woreda have not promoted the introduction and expansion of non-agricultural economic activities in the Woreda. The main reason for this was the unavailability of some major facilities mainly electricity.

6.6.5 Lack Focuses to Some Areas

Some of the limitations of the development interventions of Menschen fur Menschen were the results of lack of focuses to some of the developments problems by Menschen fur Menschen. Menschen fur Menschen's engagement in the construction of schools has great contribution for the growth of school enrollments in the Woreda, However, its role in enabling School aged children that were unable to attend schools because of failure of their parents to send their children to schools due to failure of meet the needs of their children because of poverty has got no big concern. Hence, it did not engage in the

provision of basic schooling materials to unable children. Though, it has tried to help orphans to attend schools.

The other major problem in the Woreda is shortage of trained teachers and medical stuffs. Menschen fur Menschen's efforts to alleviate this problem are poor. There are no institutions for the training of teachers and health officers in the Woreda. Menschen fur Menschen has made no effort to tackle these problems.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1 Conclusion

This study was aimed at assessing the roles of NGOs in improving the livelihood of the rural communities by taking the case of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabite, Woreda of the Amhara National Regional state. Nowadays, NGOs are considered as important development agents. In Ethiopia their number has shown tremendous increases in the past two decades. Menschen fur Menschen is one of the many NGOs which have been working in different parts of the country including Merhabete since 1982.

In Merhabete Menschen fur Menschen has worked for 15 years as the only non-governmental development agent. It has been engaged in five related fields namely; educational, health, infrastructure, agro-ecology and the women and development components.

The first three components were concerned with the construction of schools, health institutions, and the road networks. In addition, the schools and the health facilities were furnished with the necessary materials. Furthermore, the infrastructure component was concerned with the development of potable water sources in the Woreda. The agro-ecological component was dealt with the preservation and rehabilitation of the natural environment of the Woreda. The last but not least, component was the women and development component. This component was in favour of the empowerment of women.

In its development intervention in Merhabete Menschen fur Menschen had both opportunities and challenges. Some of the opportunities, such as willingness to take part in the development projects and trustworthiness of the population, were the results of the fruits of the development interventions of Menschen fur Menschen and few of these opportunities were properly exploited. The other opportunity that Menschen fur Menschen had in Merhabete was independence from the Woreda's government bodies.

The challenges that Menschen fur Menschen has faced in its 15 years development programs in the woreda were the results of both natural and manmade problems. Naturally Merhabete is mountainous region. Thus, it is difficult to the implementation of many development projects such as the provision of potable water, building road network and the natural environment preservation and rehabilitation projects.

The manmade challenges that Menschen fur Menschen faced in its development interventions were the results of either poor awareness to avert the problems in the designing the projects, or the absence of strong local formal institutions such as bank, and development agents in the Woreda. The manmade challenges were further reinforced by the reluctance of the Woreda's government bodies to cooperate with Menschen fur Menschen. Due to these challenges, the successes of Menschen fur Menschen are overshadowed by problems such as dependency of the local communities on external bodies and the problem of sustainability of the development process in general and the development projects that have been finalized in particular. The problems of dependency and sustainability above all are visible in the road networks, potable water sources and the environmental preservation and rehabilitation projects of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete.

Fifteen years is short time to bring a comprehensive and sustainable development in areas like Merhabete which is entrenched with massive socio-economic problems. Using the opportunities and by resisting the challenges Menschen fur Menschen, however, has achieved great successes.

The records of Menschen fur Menschen in Merhabete as the only development agent besides the government are a remarkable one. The success is so impressive particularly in the areas of the provision of educational and health facilities. On the contrary, the degree of success began to decline when we examine the engagements of Menschen fur Menschen in the areas of the construction of road networks, the rehabilitation and conservation of the natural environment and the small-scale credit and saving service.

Factors for relative poor performances of these components of Menschen fur Menschen's intervention were the results of multifaceted causes, including both natural and artificial. Some of the factors that shadowed the high levels of successes of Menschen fur Menschen in Merabite were manmade problems that occurred in the course of the interventions and in the finalization stages of the development projects. In the course of the projects effective works and follow-ups to maintain sustainability have not been done.

The other problem of Menschen fur Menschen's projects was failure either to develop effective institutions or to strengthen the existing ones to promote sustainability of the development process in general and the finalized projects in particular. The only institution that existed to take the finalized projects was the governor body of the Woreda. The Woreda's administration has several problems to promote the sustainability of the development process that initiated by Menschen fur Menschen and to keep the finalized projects in rendering their services. Problem of budget and expertise are among some of the problems of the Woreda.

Another failure of Menschen fur Menschen to promote the sustainability of the development process was its failure to use the long-lived indigenous traditional institutions in development projects and in handing over the finalized once. *Iddirs*, *Mehabers*, *Iqqubs* and the likes had no role in the development initiatives that were introduced by Menschen fur Menschen in the Woreda.

To sum up, Menschen fur Menschen had great successes in the areas of education and health. However, its departure before building the capacity of the local population to promote the sustainability of the development process in the Woreda, is the highest miscalculation that potentially could back the development process in the Woreda to zero, unless other agents mainly the government give it great concern.

7.2 Recommendations

The major success of the development intervention by external agents is maintaining the sustainability of the development projects, especially following the departure of the development agents. To achieve sustainability the following recommendations are made;

- Give more weight to development projects that have a long lived potential of bringing major changes in the life of the rural poor such as education, health, road network etc.
- Promote the participation of the local population in the development projects at all levels.
- Embrace the local and traditional institutions in the development projects.
- Empower and build the capacity of the local population about the future handling of the development process through trainings.
- Avoid activities that could create dependency mentality among the beneficiaries like free food aid.

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Annex: 1 structured questioner for household survey

HOUSEHOLD SERVEYQUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

This is a questionnaire prepared to gather data aimed at examining the role of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in improving the livelihood of the people of Merabite Woreda. The Ultimate objective of collecting the information is solely for academic purpose and to have a wider understanding about the extent at which the people of Merabite Woreda are benefiting from the intervention of NGOs. The output of the study depends on the genuine information that will be collected from you. So you are kindly requested to fill this questionnaire based on the existing reality.

Name (Enumerator)? _____

Date of interview, Day _____ month _____ year _____

Name of the rural kebele _____

Village _____

Part one - IDENTIFICATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Q.1 Sex of the household head 1. Male ☐ 2. Female ☐

Q.2 Age of the household head _____

Q.3 Marital Status 1.Married ☐ 2.Single ☐ 3.Divorced ☐ 4.Widowed ☐ 5. Other _____

Q.4 Size of family _____

Q.5 Is the household head or other member of the family involved in more than one livelihood activities? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q.6 If your answer for Q5 is yes, provide the following information.

No	Type of occupation	Put in order according to their contribution to the household			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	Livestock raring				
2	Cultivation				
3	Laborer				
4	Petty trader				
5	Wood & charcoal seller				
6	Pottery				
7	Weaving				
8	Bee heaving				

9	Sale of local drinks (tela,katikala...)				
10	Others, specify				

Part two HOUSEHOLD ASSET AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILES

Q. 7 Do you have land? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 8 If your answer for Q7 is yes how many hectare/s of land? _____

Q. 9 If your answer for Q7 is yes how did you get it? (Multiple choices is possible)

1. Shared with relatives ☐ 4. Shared cropped in ☐
 2. Inheritance from parents ☐ 5. Others, specify _____
 3. Communal right ☐

Q.10 If your answer for Q8 is yes, how is the fertility of the soil?

1. Very good ☐ 2. Medium ☐ 3. Poor ☐

Q.11 If your answer for Q7 is No, Why?

Q.12 How does this year's harvest compare to the previous year?

1. Good ☐ 2. Bad ☐ 3. No change ☐

Q.13 If your answer to Q 12 is Good, what was / were the reason/s?

1. Good rain ☐ 2. Good input supply ☐ 3. Others, specify _____

Q.14 If your answer to Q 13 is Good input supply, who provided the supply?

1. Government ☐ 2. NGO's ☐ 3. Others, Specify _____

Q. 15 Did you get any modern agricultural input? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 16 If your answer for Q15 is yes, which modern input did you apply?

1. Chemical fertilizer ☐ 2. Improved seeds ☐ 3. Herbicides ☐ 4. Insecticides ☐
 5. Others, specify _____

Q.17 If your answer to Q 12 is Bad , what was / were the reason/s?

Q.18 Are there any constraints you face while farming? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 19 If your answer for Q18 is yes, what is/are they? (Put in order of their severity)

No	Constraints	Rank			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	Soil erosion				
2	Water logging				
3	Poor soil fertility				
4	Susceptibility to wild life				
5	Water scarcity				
6	Drought				
7	Crop pests / disease				
8	Others, specify				

Q.20 Have you ever got any supports to over come the problems? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q.21 If your answer for Q 20 is yes, who supported you?

1. Government ☐ 2. NGOs ☐ 3. Others, specify _____

Q. 22 If your answer for Q 20 is yes, what kind of support did you get?

1. Credit facility ☐ 2. Free food aid ☐ 3. Food for work ☐

4. Employment opportunity ☐ 5. Others, specify _____

Q.23 Do you have livestock? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q.24 If your answer for Q 23 is yes, how did you get these resources? (Multiple responses are possible)

1. Inherited from parents ☐

2. Donated from NGOs ☐

3. Purchased ☐

4. Other, specify _____

Q.25 What is the total number of stock?

No	Type	Number	Equivalent in cash	Remark
1	Cow			
2	Oxen			
3	Calves			
4	Sheep			
5	Goat			
6	Mules			
7	Horse			

8	Donkeys			
9	Chicken			
10	Bee hives			

Q.26 Who has control over the livestock of the family?

1. Household head ☐ 3. Jointly (Spouse and head of the household) ☐
2. Spouse ☐

Q.27 Are there problems in livestock rearing 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q.28 If your answers for Q. 27 is yes, what are the constraints? Put in order based on their severity.

No	Constraints	Rank			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	Shortage of grazing land and fodder				
2	Lack of adequate veterinary service				
3	Prevalence of animal disease				
4	Shortage of water				
5	Attack by wild life				
6	Others if any, specify				

Q.29 Is there any challenge in selling livestock and other agricultural products?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q.30 If your answer for Q 29 is yes, what are these problems? Put in order based on their severity.

No	Challenges	Rank			
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	Long distance to the market center				
2	Unfavorable market condition				
3	Lack of market for stock & their products				
4	Others, specify				

Q. 31 Do you have any other source of income? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 32 If your answer for Q31 is yes, what is/are it/they?

PART THREE NGOs AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

Q.33 Can you name some of the NGOs working in your village please? _____

Q.34 What is their contribution?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Construction of schools | ☐ | 4. Provision of clean water supply | ☐ |
| 2. Construction of health centers | ☐ | 5. Providing training | ☐ |
| 3. Construction of roads | ☐ | 6. Other specify | _____ |

Q.35 Have you ever got support from them? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 36 If your answer for Q35 is yes in what form?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Credit facility | ☐ | 6. Road to market centers | ☐ |
| 2. Construction of health centers | ☐ | 7. Other, specify | _____ |
| 3. Food aid | ☐ | | |
| 4. Provision of clean water supply | ☐ | | |
| 5. Training | ☐ | | |

Q.37 If your answer for Q35 is No why?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. You were not selected by NGOs authorities | ☐ |
| 2. You were not interested to get their support | ☐ |
| 3. You did not have the guarantee for credit | ☐ |
| 4. Others _____ | |

Q.38 Are you happy with the criteria for the selection of individuals who were/are receiving assistance (support)?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Yes ☐ | 2. No ☐ |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

Q.39 If your answer for Q38 is No why?

Q. 40 Do you think that NGOs are helping you best at bad times (during famine---) and even at normal times in development activities?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Yes ☐ | 2. No ☐ |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

Q. 41 If your answer for Q40 is No why?

NGOs AND EDUCATION

Q. 42 Do members of the household have access to education? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 43 If your answer for Q42 is yes what is the distance of the school from your home? _____ in Km

Q. 44 Who constructed the school? 1. Government ☐ 2. NGOs ☐ 3. Others, specify---

Q. 45 Did you make any contribution in the school construction? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 46 If your answer for Q45 is yes in what form did you contribute?

1. Money ☐ 2. Material ☐ 3. Labour ☐ 4. Other, specify _____

Q. 47 If your answer for Q45 is No why?

1. No one demanded your participation ☐

2. You had no interest to contribute ☐

3. You have no ability both financially and physically ☐

4. Other, specify _____

Q. 48 Is there any child who does not attend school in the household? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 49 If your answer for Q48 is yes why?

1. Required for farm or any other household activity ☐

2. Long distance to school ☐

3. Inability to cover school costs ☐

4. Fear of rape and abduction ☐

5. Other, specify _____

Q.50 If your answer for Q49 is yes did you get any support to enable your children to attend school? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 51 If your answer for Q50 is yes who supported you?

1. Government ☐ 2. NGOs ☐ 3. Other, specify _____

NGOs AND HEALTH

Q. 52 Do you have access to health center? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 53 Who constructed the health center?

1. Government ☐ 2. NGOs ☐ 3. Other, specify _____

Q. 54 If your answer to Q52 is yes what is the distance of the health center from your residence in Km? _____

Q. 55 Did you make any contribution in the construction of the health center?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 56 If your answer for Q55 is yes in what form did you contribute?

1. Money ☐ 2. Material ☐ 3. Labour ☐ 4. Other, specify _____

Q. 57 If your answer for Q55 is No why?

- 1. No one demanded your participation ☐
- 2. You had no interest to contribute ☐
- 3. You have no ability both financially and physically ☐
- 4. Other, specify _____

Q. 58 During the last 12 months was there an occasion in which one or more of your household members fell seriously ill? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 59 If your answer for Q58 is yes did the person/s take medical treatment?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 60 If your answer for Q58 is No why?

- 1. Too high cost of treatment ☐ 4. Other, specify _____
- 2. Too high transport cost ☐
- 3. Absence or low quality of health facility ☐

NGOs AND CLEAN WATER SUPPLY

Q. 61 Do you have access to clean water? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 62 If your answer for Q61 is Yes how far is it from your residence in Km _____?

Q. 63 Who constructed the clean water source?

1. Government ☐ 2. NGOs ☐ 3. Other, specify _____

Q. 64 Did you make any contribution in the construction of the water source?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q. 65 If your answer for Q64 is yes in what form did you contribute?

1. Money ☐ 2. Material ☐ 3. Labour ☐ 4. Other, specify _____

Q. 66 If your answer for Q64 is No why?

1. No one demanded your participation ☐
 2. You had no interest to contribute ☐
 3. You have no ability both financially and physically ☐
 4. Other, specify _____

Thank You!

Annex: 2FGDs guide

Key issues to be discussed	Guiding questions
Natural resource base	How the communities getting access to farmland and livestock?
Financial Capital	What are the major source cash in the community?
Physical capital	Do you have access to basic infrastructures such as road, education, health etc?
Social capital	What social and financial informal institutions (iddir, debo, iqub etc.) in which the communities participate in the area? How?
Economic activities	What are the major economic activities are there in the woreda?
Major livelihood	What the major livelihood challenges in the woreda?
NGOs in the Woreda	Name NGO/s working in the Woreda? What are the major areas of their involvements?
Participation	Have you ever participated in the development projects of NGOs? How? Did the NGOs allow you to participate in all their development projects? How?

Annex: 3 Check List for key informant interviews

I. For government officials, elders and women.

1. What are the major economic activities?
2. What are the major livelihood challenges?

3. Can you name some of the NGOs that are working in your Woreda?
4. How do you describe their roles in tackling the major livelihood challenges in the Woreda?
5. How is your relation with the NGOs in the Woreda (For Government officers)?
6. How do you see the sustainability of the development projects?
7. How do you see the participation of the local population in the development projects in the Woreda?

II. For NGOs officials:

1. How is your relation with the government bodies in the Woreda?
2. How do you see the participation of the local population in your development projects in the Woreda?
3. How do you describe your roles in tackling the major livelihood challenges in the Woreda?
4. How do you see the participation of the local population in your development projects in the Woreda?
5. How do you design your development projects?
6. What are the roles of the local population and the government bodies in the Designing and implementing your development projects?
7. What major problems did you face while operating in the Woreda?
8. What major opportunities did you have in the Woreda?
9. Do you think have properly exploited the opportunities?

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that the thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Declared by:

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