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SEASONAL MIGRATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS: THE CASE OF  
BAHIR DAR TOWN AND THREE RURAL *KEBELES* IN AMHARA REGION

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DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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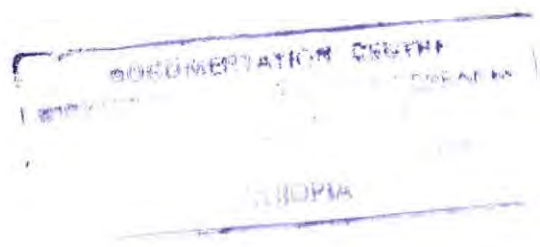
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**Title**

**Seasonal Migration and Rural Livelihoods: The Case of Bahir Dar  
Town and Three Rural Kebeles in Amhara Region.**

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## GLOSSARY

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>Areke</i>	local alcoholic drink
<i>Ato</i>	a title used before the first name of a man which is equivalent to Mr. in English
<i>Birr</i>	Ethiopian currency
<i>Chat</i>	<i>catha edulis</i>
<i>Derg</i>	the committee of the provisional military government that ruled Ethiopia between 1974 and 1991
<i>Kebele</i>	lowest administrative unit in Ethiopia. It is also known as Peasant Administration (PA) in rural Ethiopia
<i>Timmad</i>	unit of land, equivalent to one quarter of a hectare
<i>Woizero</i>	a title used before the first name of a married woman which is equivalent to Mrs. in English
<i>Woreda</i>	an administrative unit in Ethiopia that is below zones and above <i>kebeles</i>
Zone	an administrative unit in Ethiopia that is below region and above <i>Woredas</i>

## ACRONYMS

ACSI	Amhara Credit and Saving Institution
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
BDCA	Bahir Dar City Administration
DFID	Department For International Development
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMP	Global Mountain Program
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HH	Household
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDR	Institute of Development Research (at Addis Ababa University)
IDS	Institute of Development Studies (at the University of Sussex)
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PA	Peasant Administration
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TB	Tuberculosis

## ABSTRACT

*Seasonal migration of labour to Bahir Down Town and other rural areas is found to be an important component of the livelihood strategies of people living in the study area. This study aimed at examining the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration of labour on the livelihoods of migrant people. To generate the necessary data, both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed.*

*Seasonal out-migration of labour in the study area is undertaken by many rural households so as to diversify households' portfolios, save and invest in rural areas, and reduce risk and vulnerability. The remittances obtained from this type of migration have served rural households to supplement their income from agriculture and alleviate the problem of land shortage and landlessness. In addition to the remittances, labour migrants bring back home some kind of items such as household utensils, consumable goods, clothes and educational materials. They are positively contributing to the development of the recipient area by supplying cheap labour power. On the other hand, they exert pressure on social services in the town, increase unemployment, and pollute the environment. The major factors that drive rural people to migrate for seasonal wage earning employment are attributed to economic, social and cultural factors. The availability of employment opportunities at destination and the attractiveness of the payment appear to be another major pull factor of seasonal out-migration of labour. The stream of seasonal out-migration of labour is predominantly carried out to rural areas of other region. Most of them have earlier experiences of out-migration either to the same place or in other areas and they prefer rural to urban areas for their future out-migration and permanent residence. Migrants usually stay at destination from 1-5 months and the majority migrate in September as this time is the peak labour demanding time at the destination. Because of their short stay at the destination, the skill acquired by migrants is negligible. The major problems in which labour migrants often face during their journey and at the destination are inability to get social services, social discrimination, labour exploitation, exposure to illnesses, misleading information, shortage of transportation, and robbery.*

*By considering the positive contribution of off-farm seasonal wage employment towards improving the livelihoods of the rural poor, the rural development strategy should be directed towards promoting a policy that maximizes the benefits incurred from labour migration and minimizes the risks and challenges associated with it. There is also a need to consider labour migration as an alternative livelihood option for the poor rural households in increasing assets, reducing poverty and alleviating the problem of farmland and landlessness.*

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Population mobility is a norm in human history, not an exception. Since the remote past, human beings have been in a constant state of movement to varying distances, for different periods of time and for different reasons. Migration phenomenon in Africa is as old as the history of mankind on the continent (Adepoju, 1995; de Haan, 1999). It has occurred in the continent in response to natural and human-induced factors. Following the introduction of industrialization and the expansion of construction activities in many towns, large scale rural-urban labour migration for wage earning employment has become more common in many African countries (Bjeren, 1985). In West Africa, for instance, seasonal migration of labour from the semi-arid northern regions to the commercial farming areas of the south has been a very common practice (Devereux et al., 2003). In southern Africa, this type of migration has been carried out from Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and other countries to the goldmines and commercial farm areas of South Africa (ibid).

Similarly, in Ethiopia, the expansion of industries, construction and service activities in major towns has attracted many rural people to flow to urban areas. Besides, due to natural and human induced factors, the rural parts of the country have been vulnerable to different socio-economic problems. One of the coping strategies pursued by peasants is, therefore, rural-urban migration. As the economic, political and social activities increased in Bahir Dar town, it has become the destination of many labor migrants. A large number of seasonal migrants work in urban informal sectors as casual laborers, head-loaders, and employed temporarily in the construction and service sectors during the slack periods of farming activities in their home areas and return in the peak agricultural season.

Migration patterns are so complex that it divides into internal and international, that is, movement of persons within a nation, and between nations, respectively. There are different streams of migration: rural-urban, rural-rural, urban-urban, and urban-rural. The movement of people could also either be seasonal or permanent. Seasonal migration as a livelihood strategy appears to be far more important in rural areas in terms of coping and accumulation option for the poor and the non-poor alike (Ellis, 2003). Many rural residents migrate in the lean season to neighboring intermediate cities and elsewhere to find jobs. This strategy diversifies income sources and makes up for lost income from agriculture work.

To have a better understanding about the opportunities and challenges of seasonal out-migration of labour to an individual, or a household as well as its impact to areas of origin and destination, it is important to identify who migrate, why they migrate, where and when migration takes place, and the contribution migration makes to the household economy. In this study, therefore, an attempt has been made to identify the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants, the stream and frequency of migration, and its impacts on the place of origin and on the host environment as well as on migrants themselves.

Due to the nature of the problem, relying only at places of destination may not give a complete picture of the issue under study. Thus, attempts are made to document the opportunities migrant laborers incur and challenges they encounter based primarily on the perception of the migrants and the families of the migrants at places of origin. By so doing, based on the findings, attempts are also made to provide recommendations in the context of seasonal out-migration of labour which enables to promote well designed policies that can support migration as a positive choice.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Migration, in general, and seasonal migration in particular, is often viewed negatively. Development studies, so far, have paid little attention to labor migration (de Haan, 1999). He further states that policy makers often perceive migration as an undesirable and a threat to stability. However, a livelihood approach, being people-centered and holistic, looks in an opposite direction, namely that it affirms the crucial role migration can play in increasing assets, reducing poverty, diminishing vulnerability and improving livelihoods. This does not mean that there are no negative stances to migration, rather the positive balance of arguments found in current migration literature outweigh and appear more persuasive (Ellis, 2003). Such an important issue has remained a matter of dispute and not yet adequately explored.

In rural parts of Ethiopia, the agricultural activity is seasonal in character in which the peak periods of harvesting and cultivation vary across time and location. These spatial and temporal variations in terms of agricultural peak periods between the source and destination areas not only create favourable situations for seasonal out-migration of labour but have remained an essential component of the livelihood strategies of many rural households. As a result, since earlier periods, farmers from Gondar and Gojjam have migrated to the coffee growing areas of south-western Ethiopia for wage employment during the slack agricultural season at home and the peak labour demanding time at destination. Although this type of migration has greater contribution to both the sending and receiving areas and offers a greater potential for poverty reduction, its potential benefits and challenges are not yet being fully investigated.

Nowadays, thousands of people migrate from their rural homeland village to Bahir Dar Town and other areas such as Eastern Showa<sup>1</sup>, Humera<sup>2</sup>, Mettema<sup>3</sup> and Wollega<sup>4</sup> for

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<sup>1</sup> A *teff* growing area found in Oromiya National Regional State

<sup>2</sup> A commercial sesame cultivation area found in the Tigray National Regional State

<sup>3</sup> An area found in Amhara National Regional State where sesame cultivation is the dominant activity

<sup>4</sup> A coffee growing area located in the south-western part of Ethiopia

wage earning employment during slack season and return during the peak farming season. This type of migration is undertaken in both normal and poor farming periods. Peasants undertake this seasonal migration to diversify households' livelihood portfolios and as a coping strategy to reduce or prevent risks, smooth consumption, supplement income, and create savings. However, of course, the earnings obtained by migrants, the remittances brought back to their families and investment on agriculture, the values, skills and experience acquired in their stay in the host environment have not yet been adequately investigated.

Besides, a few investigations have given attention to the hazardous circumstances that migrants encounter in the host such as labor exploitation, risk of injury, vulnerability to illnesses, exclusion from social protection, and the coping strategies of the migrant people. Such crucial issues, therefore, need further research and the researcher intends to fill in such research gaps.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to examine the opportunities and challenges of seasonal labor migration as a livelihood strategy in improving the lives of the migrants.

#### **Specific Objectives**

The research specifically tries to:

- investigate the factors of migration as per the perception of migrants and their families of origin,
- assess the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants,
- explore the impacts of seasonal out-migration of labour on the source area, on destination as well as on migrants,

- uncover the living and working conditions of migrants and the challenges they encounter in the urban setting,
- suggest recommendations for well-designed policies.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- Why do people pursue migration as a livelihood strategy?
- Who migrates? In terms of gender, age, education, marital, and economic status.
- What is the impact of seasonal out-migration of labour on the livelihoods of rural people?
- What social networks are available for migrants to move to urban areas?
- How remittance is invested by migrants?
- How migration is perceived by urban people, institutions, families of origin and migrants themselves?
- What is the impact of migration on the host environment?
- How do migrants live and work in the recipient area?
- What risks and challenges do migrants face at the destination?
- Where do migrants prefer to migrate? Why do they prefer such specific area?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Seasonal migration of labour has become one of the most durable components of the livelihood strategies of people living in rural areas. Rural households engage in short and long-term migration to maintain and diversify household income, to save and invest in rural areas, and reduce risk and vulnerability. However, the awareness about the pattern and magnitude of seasonal migration as well as the importance of it in the lives of the poor remains inadequate. Migration has been perceived as a problem that poses a threat to social and economic stability rather than viewing it as an important livelihood option for the poor. This study, therefore, tries to explore the opportunities and challenges of seasonal labor migration in improving the livelihoods of migrants. Moreover, in an effort to have a better understanding about the subject, attempts have been made to assess the

situation both at the place of origin and destination, which may contribute to stimulate further research on the topic.

Up-to-date comprehensive investigations which can make valuable information on the impact of seasonal labor migration on the livelihood of the poor in the country in general and the study area in particular are not yet adequate. There still is a need for further study on the subject. This study, apart from its contribution to the academic sphere, will have an applied dimension. It is believed to give insights to policy makers and NGOs working in improving the livelihood of rural people.

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

The central theme of the study is to investigate the opportunities and challenges of seasonal out-migration of labour as a livelihood strategy of the rural people. In so doing, attempts have been made to address the issue based primarily on the perspectives of migrants, their families of origin and other stakeholders who have relevant experiences with the subject. But, in addressing the subject, this study has the following limitations:

First, in Bahir Dar, at destination, although efforts have been made to include reasonable size of people under the questionnaire survey, the number of respondents who are selected for this study are not representative of the total number of seasonal migrants in the town. Second, since the study primarily focuses on seasonal labour migrants who stay in town for short periods, other type of migrants such as permanent migrants are not included in the study.

Third, in order to make the study more manageable in terms of time and finance, only one *kebele* from each *woreda* is purposively selected. Thus, the study villages are not representative of the *woreda* and the results of this research from each *kebele* can not be generalized for other *kebeles* of the *woreda*.

### **1.7. Organization of the paper**

This paper has seven chapters. Chapter one is the introductory part of the paper which includes the background, statement of the problem, the objectives and the research questions. The significance and limitation of the study are also treated under this chapter.

Chapter two is all about concepts and the theoretical framework for this study. It also briefly discusses some of the research works on migration in Ethiopia. Chapter three is about the research methodology. It describes the selection of the study areas and methods used to collect and analyze research data. Also highlighted under this chapter are the experiences and challenges encountered and lessons learned during the field work.

In chapter four, a brief description of the study area will be presented. It describes the location, size, climate, topography, demographic, historical, and socio-economic profiles of the study area. Chapter five discusses the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants. The factors of migration, the stream and frequency of out-migration, place of preference for migration, and skills acquired by migrants are also treated under this chapter.

Chapter six describes the impacts of migration to the place of origin and destination. The major purposes of the remittances, the working and living conditions of migrants at destination, and the challenges they face are also described in this chapter. The last chapter provides conclusions and recommendations.

## **Chapter Two: Some Thoughts on Migration**

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

In the following section, some of the conceptual and theoretical approaches to migration that have evolved from the earliest time to the recent periods will be highlighted. But before discussing the different perspectives, a brief explanation to some of the important concepts is provided.

Migration is defined as one or more family members leave the resident households for different reasons and varying periods of time, and by so doing are able to contribute to its welfare (Ellis, 2000). Spatially, two forms of migration can be identified: internal and international, in that the former refers to movement of people within a nation, and the later entails mobility between nations. The streams of internal migration could be rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban and urban-rural (Todaro & Smith, 2003).

The duration of migration could be permanent, seasonal and circular. Permanent migration means that migrants make a long duration move to a different location and sets up domicile at destination. Circular migration is not necessarily tied to seasonal factors rather migrants routinely return to the resident household and do not set up permanent living arrangements in the place they go for temporary work. Seasonal migration is characterized by temporary movement of persons between either rural and urban or rural and rural areas timing their movements to coincide with the farming slack season at home and the peak labour demanding time at destination (Ellis, 2000).

This study focuses on internal migration, particularly seasonal out-migration of labour that is undertaken by farmers for wage earning employment. This type of migration is most often undertaken by peasants during the slack season and return for the peak periods

of agricultural activities at home. According to Devereux et al. (2003), 'labour migration is, and has been for generations, an important component of livelihood diversification and coping strategies for many households who continue to base their lives in the villages and to consider themselves primarily farmers.' It is carried out at certain times of the year for seasonal work at the destination and migrants retain strong links with their rural family. Migrants usually remain at destination from one to six months. This type of migration is undertaken as a coping strategy to reduce their household food consumption and to earn and remit money from the income they obtained (Tesfaye, 2007).

Beginning from early periods, there have been different lines of thoughts on migration. In the following section, attempts are made to assess the different theoretical approaches to migration.

### **2.1.1. Early Theories/ Economic Approaches to Migration**

Theoretical explanations of rural- urban migration go back to 1880s when Ravenstein first proposed his "law of migration". According to Ravenstein's law of migration, migrants move from areas of low opportunity to areas of high opportunity in which the choice of destination is regulated by distance. Migrants from the rural areas move first to nearby towns, and then to large cities (Ravenstein, 1885, 1889, as cited in Oberai & Singh, 1983). He further points out that migration accelerates with growth in the means of transport and communication and expansion of trade and industry.

The other theoretical explanation that gives consideration to the process of rural-urban labor transfer was the one developed by Lewis (Lewis, 1954, as cited in Todaro & Smith, 2003). Lewis's model is based on a concept of dual economy comprising subsistence, agricultural sector characterized by unemployment and underemployment, and a modern industrial sector characterized by full employment where capitalists reinvest the full amount of their profit. This model considers migration as an equilibrating mechanism through the transfer of labor from the labor-surplus sector to the labor-deficit sector. According to the model, this process of labor transfer continues indefinitely until the rate

of expansion of demand for labor outstrips the growth rate of population in rural areas (ibid). In the 1950s, development economists viewed the demand for labour created by the growth of modern industries and the gap in rural and urban wages motivates people to migrate to urban areas. Since then there have been many debates on what motivates people to migrate.

A model that gives comprehensive consideration about rural-urban migration is the one provided by Todaro (Todaro 1969, as cited in Oberai & Singh, 1983). According to his model, migration is stimulated by rational economic considerations of relative benefits and costs, mostly financial, but also psychological. He further points out that the decision to migrate depends on expected rather than actual real wage differentials between urban and rural areas. These neo-classical economic approaches are often known as 'push-pull' theories. They perceive the causes of migration as 'push factors' which drive rural people to leave the areas of origin, and 'pull factors' that attract the attention of prospective migrants into a new destination (Castles & Miller, 2003; Todaro & Smith, 2003; de Haan, 2000). The push factors, according to various authors, are population pressure, low living standards, lack of economic opportunities and political discomfort. On the other hand, availability of job opportunities, health services and other modern facilities in towns and political freedom are assumed to be the 'pull factors' of migration (Castles & Miller, 2003).

These neo-classical economic approaches emphasize on individual behavior, and focus on positive aspects of migration (de Haan, 2000). The analysis assumes that migrants act individually according to a rationality of the relative costs and benefits. Individual decision to migrate to cities would be determined by wage differences, plus expected probability of employment at the destination (Todaro & Smith, 2003; Castles & Miller, 2003; de Haan, 2000; Oberai & Singh, 1983).

The neo-classical economic approaches have therefore been criticized as individuals do not always leave their homeland for purely economic reasons and that decision making

often involves other non-economic factors such as historical, socio-economic structures and social institutions. The economic approach is also criticized since it sees migrants as individual market-players who have full information on their option to make rational choices. However, migrants have limited and often contradictory information which holds them back from making rational decisions and are subject to a range of constraints (Castles & Miller, 2003; Oberai & Singh, 1983).

Although the approach mainly considers migration as determined by economic motive, some of the arguments are still valid in analyzing the factors of migration. The push factors of migration such as impoverishment of the rural economy due to the decline of agricultural productivity, scarcity of farmland and landlessness, on the one hand, and the pull factors like the availability of employment opportunities in other areas, on the other hand, are relevant in the context of this study. But, due to the complexity of the factors of migration, it is not mere economic reason that makes people to arrive in the decision to migrate. A better understanding of the causes, processes as well as consequences of migration therefore, needs further investigation of other factors such as social, cultural, political and institutional factors of migration.

### **2.1.2. Structuralism/Marxist Theories to Migration**

This approach focuses on political and other institutions that determine migration, and emphasizes on the negative aspects of migration (de Haan, 2000). Structuralism theories to migration stressed the unequal distribution of economic and political power in the world economy. Migration was seen mainly as a way of mobilizing cheap labor for capital (Castles & Miller, 2003).

This theory sees labor migration as inevitable in the transition to capitalism, and stresses the advantages of migrant labor for capitalist production. For them migration is not a choice for poor people, but the only option for survival after alienation from the land. The Marxist interpretation (Breman, 1996; Olsen, 1996 as cited in Deshingkar & Start, 2003) focus on how wider structures have perpetuated the exploitation of migrants by capitalists and intermediaries and see migrants as powerless and poor and perpetually in debt.

The structuralism approach has been criticized as one-sided to analyze adequately the complexity of migration and paid inadequate attention to the motivations and actions of the migrants (Castles & Miller, 2003).

Accordingly, although the theory seems partial in understanding other factors of migration, some of the ideas, such as the institutional factors that prevail in rural areas, especially the land redistribution process, which make farmers landless are relevant in the context of this study in analyzing the factors of migration. Unlike the Marxist approach, the current thinking about migration goes beyond its negative role by giving emphasis on the positive contribution of migration towards improving the livelihoods of poor people. Moreover, it is understood that, rather than one or two factors, the determinants of migration are complex and context specific in which the decision to migrate is the interplay of many factors.

### **2.1.3. Migration Systems Theory**

The migration systems theory have emphasized that analyses need to incorporate both individual motives, institutions and the structural factors in which the migrants operate (de Haan, 2000; Castle & Miller 2003; Deshingkar & Start, 2003). The approach portrays more complex pictures of migration which attempts to cover a wide range of disciplines and includes all dimensions of the migration experiences (de Haan, 2000).

This theory as a new mainstream of migration theory, is a more inclusive and interdisciplinary approach. It emphasizes that any migration movement depend on the interacting factors of macro structures (large-scale institutional factors) and micro structures include the networks, practices and beliefs of the migrants themselves (Castles & Miller, 2003). According to this approach, people decide to move to new areas because they have closer kinsmen who help them to finding jobs and making easier their entry to towns.

Boyd (1989, quoted in Castles & Miller, 2003) noted that 'informal networks bind migrants and non-migrants together in a complex web of social roles and interpersonal

relationships'. The migration system theory has emphasized that the flow of information and social capital such as informal networks, personal relationships, friendship and communities and mutual help in economic and social matters provide vital resources for individuals in starting migratory movements.

As de Haan (2000) noted that migration, apart from contributing to livelihoods, is part of social networks and is usually consistent with communities' values and norms. Many studies in Asia and Africa emphasize that migration decisions are made not by individuals but by families (Hugo, 1994, as cited in Castles & Miller 2003). Social networks help support during personal accidents, look for job, providing shelter and make the migratory process safer and more manageable for the migrants and their families (Deshingkar, 2004; Castles & Miller, 2003).

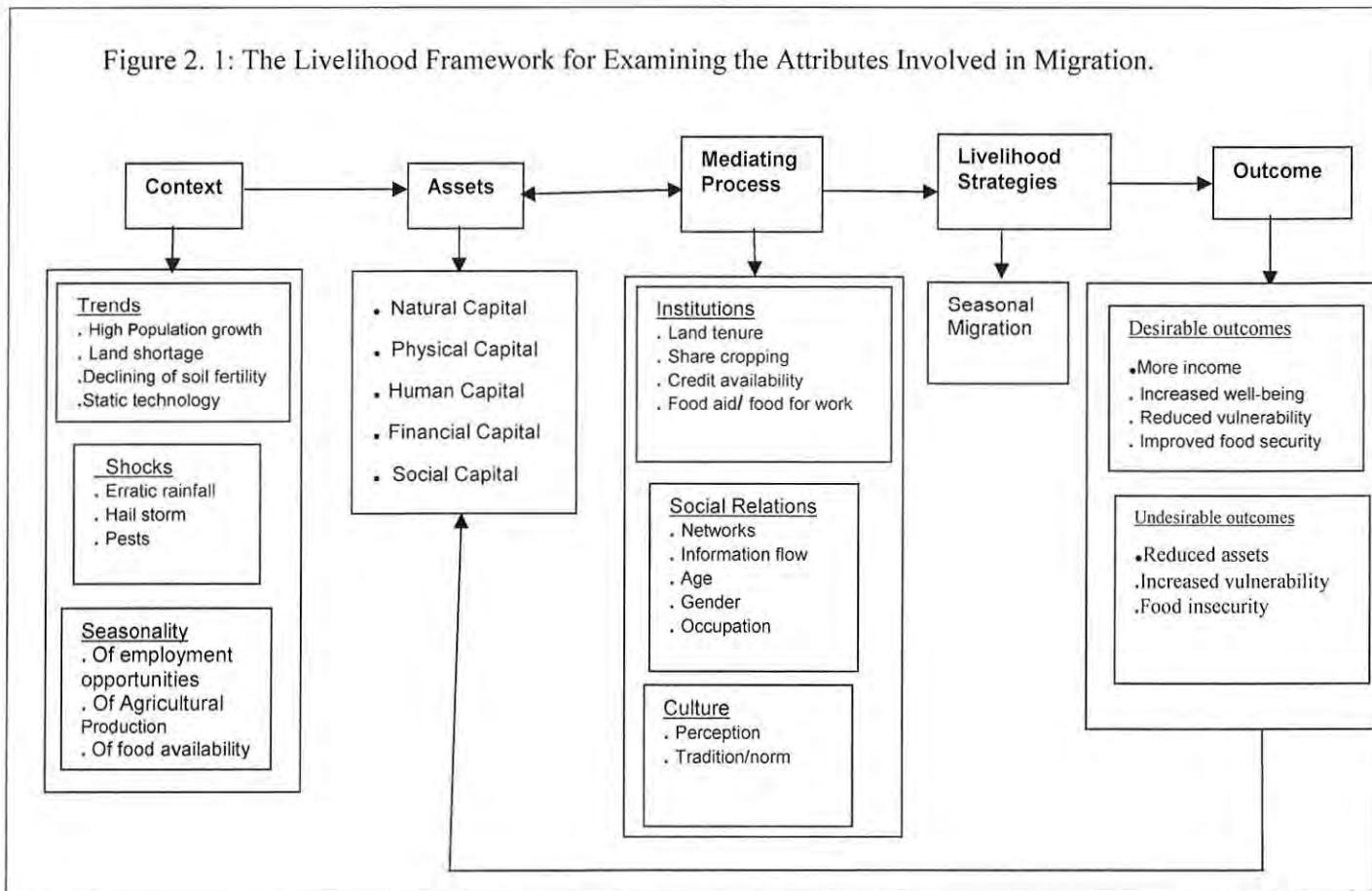
This theory has, therefore, emphasized social networks are important determinants of migration and the decision to move to new areas is largely influenced by the presence of closer relatives. Information flow and social networks such as friendship and kinship ties so as to help each other during accidents are relevant to understand the determinants of labour migration in the context of this study. Besides, the long established tradition of the community under study towards out-migration of labour is valid in understanding the reasons of migration and not migration.

#### **2.1.4. Migration-Livelihood Approach**

The livelihoods approach departs from earlier narrow economics approaches and Marxist approaches of political and institutional analysis to understand migration as one of the strategies adopted by individuals, households or communities to enhance their livelihoods (Skelden, 2002; Kothari, 2002; Ellis, 2000; 2003; de Haan, 1999; 2000; Deshingkar, 2004; McDowell & de Haan 1997). Recent theories go beyond the Marxist and neo-classical economics interpretations by incorporating livelihoods and social exclusion perspective (Deshingkar & Start, 2003). According to Kothari (2002), livelihood strategies are diverse and multiple but migration remains a central component for many poor people in developing countries.

This study, therefore, examines the process of seasonal migration in light of the migration-livelihood framework approach. The approach argues that migration is one of the most durable components of the livelihood strategies of people living in rural areas. It focuses on the need for a multi-disciplinary and people-centered perspective, and that the livelihoods of people are not restricted to one particular economic sector. According to the proponents of this approach, seasonal migration has become a common livelihood strategy of poor households which helps to smooth seasonal income fluctuations and earns extra cash so as to supplement income, which in turn, positively contribute to poverty reduction and development (Ellis, 2003). A conceptual framework that shows migration as a livelihood strategy is illustrated in the basic livelihood framework in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2. 1: The Livelihood Framework for Examining the Attributes Involved in Migration.



Source: adapted from Scoones, 1998; Ellis, 2000.

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the things people do in pursuit of a living are referred to in the livelihood framework as livelihood strategies. Migration is one such category of strategy. The immediate connections of migration to the livelihood framework are the human capital, that is, migration involves mobility of labor, together with a person's experience, skills, education level, and health status. The asset effects of migration go much further than this. For example, the remittance obtained from migrating is critical to improve the level of other assets, such as financial capital (money, savings, repaying debt, access to loan), natural capital (land, livestock), and physical capital (produced investment goods, water pump). Migration also widens social networks and consequently increases social capital (Ellis, 2003).

The livelihood activities of people are influenced by exogenous and endogenous factors, which are referred to as 'context' (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Ellis, 2000). Assets are either destroyed or created as a result of the trends, shocks and seasonality of the 'context' (Ellis 2000). In the study area, the most frequent shocks that affect people's livelihoods are erratic rainfall, hail storms, and pests, which in turn, expose poor people to high degrees of vulnerability such as food shortage. Seasonality, on the other hand, refers to the prevalence of agricultural peak and slack periods in the labour sending areas, which in turn, facilitates the movement of people. Seasonality causes a shift in occupation to occur as labour is switched from lower to higher return activities (ibid). This seasonality factor is also attributed to the seasonal character in terms of the availability of food at home and job opportunities in the receiving areas. Trends, in this context, are used to refer the prevalence of high population growth, land shortage, decline of soil productivity, static technology. Shocks, for example, cause food shortage and can be overcome by migrations of household members to take advantage of differing seasonal patterns of farm production. Seasonal out-migration of family member is, therefore, routine responses to the seasonality problem for food insecure rural households and as a coping strategy to reduce the adverse impact of the shock (ibid).

As outlined in the framework (in Figure 2.1), factors associated with institutions, culture, and social relations are summarized as the 'mediating process'. The institutional factors,

under the context of this study, include the land tenure system, sharecropping arrangement, availability of credit, and food aid/food for work. Networks, flow of information, age, gender, and occupations are taken as the social relation aspects. On the other hand, the perception and tradition of the people is considered as cultural factors. People's livelihood efforts, conducted within these contexts, result in outcomes. The outcomes could be better or deteriorating material welfare, reduced or raised vulnerability, improving or reducing food security, declining or improving agricultural productivity and so on.

Migration is a significant livelihood strategy for poor households. However, the role of migration in sustaining or moving out of poverty is largely determined by the social, cultural, political, geographical and economic circumstances experienced by the poor (Kothari, 2002). He further states that migration plays an essential role in livelihood strategies of the poor and occurs in response to a wide range of factors that affect people differently. Migration is, therefore, not a predictable and homogenous form of action as people's responses to identical situations may vary and each movement is unique.

McDowell and de Haan (1997) remarked that 'livelihoods and poverty clearly affect and are affected, by migration, but that there are no easy generalizations'. The link between migration and poverty is complex and dependent on the specific circumstances in which it takes place. Poverty can be alleviated as well as exacerbated by migration (Skeldon, 2002). Similarly, migration can increase or decrease inequality (Ellis, 2003). According to him, it is often the better-off members of a community who first migrate as they have the resources to support migration. This first phase of migration, including remittances, can reinforce existing inequalities - but over time, with the provision of information and the build up of social networks, lower income individuals get the opportunity to migrate. Research on livelihoods is, therefore, advised to focus on the complexity of migration process and to be dependent on local contexts (Kothari, 2002).

Since migration streams are strongly segmented, migrants come from a variety of backgrounds. They may belong to different social groups and are both the poor and non-poor alike. Migrants can be the better off, not necessarily the poorest (de Haan, 1999). According to him, migration is context specific and not an option to all, rather are highly segmented in which peoples networks, and various social institutions determine who migrates and from which areas. Migration is an option to those who are able bodied and those with access to some resources to cover the cost of transportation (Skeldon, 2002).

Proponents of the migration-livelihood approach argue that policy makers and development planners have given very little attention to the role of migration in alleviating poverty (de Haan, 1999). Development policies, so far, place greater attention towards the growth of small-farm agriculture for rural poverty reduction by making farmers productive and holding them back at home. On the other hand, they pay little attention to the role of migration in alleviating poverty (Ellis, 2003). The rural poor are pictured flooding into cities, causing economic and social instability to the urban population by exerting pressure on urban services and infrastructure, increasing urban unemployment and causing rising crime and civil disorder. It was also perceived that migration would deplete the rural economy by extracting the more skilled and innovative individuals. Perhaps because of these perceptions of negative outcomes, policy-makers, governments and donors have often seen the migration of the rural poor as being a threat to stability and burden to the destination. As a result, they have tried to control rural-urban movement through designing policies that restrict the movement of people (McDowell & de Haan, 1997; de Haan, 1999; Ellis, 2003).

This view of migration in development thinking is reflected in many Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). A study by the Centre for Migration Research at Sussex University examined 48 PRSPs, and found that 21 made no mention at all of migration; of the 27 that did, they referred to migration in negative or pejorative terms. Seventeen presented internal migration as a problem for development, and eight cited a need to control and contain it, and others pointed to the negative effects of migration in spreading HIV/AIDS and crime (Ellis, 2003).

Until the more recent lifting of restrictions, the military government of Ethiopia was blamed for its restrictive policy of population movement. During the *Derg* period, population control was inseparable from political control. Seasonal migration of labour for wage earning employment was restricted. The current Ethiopian government has also ambivalent position towards migration. The agricultural sector strategic document makes two direct references to migration. The first states the objective of reducing rural-urban migration by increasing utilization of labour within the agricultural sector. The second states the creation of favourable conditions for the nomadic population to become settlers (McDowell & de Haan, 1997). Although seasonal migration of labour has been an important component of the livelihood strategy of many rural households, this important issue is missing from Ethiopia's federal and regional policies for food security and rural development (Devereux et al., 2003).

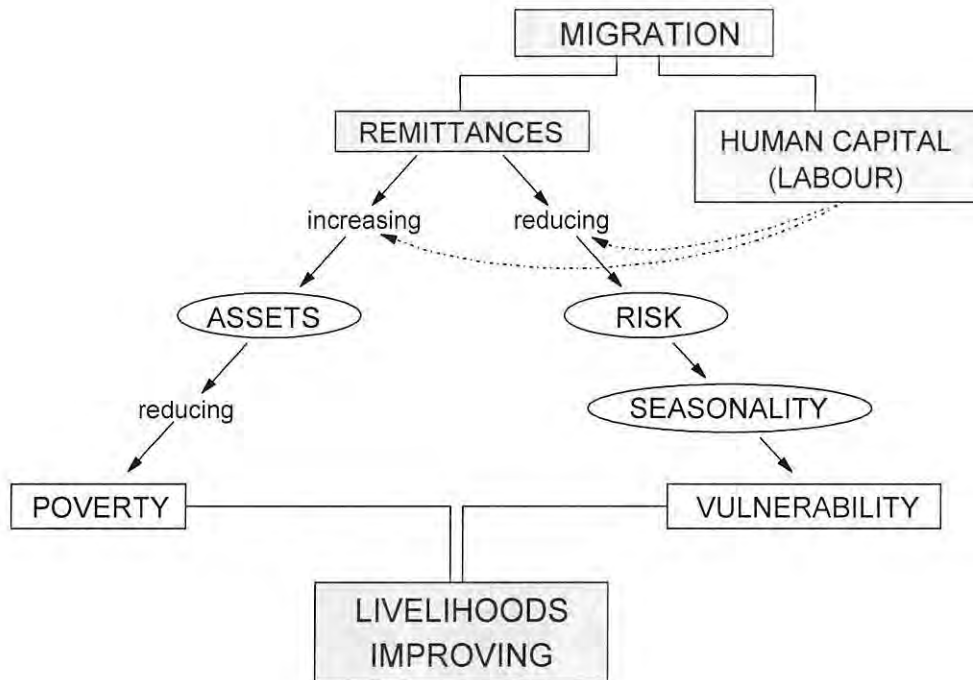
## **2.2. The Impacts of Migration**

The impacts of migration in general and seasonal migration in particular have been a widely held concern and remained a matter of dispute. There are two arguments whether or not migration is beneficial or harmful for the livelihood of people. The following section provides both the positive and negative views of the impacts of migration.

### **2.2.1. The Positive Views of the Impacts of Migration**

Some studies maintain the positive role of migration in improving livelihoods and reducing poverty (the positive role of migration in improving livelihoods is illustrated in Figure 2.2 below).

Figure 2.2: Positive Links between Migration and Improving Livelihoods.



Source: adopted from Ellis, 2003.

Following writers on migration like de Haan (1999) and Skeldon (2002), migration is considered as one of the livelihood strategies that rural households pursue. According to this argument, migrants are believed to employ their newly acquired progressive ideas, values, skills and income to bring about investment in land, purchase of cash inputs to agriculture resulting in better cultivation practices and higher yields, investment in agriculture implements or machines, investment in education and non-farm income to be generated. Moreover, migration facilitates the regular flow of information, goods and other resources between the urban and rural areas.

By comparing households that experiences out-migration with the non-migrant households who only stick on agriculture, Ellis (2003) emphasizes how migration positively contribute in mitigating vulnerability in the following way. According to him, the most successful families generate their income portfolio from other activities that are not directly related to agriculture. Such families are not only less prone to the failure of agriculture-related activities that occurs as a result of natural disasters but they can improve their farm productivity and strengthen their livelihoods further. On the other hand, the less successful households are those who establish their livelihoods on subsistence agriculture without diversifying their income portfolio. Such families are also more vulnerable to food shortage that occurs with natural shocks (ibid).

The proponents of migration-development literature has increasingly stressed the diversity of poor people's livelihoods (Ellis, 2000), and has recognised that the diverse portfolio of activities that make up livelihoods often includes migration. Diversification is a key means for households to reduce and manage risk, often when faced with shocks such as natural disasters (Deshingkar, 2004). They argue that the need to recognise the complexity and variety of different types of migration. Migration patterns may also vary with gender or age: in some contexts, young men may be the primary migrants, while in others women may be more likely to migrate to find employment as domestic workers; in some cases, elderly people are more likely not to migrate. In fact, rather than being an interruption to a longstanding way of life or a forced response to an unusual event, many forms of migration are typical features of poor people's livelihoods ( de Haan, 2000). In many forms, people use mobility as a way of maintaining their livelihoods.

Moving out of poverty is a cumulative process and often achieved in sequence from smaller income to higher income. The remittances obtained from migration therefore can play an important role in sustaining such cumulative processes. Remittances can help families to meet their basic needs - buy food, see a doctor or make repairs to their home

(Ellis, 2003). The positive role of seasonal out-migration of labour to both receiving and sending areas is stated by Devereux et al. (2003, 65) in the following way:

*Labour migration both facilitates agricultural development in the high-potential areas and allows smallholders from the low-potential, drought prone areas to fill seasonal gaps in their income and to offset their dependence on local climate conditions. In many other African countries, temporary labour migration from smallholder farming areas has been an important means not only of supplementing incomes, but also of raising the productivity of subsistence agriculture through the investment capital and innovations (such as new seeds or irrigation techniques) that the migrants bring home to their farms.*

Proponents of the migration-livelihood model argue that migration can benefit poor people, poor communities and developing countries (de Haan, 1999; Ellis, 2003). According to them, for individuals and their families, migration can help them to increase their income, learn new skills, improve their social status, build up assets and improve their quality of life.

### **2.2.2. The Negative Views of the Impacts of Migration**

However, a number of writers have argued against the positive role of migration. According to Ellis (2003), “the pessimistic arguments about migration are quite often found, on closer inspection, to be based on misunderstanding about livelihood strategies or failure to take into account cumulative and spread effects of remittance income.” For these groups, migration is perceived as a process of labor extraction that results in decline of agricultural productivity, including food production. For them, the gains from labor mobility benefit the better off because the poor do not migrate due to the transaction costs of migrating. This argument, however, works for distant migration (especially international ones) that requires initial investment, not to seasonal migration in which the poor are heavily engaged.

The other argument that advances about the negative impact of migration is that the earnings obtained from migration is spent on consumer goods rather than invested in assets giving rise to improved livelihoods in the future. This argument is being criticized for its misunderstandings about life towards the bottom rank of world income

distribution. According to the critiques, if the income is spent on food and other basic goods, then it is to compensate for a food deficit and achieving food security (Ellis, 2003).

Migration is also viewed in negative terms because of the adverse experiences of migrants themselves encounter in the host environment. For example, weak social status, harassment, violence, lack of redress against mistreatment by employers and public officials, exploitation by middlemen, vulnerability to illness such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, absence of social protection and so on (Deshingkar,2004).

The impact of migration is still debatable as to whether it affects negatively or positively upon the sending and receiving areas as well as on migrants themselves. Although, recently, there are many empirical evidences that reveal the positive contribution of migration to the poor rural households, there is still a need for further detailed study on the subject. Similar to the factors of migration, studying the impacts of migration is a complex task. Nevertheless, its impacts largely depend on the characteristics of migrants, the remittances investment at home and the household structure at home.

### **2.3. Review of Works on Migration in Ethiopia**

Although literature in Ethiopia on migration are very limited (Bjeren, 1985; Worku, 2006; Tegegne, 1999), there are studies conducted by different scholars that dealt with the processes, causes, and consequences of migration. Bjeren (1985), when she conducted her research on migration, stated that in Ethiopia, although there were few urban studies, research on migration was inadequate.

As noted by Wood (1983), in Ethiopia, since the remote past there has been a considerable volume of seasonal migration for employment opportunities into the south-west coffee farms each year between October and December. He asserted that the source areas of seasonal migrants were specifically the Northern Highlands of eastern Gojjam

and south Gondar, and the Gurage areas of Showa province. The reasons for these specific source areas are due to population densities, the need to supplement the income of households through off-farm activities, historic links, patterns of information flow and most parts of these areas produce only one crop a year, which is harvested in September and October (ibid). Worku (2006) pointed out that seasonal migration of farmers among the Guraghe has been carried out since earlier periods not only to towns but also rural areas by engaging in different off-farm activities. They usually migrate by the end of December, after accomplishing their farm activities. Tesfaye (2007) also stated that in rural Ethiopia, seasonal migration of labour is a common practice by peasants during the slack farming season so as to supplement their income. This type of migration is undertaken by peasants even in normal times so as to diversify households' livelihood portfolios and as a coping strategy in poor farming periods (Devereux et al., 2003). Migration as a livelihood strategy of rural people from Oromiya Zone of Amhara region to Djibouti is also documented by Degefa (2005). According to him, there are many 'households that have recovered from shocks, specifically droughts livelihood crises, by investing the financial capital they generated by migrating to the neighboring country of Djibouti'.

Thus, in Ethiopia, since earlier periods seasonal out- migration of labour to the southwest for coffee picking peak period (Wood, 1983), to the Metehara state farms of sugar cane plantation and cotton picking (Beyene, 1985), to rural areas for different off-farm activities and urban areas for temporary jobs (Worku, 2006; Bjerren, 1983), to the neighboring country of Djibouti during shocks as a coping mechanism and normal periods so as to improve livelihoods (Degefa, 2005) have been experienced by farmers. In most parts of the country, the agricultural activity is seasonal in character in which the peak and slack periods of harvesting and cultivation vary across time and locations. Consequently, this seasonality character of activities between sending and receiving areas creates conducive situation for seasonal movement of labour and out-migration of labour has remained an essential component of the livelihood strategies of many rural households (Devereux et al., 2003).

Different researchers have attributed different reasons to the push and pull factors of migration to urban areas. Environmental degradation, lower agricultural productivity, inadequate social services, demographic pressure, land shortage, were identified as the major push factors of migration (Sileshi, 1978; Befekadu, 1978; Kebede, 1991). The presence of relatives and similarity of ethnic origin at destination as well as the flow of information between origin and destination were also identified among the most important factors of migration and also influence the pattern of migration (Bjeren, 1985; Beyene, 1985; Worku, 2006). Thus, in addition to other factors of migration, social networks and information flow have been identified as important determinants of migration in Ethiopia.

In a study conducted by Beyene (1985) about the patterns of seasonal labour migration to Metehara estate, the reasons for migration to the agricultural scheme were due to insufficient means of subsistence, the need for modern goods and clothing, payment of tax and advertisement by agricultural schemes. But, he emphasized that determinants of migration often vary from place to place and are context specific. The reasons for migration from Kambata and Hadya and other areas to the Metehara agricultural scheme were not similar.

As case studies conducted by de Haan et al. (2000) on migration and livelihoods in different sites of Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Mali found out that in Ethiopia the poorer migrated more than the less poor and lack of land is identified as an important determinant of migration. The case studies indicate that social networks are found to be the most important determinant of migration. The study also indicates that in Ethiopia there was a negative perception towards migration because of Ethiopian's past experience of large scale forced settlement. But migration in Ethiopia was also viewed positively as a solution to land shortages (ibid).

In a recent study conducted by Tesfaye (2007), recurrent drought, rainfall scarcity and land shortage were identified as the primary, secondary and tertiary push factors of migration, respectively. He also noted that although land shortage is the commonly assumed reason of migration, it is rather the quality and productivity of land that is an important factor of migration. The same study revealed that availability of fertile land at the destination, presence of relatives and peers and the quest for better life were identified as the major pull factors that attract migrants to a recipient area. The availability of job opportunities and the type of work available in the recipient areas are the most important factors in determining the pattern of migration. Seasonal migration of this type has also important implication on the selection of gender (Worku, 2006). Because of the labour market demand at destination, this type of migration is predominantly undertaken by male. As a result, rural women have been restricted from such activities and they are more often migrating permanently to urban areas for domestic works (Devereux et al., 2003).

Regarding the impacts of out-migration to the recipient and sending areas as well as on migrants themselves, there are some studies which reveal both the negative and positive impacts of migration.

In Ethiopia, the positive contributions of migration to the place of origin were identified by different studies. Worku (2006) in this regard stated that about 200-300 men migrate annually timing their migration to coincide with the agricultural slack season and this type of migration has become a considerable aspect of the livelihoods of the people in the study area. He also asserted that seasonal migration of labour has less impact on the agricultural output than other types of migration. This is mainly because seasonal migrants often remain at destination for three to four months by adjusting the agricultural slack season at home. In another study made by Beyene (1985), seasonal migration of labour in the study area has no negative impact on agriculture. The reasons cited were the majority of seasonal migrants move to the agricultural scheme during the agricultural slack season at home and during their absence, relatives and families who stay behind

work in the field. Thus, due to the short duration of stay at destination, the presence of other family members at home, and the timing of out-migration with the farming slack season, the impact of this type of migration on the agricultural works of the sending area is very negligible.

The positive roles of rural-urban migration to the recipient areas were also stated by Shake (1973) and Markakis (1974). According to them rural labour migrants are the major sources of cheap labour power for urban construction activities and play a pivotal role in the development of towns. According to Devereux et al. (2003), labour migrants play an important role in meeting the labour demands of receiving areas, which in turn, contribute to national growth to occur. Degefa (2005), quoting a returnee migrant from Djibouti, stated that there are cases in which migrants bring back skills in their return home and able to supplement their income. He further states that out-migration of people has been carried out both as a coping and livelihoods' improvement strategy of people in the study area.

Worku (2006), quoting his informant, notes that given the poverty in the village, it would have been impossible for the people to survive had it not been the safety value of rural – urban migration. The same informant told Worku that the money sent by urban relatives to their rural kin, played an immense role in village's rural economy. Adding to the cultural influences of migration, the informant told Worku that rural –urban migration had helped villagers to adapt new modes of dress and realized the value of education and modern health care because of the influence of the urban migration. Thus, rural –urban migration by the Gurage was considered as asset to the people, similar to their farms and cattle. Beyene (1985, 56) also put the role of migration to the study area as follows:

*Under the existing population pressure in the area, the availability of smaller land holding size with lower agricultural productivity and in the absence of employment opportunities, migration of people to earn additional income is a normal livelihood strategy often pursued by the rural poor. Some rural poor can not afford to buy clothes, to pay taxes, to buy exercise books for their children and even to meet their consumption need unless migrating seasonally to areas of wage employment. There is greater frequency of visit to the farm and earn better income. Many people in the study area rely on income from migration to*

*supplement their economy. Had it not been migration, what would have been the alternative to these people?*

On the other hand, there are studies that reveal the negative impacts of migration on the sending areas, destinations and migrants. Previous studies conducted by Birru (1997), Andargachew (1992), Aschalew (2006) emphasized the negative impacts of migration on the host environment by creating unemployment, exerting pressure on urban social services, and population concentration in towns. Worku (2006) in his study of the impacts of migration on village life identified that migration in the study area is responsible to create a shortage of farm labour, which in turn, led to a decline in agricultural output, a greater burden to wives of the migrants, and the transmission of sexually transmitted disease. Beyene (1985) stated that out-migration of labour has negative impacts on the communities of origin by removing labour and transmission of diseases. Moreover, migrants were exposed to deadly disease such as malaria and schistosomiasis, and injuries such as cutting of fingers at work place (ibid). In a study made by Degefa (2005), although many people from rural Oromiya Zone of Amhara Region migrate to Djibouti, migrants are often exposed to risks on their life during journey and after arrival at destination. According to him, they pass through unsafe routes, unable to get job at destination, labour exploitation, and deportation by the government of Djibouti, which in turn, exposed them to loss of assets and psychological frustration.

#### **2.4. SUMMARY**

In this chapter, some of the important concepts in relation to migration, with particular emphasis on seasonal migration, are highlighted. Attempts are also made to assess the different lines of thoughts that have evolved from earliest economic theory up to the current livelihood-migration approach. Although this study attempts to examine the opportunities and challenges of seasonal out-migration of labour in light of the migration-livelihood framework approach, some of the arguments presented in other theories are still relevant in the context of this study so as to get a better understanding about the causes, processes and consequences of migration.

## Chapter Three: Research Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design and Selection of the Study Area

Before the start of the actual field work, field observation and preliminary field survey were carried out in Bahir Dar Town during two trips. The field observation was carried out for two weeks time, from August 16- 30, 2006. During this time attempts were made to get better insights about the problem to be studied by observing the realities, and through informal conversation with labour migrants. It was by this time that I was able to identify places where seasonal migrants often live, eat, entertain, and waiting for work. I observed their living and working conditions in the town as well as their relation with urban dwellers. I talked with some of them about their motivation to come to town, earlier migration experiences and the challenges they face in the host environment. I had had also the chance to communicate with different people who have relevant experience with seasonal migrants.

During my trip, I also recognized that there are many numbers of people that migrate to town in search of job during the agricultural slack season. Farmers often do this as their livelihood strategy like any other activities to earn income. In addition to field observation, I have read related literature on the issue and started to write the proposal.

In addition to the information I obtained from local people, my previous knowledge and familiarity to the study area helped me in identifying which *kebele* is the host of migrants. Moreover, it was during the pilot field survey, which will be discussed below, that I was able to get better understanding in identifying the resident areas of seasonal migrants. Because of its closeness to the bus station, the availability of houses which rent floors with relatively lower price and existence of earlier migrants, *Kebele* 12 and 6 are known to be the host of many rural-urban labour migrants. Aschalew (2006) affirms that the major destination of rural-urban labour migrants are located in *kebele* 6 and 12 where the bus terminal is situated. Thus, these two *kebeles* were selected purposively for this particular study.

I asked the Regional Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, the Regional Works and Urban Development Bureau, the Central Statistics Office in Bahir Dar Town, the Municipality of Bahir Dar Town, the *kebele* administrators, and Social and Labour Affairs Office of Bahir Dar's Special Zone whether they have documented the in-migrant and out-migrant population of the town. Unfortunately, they do not register the in-migrant and out-migrant population of the town. I also asked the *kebele* administrators to give me the list of the in-migrant and out-migrant population in their *kebeles*. But, I couldn't find any document, which contains the in-migrant and out-migrant population. The *kebele* administrators told me that they do not register and document the in-migrant and out-migrant population in their *kebele*. Thus, it was difficult to estimate the number of seasonal in-migrant and out-migrant people.

However, the number of houses which rent floors for seasonal migrants has already known by the *kebele*. According to the information from the *kebele*, there are a total of twenty-three floor renting houses in these two *kebeles*. Because of the fluid nature of seasonal migration, it is not easy to determine its exact figure. In order to estimate the number of seasonal migrants in these two *kebeles*, I counted the number of people in each floor renting houses for four consecutive days to estimate the average size of people who live in each house. The estimated average sizes of people who live in each house within those four days were seventeen. So, the total numbers of seasonal migrants in these two *kebeles* are estimated to be 391. Out of this number, I purposively select 70 people. The selection was made on the basis of origin, the duration of their stay in town, and their willingness. Thus, the sample included migrants who originated from three woredas namely Easten Estie and Tach Gaint (South Gondar Zone), and Yilmana Densa (from West Gojjam Zone). The respondents from respective woredas were 26, 19 and 24. But one respondent from Tach Gaint was absent during the survey time and only 69 respondents were included under the questionnaire survey. Admittedly, this figure is not representative of the total sample size of the population; it is rather to show the complexity of getting data and how far I have attempted to include reasonable number of people into the study.

Moreover, since labour migrants originate from rural areas, relying only at the place of destination without investigating the reality at the place of origin would make the study incomplete. Thus, in order to assess the opportunities and challenges of migration, I decided to incorporate the major source areas of labour migrants as the study area of the research. Hence, those three woredas were purposively selected. Each woreda is distinct in terms of agro-ecology, fertility of the land, asset status, distance from Bahir Dar Town, infrastructural facilities, degree of dependency on external assistance, perception towards aid, level of food security, outlook towards earning income other than agricultural activities, perception towards migration, historical experience to migration, motivation for self improvement, and agricultural output.

Based on the information from seasonal migrants in Bahir Dar Town, I traced back to the place of origin and one *kebele* from each woreda and a total of three *kebeles* were selected. During the selection process, I made contact with the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office, and local people in order to crosscheck the information I obtained from seasonal migrants and thus identified the *kebele* that is locally known for its high magnitude of seasonal out-migration. Based on the information obtained from the aforementioned sources in Eastern Estie, Jibasra *kebele*, in Tach Gaint, 02 *kebele* and in Yilmana Densa, Agita *kebele* were selected as the study area of the research. I selected five percent of the total households for each *kebele*. I found the list of population from the *kebele* office. The selection of households was made using systematic sampling techniques. In Tach Gaint, at 02 *kebele*, out of the total of 1203 households in the *kebele*, I selected 60 households. In Eastern Estie, at Jibasra *kebele*, out of the total of 1007 households in the *kebele*, I selected 50 households. In Yilmana Densa woreda, at Agita *kebele*, out of the total of 1113 households in the *kebele*, I selected 55 households.

Two enumerators for each *kebele* and a total of six enumerators for the three *kebeles* were employed to administer the household questionnaire survey, under the close supervision of the researcher. All of them are working as Development Agents of the *kebele*. I trained

them as to how to handle the research topic. I chose them for their familiarity and knowledge about the locality.

While in Bahir Dar, I did not immediately start the data collection process until I established confidence and trust among the subjects under study. It took me several days in order to build trust and confidence among the migrants. The first step was familiarizing myself by talking with them on different matters. I frequently went to the local beer house where the majority of them are found. Instead of directly getting into my own topic, I cautiously tried to talk about other unrelated issues. Towards the beginning of the field work, many of them were not comfortable to talk freely with me. After some time, since I repeatedly meet with them in different areas, they started to familiarize with me and began to share ideas. Once I established trust and confidence up on them, they made themselves free and became willing for the interview. Interviews were recorded with 90 minute cassettes and it was transcribed and translated soon after.

It was the researcher's intention to involve female seasonal migrants at the destination. Unfortunately, almost all of them whom I spoke do not fall under the category of seasonal migrants. Seasonal migration, in this case, seems to be a male domain.

In order to assess the impact of seasonal migration on women (wives of migrants) who stay behind, I had prepared a questionnaire survey separately for women. However, using the suggestion from my advisor and to have a better understanding about the reality, I put emphasis on individual cases of women (wives of migrants) using interview. Thus, two women from each of the three kebeles and a total of six women were interviewed. During the interview, I asked them what kind of problems they often face in the absence of their husbands, how decision is made to migrate and use of remittance, the kind of items and amount of money their husband has brought back, and their perception towards migration. At first sight, they were afraid of to speak out properly for my questions. I encouraged them to respond freely and after a while they began to react to all questions comfortably.

### **3.2. Data Sources**

In order to obtain relevant data on the research subjects, different techniques were employed. The data were collected primarily from first hand sources through interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaire survey, and field observations to achieve the objective of the study. Secondary sources were also thoroughly reviewed to supplement primary data.

### **3.3. Method of Data Collection**

In a given research, the choice of the method of a particular study depends on the purpose of the research at hand. Although there are no strict rules as such for the choice of the method, a researcher needs to consider the cost and time available for that particular research. It is also important to consider the depth and breadth of information needed to be analyzed by either qualitative or quantitative or both methods.

A variety of research techniques may be implemented in migration studies. Migration is often considered a quantifiable event which can be described using statistics on numbers of who moves, where to and from where (Kothari, 2002). He further states that migration is also a cultural and social event that articulates unequal social and power relations, and figures do not necessarily provide analysis of reasons for moving or staying, decision-making process, and other social networks. Qualitative methods are, therefore, helpful through for example, life histories of migrants, interviewing, focus group discussions and observations which emphasis the investigation of particular social phenomenon and tend to provide substantial detail about a small number of cases. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will provide a more holistic account of mobility and its impact on the livelihoods of migrants (Ibid).

Taking this into consideration, I employed both qualitative and quantitative methods as a basic tool of research to explore the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration on the livelihoods of migrants. This is because qualitative methods, mainly key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observations gave the chance to acquire a deeper understanding of people's experience, opinions, knowledge, beliefs, needs, constraints

and traditions (Degefa, 2005). It will also enable to gain a deeper understanding of the existing realities.

### 3.3.1. Individual Interview

Interview is often used as a method of generating data for understanding people's knowledge, experiences, opinions, beliefs, needs, perceptions, and constraints (Robson, 1993). I employed key informant interview particularly semi-structured and structured interview using topics prepared to answer questions such as reasons for migration, impacts of seasonal migration on their livelihoods, what they intend to do with their earnings, the perception of urban people and institutions towards migrants, and the challenges and risks migrants face from their own perception. At destination, Bahir Dar Town, six key informant interviews were conducted with seasonal migrants who had been living in Bahir Dar town using the interview guidelines prepared (see Appendix V). The selection of key informants was undertaken purposively.

Interviews were also administered for households at the place of origin using the interview guidelines (see Appendix V). Four key informants in each *Kebele* and a total of twelve key informants were interviewed at places of origin. The selection was made purposively.

Interviews were also administered for women (wives of migrants) at the place of origin using the interview guidelines (see Appendix V). Thus, two key informant women from each of the three *kebeles* and a total of six women were interviewed. The selection was made purposively.

To make the data more credible and valid, cross-checking information from different stakeholders i.e., triangulation were employed. Thus, personalities of relevant experiences vis –a- vis seasonal migrants were interviewed using the interview guidelines (see Appendix V). The followings were among the interviewees for this particular study: *kebele* administrators, service givers, employers, Police Officers, middlemen, urban residents, health centers, Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, Land Administration and Use

Authority, Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau and Amhara Credit and Saving Institution were interviewed in Bahir Dar Town using the interview guidelines. Although I prepared interview guides to interview NGOs working on migrants, I could not get an NGO that works in relation to migrants.

### **3.3.2. Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group discussions (FGDs) allow group interaction in which participants are able to discuss each other's ideas that provide better insight to the issue under investigation which is not easily attainable through individual interview. The topics of discussions during FGDs were related to the factors of migration, impacts of migration, problems and challenges they encounter and intention to invest their earnings and perceptions towards migration. Three FGDs were conducted with seasonal migrants who had been living in Bahir Dar Town using guidelines prepared prior to the discussion (see Appendix V). Two FGDs for each *kebele* and a total of six FGDs were employed for households at the places of origin.

### **3.3.3. Observation**

Observation provides first hand information and enables in-depth views into the issue under investigation if it is critically observed and recorded (Degefa, 2005). I used observation as a tool to understand their lifestyle and relations with urban people, areas of residence and entertainment, relation with employer, middlemen, service givers, and the pressure they exert on the town.

### **3.3.4. Household Survey**

In order to acquire quantitative data and to supplement the qualitative data, structured questionnaire survey was administered for households at places of origin and for seasonal migrants who had been living in Bahir Dar Town (see Appendix III and IV). The household questionnaire survey tries to address the demographic characteristics of migrants, migration experience, reasons for migration, the frequency of seasonal migration, use of the remittance, and who made decision to use the remittance, the skills acquired by migrants, the impacts of migration, the size of landholding, and the type and

number of livestock. The questionnaire survey for seasonal migrants tries to address the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants, reasons for migration, expenditure, location and decision of remittance investment, frequency and place of migration, problems associated with migration, migrants social network, and their living and working conditions in the host.

### **3.4. Method of Data Analysis**

After the data has been collected from the sources through the aforementioned instruments, they were transcribed, coded, stored, interpreted and analyzed. Interviews and FGDs were analyzed by transcribing and organizing data collected from primary sources. Interpretations of observed realities were also used.

Descriptive analyses were carried out by presenting information obtained. The quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the quantitative analysis were cross-checked with the qualitative data.

### **3.5. Challenges and Experiences Encountered During Data Collection**

During the pilot survey in Bahir Dar Town, from December 18-29, 2006, seasonal migrants were asked their places of origin, namely woreda, *kebele* and village. Some of them were skeptical about the whereabouts of me and rumored as if I were recruiter of militia for the Somalia war (at this time the Ethiopian government was preparing for the war against the so called Islamic Militia Terrorist Group). Others were also reluctant to give information as if such registration is to take over their land at home. In order to develop trust and confidence and also to ease the whole process of the pilot survey, I briefly introduced myself and informed the objective of the research to all labour migrants. I told them openly that I am a student attempting to study about the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration vis-à-vis their livelihoods.

It was my advisors who suggested me to make a pilot survey prior to conducting the actual field work. While I was in field work, we were communicating with email, telephone, and physical contact. I was frequently communicating with my advisor at Addis Ababa

University and discussed about issues related to the progress of the research. During our physical contact with my co-advisor at Bahir Dar, we discussed about the whole progress of the research and proposed me other interrelated issues that need to be addressed during the field work both in Bahir Dar and at the place of origin.

After accomplishing the field work in Bahir Dar town, I first moved to Tach Gaint woreda. While I was in Tach Gaint, I made contact with the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office and other local people in order to select the study *kebele*. They were supportive in providing information and making available of other related data which makes my work easy. While in the field, in order to develop trust and confidence and also to ease the whole process of the research, I briefly introduced myself and informed the objective of the research. However, respondents deliberately concealed the asset they have and were not interested to reveal the amount of remittance they get from other sources. This might be due to the fear that they will be cancelled from the Productive Safety Net Program or other aid related list provided that they have asset and/or remittance. By this time, I tried to get the data by cross-checking information. Besides, they repeatedly raised the issue of resettlement because they consider me as if I am a government agent. I told them openly that I am a student attempting to study about the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration vis-à-vis their livelihoods.

In Eastern Estie, similar to Tach Gaint, I selected one *kebele* using the information from the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office and other local people who are knowledgeable enough about the area. The study *kebele* is far from the woreda town and took a four hour journey. Unlike in Tach Gaint, here respondents provide information about their asset, remittance, migration experience and other related data in a very clear and open ways.

In Adet, I first made contact with the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office and other knowledgeable individuals of the locality. Having the information from these personalities, I selected Agita *kebele* as the study area of this research. During the field work, the chairman and other officials of the *kebele*, Development Agents who are working

in the kebele and the local people were closely assisting me in all my stay there. The Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office assigned one expert who is the head of Food Security Desk to assist me in whatever ways till the end of the field work.

### **3.6. Lessons Learned**

After all these experiences and challenges, the research process proved to be very useful to me because of the knowledge acquired in carrying out a detailed and extensive field work using qualitative and quantitative research. I have learned the following lessons from the field work and the research in general: a pilot study is extremely useful in research, a well defined field methodology is important and should be planned prior to the fieldwork and improved during the actual fieldwork, preparing interview guidelines before the interview session is important, and information triangulation in the field is very essential as it offers a useful counterchecking data.

### **3.7. SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed about the research methodology which was employed for this study. It presents the whole processes that I undergone to generate data starting from the research design and selection of the study area up to the data collection and analysis phase. In this chapter, I have tried to highlight about the sources of data, and methods of data collection such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions, field observations and household survey. Method of data analysis, experiences and challenges encountered, and lessons learned during the field survey have also been discussed.

## **Chapter Four: Background of the Study Area**

In the following section, a brief description about the locations, climate, historical, socio-economic and demographic profiles of the study areas will be presented. Due to the nature of the research problem, the discussion focuses on both the origins and destination of the migrants.

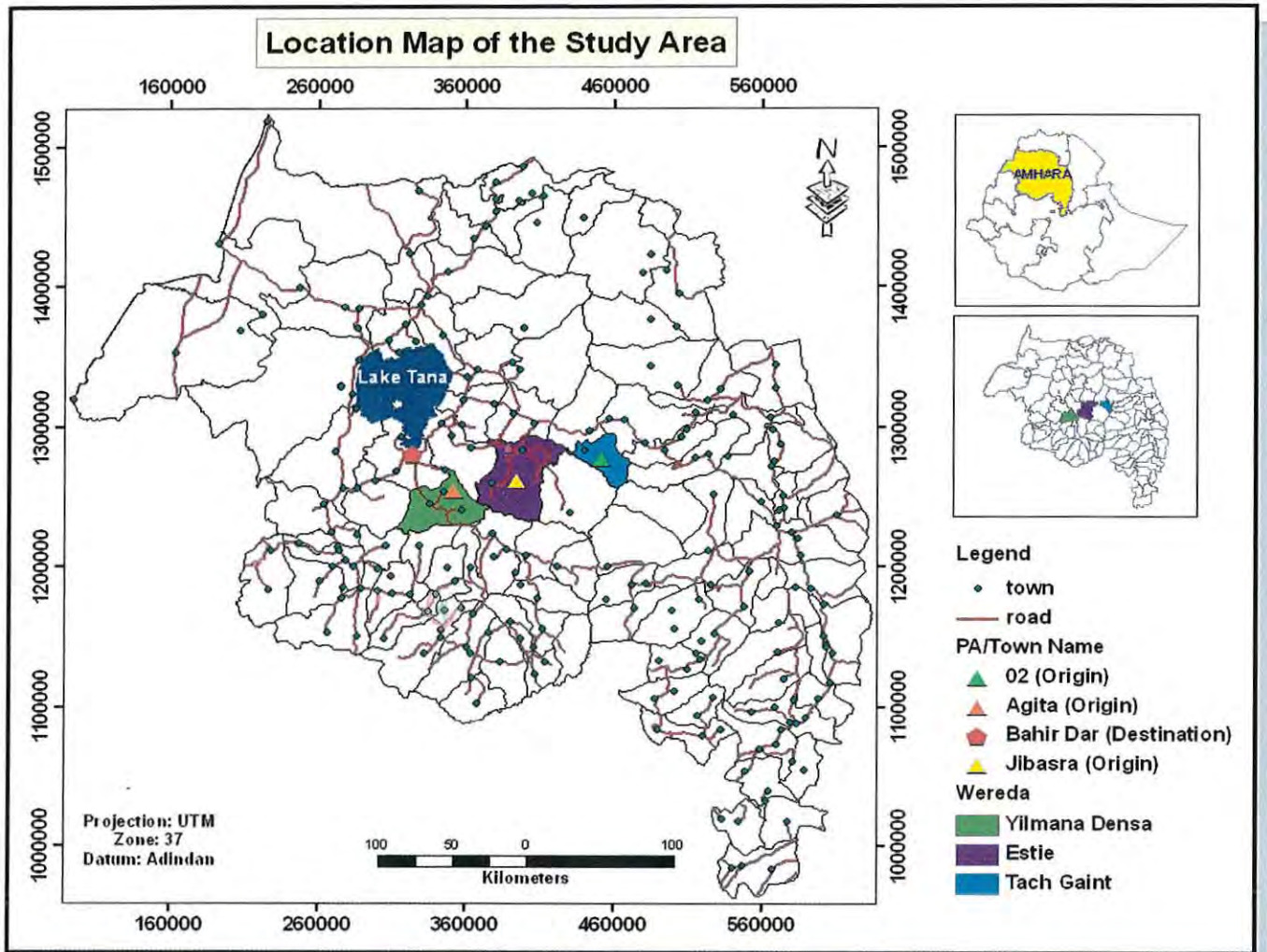
### **4.1. Bahir Dar Town**

Bahir Dar town is located in the Northwestern Ethiopia at a physical distance of 565 km away from Addis Ababa, when one follows a highway to Gondar (see Figure 4.1). It is situated at the southern shore of Lake Tana at latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates of 11<sup>o</sup>35' 30''N and 37<sup>o</sup> 23'E, respectively. The altitude of the town is 1801 m.a.s.l. (BDCA, 2004).

Oral traditions assert that Bahir Dar was established as a religious settlement since the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Seletene, 1988). It was by this time that the church of Kidane Mihret (St. Marry Church) was erected around Lake Tana. During the reign of Iyasu I (r.1682-1706), the settlement came to be Bahir Dar Giorgis instead of Bahir Dar Kidane Mihret. Since then Bahir Dar appears both a settlement and a religio-administrative centre of the locality (ibid).

During the Italian occupation period, Bahir Dar began to serve both a military base and an administrative center for the Italians. Following the Italian occupation, Bahir Dar showed a new phase of development. The former religio-administration came to an end and secular administration was established. Basic urban infrastructures and other facilities such as air field, drainage system, motor roads, and telegram, were introduced (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004).

Figure 4.1: Location Map of the Study Area.



Source: GIS and Remote Sensing Lab, Addis Ababa University, Science Faculty.

It was in the 1940s, post liberation periods, Bahir Dar showed a remarkable improvement in both social and economic activities. It was by this time that the Ethiopian government introduced various reforms on social, economic and administrative activities. Moreover, it was during this time that Bahr Dar was registered as a municipality (BDCA, 2004). During the Imperial period, the government enhanced the infrastructures of the town by improving the air field, constructing modern schools and hospital, providing pipe water, and other services (Seletene, 1988).

During the *Derg* period, the military government of Ethiopia made the town the center of socio-economic and political activities which enhanced the development of the town (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004). Bahir Dar is now the capital town of the Amhara National Regional State.

Currently, the nearby rural *kebeles* and other satellite towns of Meshenti, Zeghe and Tis Abay were put under the Bahir Dar Town Administration and the total population is estimated to be 209,564 (BDCA, 2004). Out of this, 176,727 people live in Bahir Dar Town proper whereas 32,837 people live in those recently incorporated rural *kebeles* and satellite towns (ibid).

It was during the Italian occupation and in the post liberation periods that the town showed a significant growth in terms of urbanization and other socio-economic development (Seletene, 1988). After the end of the Italian rule, the Imperial government established textile mill, bank, hydroelectric power, and other institutions in the town. During the *Derg* period, many development activities were carried out in the town and these enabled the town to become the centre of many economic activities (ibid). Currently, there are many factories in the town such as flour, tannery, soap, plastic, metal and furniture workshops (BDCA, 2004).

In the 1960s, different educational institutions, including the Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute, were established in the town. In the 1970s, the Bahir Dar Academy of Pedagogy

was established (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004). After 1991, following the coming of EPRDF to power, educational institutions has expanded in the town. Today, there are fifty-five educational institutions in the town. Out of this, twenty-four are governmental whereas thirty-one of them are private. Regarding health institutions, at present, there are forty-six health institutions in the town (BDCA, 2004).

The town is now serving as a centre of various social, economical and political activities. There are many construction works undertaken in the town. As a result of the expansion and development of the town as well as the availability of job opportunities, it attracts many rural people to migrate to the town in search of seasonal wage earning employment.

#### **4.2. Tach Gaint Woreda**

It is one of the nine woredas in South Gondar Zone, Amhara National Regional State, with capital Arb Gebeya town. It is situated at latitudinal and longitudinal location of  $11^{\circ}22' 00''$ N and  $38^{\circ} 43' 00''$  E, respectively. The average altitude of the woreda is 2,700 m.a.s.l. The woreda is located at a physical distance of 762 km away from Addis Ababa, 197 km from Bahir Dar (the regional capital) and 100 km from Debre Tabor (zonal capital). It is bounded by Simada in the West and South; North Wollo and Lay Gaint in the East and North, respectively (see Figure 4.1). It covers an area of 99,484 square kilometer. The total population of the woreda is 109,906. Out of this, the number of male and female is 60,561 and 49, 345, respectively (Tach Gaint Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

The agro-climate of the woreda is characterized by *Dega* (23 percent), *Woina Dega* (63.2 percent), and *Kolla* (13.1 percent). The average annual rainfall of the woreda is 961.3 mm and its maximum and minimum ranges between 900 to 1000 mm, respectively. The average temperature of the woreda is  $20.5^{\circ}$ c while its maximum and minimum temperature is  $16^{\circ}$ c and  $25^{\circ}$ c, respectively. The soil type of the woreda is black, red and brown soil. The relief of the woreda is characterized by uneven landscape (2 percent),

hilly (23 percent), gorges and valleys (10 percent), plain (22 percent) and others (17 percent) (ibid).

The woreda is divided into sixteen *kebeles*. Out of the total of 27,816 households, the men headed and women headed households are 19,347 and 8, 479, respectively. Out of the total rural households in the woreda, 18,831 households (67.7 percent) do not have oxen. The average landholding size in the woreda is 0.75 ha. The major crops grown in the woreda include *teff*, wheat, barely, sorghum, peas and beans. The dominant economic activity of the woreda is mixed farming (crop cultivation and livestock rearing). In terms of rural infrastructure, there is a 24 km all weather road and 185 km seasonal road (ibid).

Tach Gaint is one of those 52 woredas identified by the regional state as drought-prone and food insecure woreda of the region. It is also one of those five woredas in south Gondar zone (Ebinat, Lay Gayint, Simada and Libo kemkem) that experience shortage of rain fall (Degefa, 2000). For many years, this woreda has experienced food insecurity and dependent on food aid. In the woreda, the number of people who sought food aid has increased over the past fourteen years. The number of people who were dependent on food aid from 1993 up to 2006 has been well documented by the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office (see Table 4.1). The total number of people who have no any other means of income other than food aid in the woreda is 5,193. It is one of those woredas in the region that are targeted under the Productive Safety Net Program (Tach Gaint Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

Table 4.1: Number of Food Aid Dependents (from 1993 to 2006).

Year	Number of food aid dependents
1993	20,000
1994	39,000
1995	26,000
1996	15,000
1997	19,100
1998	19,000
1999	10,140
2000	10,040
2001	36,000
2002	52,000
2003	74,000
2004	39,670
2005	43,357
2006	54,193

Source: Tach Gaint Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office.

#### 4.2.1. 02 *kebele*

*Kebele* 02 is one of the sixteen *kebeles* found in Tach Gaint woreda. It is bounded by Agat (*kebele* 13) in the West, Anseta (*kebele* 05) and Aketo (*kebele* 07) in the East, Adansa (*kebele* 11) and Aduka (*kebele* 12) in the South and Kut mender (*kebele* 03) and Jaji (*kebele* 08) in the North. The area size of the *kebele* is 1307.5 ha. The total population of the *kebele* is 6,450. The average family size of the household in the *kebele* is about five and its maximum and minimum is eight and two, respectively. The agro-climate of the *kebele* is characterized by *Woina Dega* and *Kola*. Out of the total population of the *kebele*, 75 percent live under *Woina Dega* while 25 percent live under *Kolla* climate. The topography of the *kebele* is characterized by mountainous, plain and rugged (Tach Gaint Woreda Agricultural and Rural Development Office).

There are 1203 households in the *kebele*. Out of this, 315 (26.2 percent) households are landless while 517 (42.8 percent) households do not have oxen. The number of people who do not have any other means of income other than food aid are 468. The major crops produced in the *kebele* are wheat, *teff*, peas, chickpeas, *wasera* (a hybrid of wheat and barely) and *guaya* (grass peas). In terms of social services the *kebele* has one elementary school, one clinic, and two Development Agents (*ibid*).

### 4.3. Eastern Estie Woreda

This woreda is one of the nine woredas in south-Gondar Zone, Amhara National Regional State, with capital Mekane Eyesus town. It is situated at latitudinal and longitudinal location of 11<sup>o</sup>26' 00''N and 38<sup>o</sup> 04' 00'' E, respectively. The average altitude of the woreda is 2,400 m.a.s.l. It covers an area of 1342.38 square kilometers. The woreda is located at a distance of 671 km from Addis Ababa, 106 km away from Bahir Dar (the regional capital) and 52 km from Debre Tabor (zonal capital). It is bounded by Simada and Lay Gaynt woreda in the East, Western Estie and Dera woreda in the West, Eastern Gojjam zone in the South, and Farta woreda in the North (see Figure 4.1). In the woreda there are 36 *kebeles* (Eastern Estie Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

The agro-climate of the woreda is characterized by *Dega* (50.8 percent), *Woina Dega* (44.1 percent), *Kola* (1.6 percent) and *Wurch* (3.5 percent). The topography of the woreda is characterized by rugged landscape (57.4 percent), hilly (2.8 percent), plain (39.8 percent). The annual rainfall of the woreda ranges between 1,307.7 mm-1,500 mm. Its maximum and minimum temperature is 25 °c and 8.3 °c, respectively (ibid).

The total population size of the woreda is estimated to be 235,154. The productive age group of people, between 15 and 64 years old, are 104,173 (44.3 %). 96.5 percent of the people are Orthodox Christian followers while 3.4 percent are Muslim. The number of people who reside in rural areas are 220, 594 and out of this, the number of male and female is 112,447 and 108, 147, respectively. In the woreda there are a total of 49,854 households and out of this, the men headed and women headed households are 42,231 and 7, 623, respectively. The number of rural household is 46,679 and out of this, the male and female headed households are 39, 542 and 7,137, respectively. Out of the total rural households in the woreda, 33 percent of them do not own oxen. The average land holding of the woreda is 1.1 ha. (ibid).

The major crops grown in the woreda include *teff*, wheat, barely, beans, peas, chick peas, *guaya* (grass peas), potato, maize, sorghum, millet, nigger, *telba* (linseed) and others. The dominant economic activity of the area is farming followed by livestock rearing. The woreda is identified as one of the surplus producing woredas of the region (ibid).

#### **4.3.1. Jibasra Kebele**

It is one of the 36 *kebeles* in Eastern Estie woreda. The average family size of a household is about five, with maximum and minimum is 8 and 2, respectively. Its area size is 2012 ha. It is bounded by Arida in the West, Alemaya in the East, Messi Wojjo in the South and Mehalgie in the North. Agro-climatic wise, this *kebele* is characterized by *Dega* (35 percent) and *Woina Dega* (65 percent) (Eastern Estie Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

The total population size of the *kebele* is 5,712 and out of this, the number of male and female population is 2,980 and 2,732, respectively. Out of the registered members, the total number of households in the *kebele* is 1007. The average land holding of a household is 1.1 ha. In the kebelc, 210 households (20.9 percent) are landless (ibid).

The major economic activity of the *kebele* is mixed farming (crop cultivation and livestock rearing). The major crops grown in the *kebele* are *teff*, wheat, barely, beans, peas, chick peas, *guaya* (grass peas), potato, maize, sorghum, millet, nigger, *telba* (linseed) and others. In terms of social service it has one elementary school, one clinic, and two Development Agents (ibid).

#### 4.4. Yilmana Densa Woreda

It is one of the eleven woredas in West Gojjam Zone, Amhara National Regional State, with capital Adet town. It is situated at latitudinal and longitudinal location of  $11^{\circ}35'30''\text{N}$  and  $37^{\circ}32'33''\text{E}$ , respectively. The average altitude of the woreda ranges from 2,000 to 2,500 m.a.s.l. It covers an area of 1411.6 square kilometers. The woreda is located at a distance of 450 km from Addis Ababa, 45 km away from Bahir Dar (the regional and zonal capital). It is bounded by South Gondar zone and River Abay in the East, Mecha Woreda in the West, Quarit Woreda in the South, and Bahir Dar in the North (Yilmana Densa Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

The total population size of the woreda is estimated to be 334,475. The woreda has 46 *kebeles* and a total of 54,409 households. The average land holding of a household is 1.1 ha. Out of the total households in the woreda, 17,612 households (32.4 percent) have no oxen. 94.4 percent of the people are Orthodox Christian followers, 1.8 percent is Muslim, and 3.8 percent are others (ibid).

The agro-climate of the woreda is characterized by *Dega* (24 percent), *Woina Dega* (57 percent), and *Kola* (19 percent). The topography of the woreda is characterized by rugged landscape (64 percent), hilly (20 percent), plain (16 percent). The soil type of the woreda is black soil (20 percent), red soil (65 percent), and brown soil (15 percent). The average annual rainfall of the woreda is 1,270 mm and its maximum and minimum ranges between 1,166.5 mm-1,338.1 mm, respectively. Its average temperature is  $17^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with maximum and minimum temperature of  $25.2^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $8.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , respectively (ibid).

The major crops grown in the woreda are *teff*, wheat, barely, beans, peas, chick peas, *guaya* (grass peas), potato, maize, sorghum, millet, nigger, *telba* (linseed) and others. The

dominant economic activity of the woreda is crop cultivation followed by livestock rearing. It is one of the surplus producing woredas of the region (ibid).

#### **4.4.1. Agita kebele**

It is one of the 46 *kebeles* in Yilmana Densa woreda. The average family size is about four. Its area size is 4,530 ha. It is bounded by Senkegna in the North, Fetlo in the South, Seqela in the East and Abeka in the West. The total population size of the *kebele* is 7,046 and the proportion of male and female population is 3,469 and 3,577, respectively. Out of the registered households, the total number of households in the *kebele* is 1113. Households who do not own oxen are 149 (13.4 percent). The average land holding size is 1.1 ha. (Yilmana Densa Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office).

The agro-climate of the *kebele* is characterized by *Woina Dega* (96 percent) and *Kolla* (4 percent). The major economic activity is mixed farming (crop cultivation and livestock rearing). The major crops grown in this *kebele* are *teff*, wheat, barely, beans, peas, chick peas, *guaya* (grass peas), potato, maize, sorghum, millet, nigger, *telba* (linseed) and others. In terms of social service it has one elementary school, one clinic, and two Development Agents (ibid).

## Chapter Five: Characteristics of Migrants and Factors of Migration

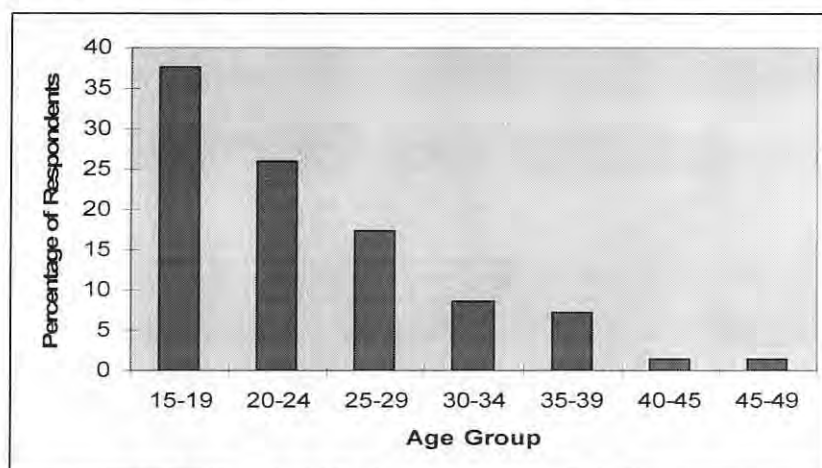
### 5.1. Demographic, Social and Economic Characteristics of Migrants

To have a better insight about the causes, processes as well as impacts of migration on individuals, households and communities, assessing the characteristics of migrants is essential. Thus, this chapter addresses the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants. It also highlights some of the factors of migration such as economic, social and cultural factors. The stream of out-migration, the frequency and experiences of migration, and the skills acquired by migrants will also be treated in this chapter.

#### 5.1.1. Age

The field survey in Bahir Dar (destination) suggests that young people are most likely to migrate. The mean age of seasonal migrants who are included under this study is 24.1 years old. Figure 5.1 reveals that, out of the respondents, 37.7 percent are between 15 and 19 years old. About 26.1 percent are between 20 and 24 years old. 17.4 percent of them are between 25 and 29 years old. Out of the total respondents, more than three-quarters of them (81.1 percent) are between 15 and 29 years old.

Figure 5.1: Age Distribution of Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar Town.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Data at the places of origin also confirm that the majority of migrants are young men between 15 and 29 years old. In 02 *kebele* of Tach Gaint woreda, out of the total seasonal out-migrants, 60.8 percent represent between 15 and 29 years old. In Jibasra *kebele* of Eastern Estie woreda and Agita *kebele* of Yilmana Densa woreda, 70.5 and 61 percent of seasonal out-migrants represent between 15 and 29 years old, respectively.

Table 5.1: Age Distribution of Seasonal Out- Migrants at Places of Origin.

Age group	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
15-19	5	13.2	15	24.6	12	29.3
20-24	13	34.2	22	36.1	9	22.0
25-29	5	13.2	6	9.8	4	9.8
30-34	4	10.5	11	18.0	8	19.5
35-39	7	18.4	2	3.3	2	4.9
40-45	3	7.9	2	3.3	2	4.9
45-49	1	2.6	3	4.9	4	9.8
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

According to a key informant in Bahir Dar, migrants are predominantly young men as these individuals are landless, a situation making them migrate looking for wage employment to earn additional income. During the FGD conducted in Bahir Dar, seasonal migration is undertaken predominantly by unmarried and young individuals who are looking for better opportunities in town.

Many studies, so far, assert that migrants tend to be single, young men and educated. For example, a case study conducted in Mali, Bangladesh and Ethiopia by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) confirms that young men are the most migratory group (de Haan et al., 2000).

Due to the selective nature of migration, seasonal out-migration of labour in the study area is undertaken by young men whose age ranges between 15 and 29 years old. This

type of migration is, therefore, predominantly carried out by the most productive age group of the society. This is partly attributed to age specific nature of the labour market demand at destination, the motivation for better life and other institutional factors at home. As will be discussed in some detail later, the out-migration of the young age group of the society has important implication on both the sending and receiving areas.

### **5.1.2. Sex**

As stated previously in Chapter three, at the outset of the research, it was my intention to include women seasonal migrants into the study at destination. Unfortunately, all of them whom I spoke do not fall under the category of seasonal migrants. Seasonal migration, therefore, seems to be a male domain.

According to an interview held with the Amhara Region Social and Labour Affairs Bureau expert, once women left their home, they do not return soon. This is mainly because of two reasons. Firstly, they often engage in low paid domestic works and hence unable to save enough money to make a swift return home. Secondly, women who have experienced urban life hardly get access to marriage at home. Consequently, if they are not successful in town, they would rather turn into commercial sex workers. In an interview made with a middleman in Bahir Dar Town, the volume of seasonal labour migration has increased over the last five years not only to Bahir Dar but also to other places such as Eastern Showa, Humera, and Mettema. However, it was only men who are engaged in seasonal migration of labour. Women do not go for such work because it is a laborious and commonly practiced by men.

Regarding the out-migration of family members, Table 5.2 indicates that seasonal migration is predominantly carried out by son members of the family followed by male heads of the household. In 02 *kebele*, out of the total out-migrants, 60.5 percent are son members of households, 31.6 percent are the male heads of the household and 7.9 percent are daughters. In Jibasra *kebele*, 65.6 percent are son members of families, 27.9 percent are male heads of the household and 6.6 percent are daughters. In Agita *kebele*, 48.8

percent are son members of the family, 43.9 percent are male heads of the household and 7.3 are daughters.

Thus, data from the three rural villages reveal that, unlike their men counterparts, women's participation in seasonal migration is negligible. Women are not attracted to migrate to rural areas for seasonal works where the major activities are agricultural works. This could be partly due to the labour market segmentation in which women are believed to be unable to perform as efficiently as their male counterparts. The social division of labour at home is yet another factor that restricts women's seasonal out-migration of labour. This has a strong link with the culture of the society in which women are traditionally entrusted to take care of families at home while seasonal out-migration is considered to be a male activity. Familial and other reproductive responsibilities of women at home may influence the duration and distance of their movement (Kothari, 2002). Women mostly migrate to urban areas for domestic work and do not often return home shortly. Once they have migrated from rural to urban areas, either they live permanently there or return home after a long stay out. Women are less likely to return to rural area after experiencing urban life. Devereux et al. (2003) assert that women's participation in seasonal out-migration of labour from Wollo to other rural areas is insignificant and they more often migrate to town permanently.

Table 5.2: Migrants' Position in the Family.

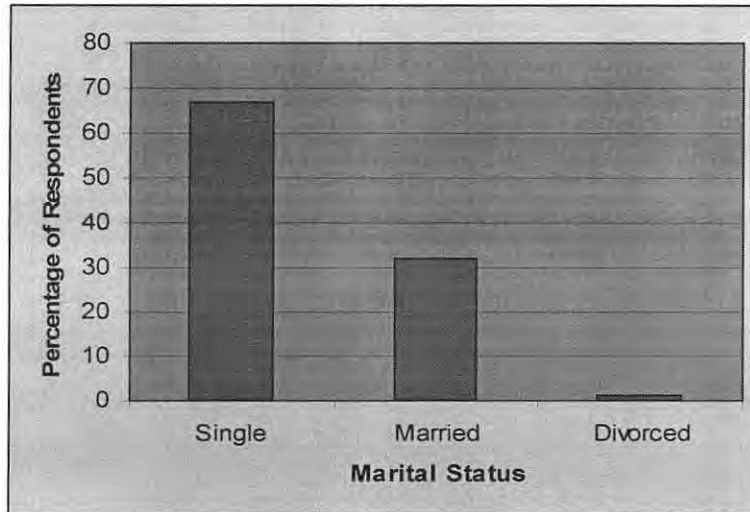
Migrants' position in the family	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Head of the Household	12	31.6	17	27.9	18	43.9
Daughter	3	7.9	4	6.6	3	7.3
Son	23	60.5	40	65.6	20	48.8
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

### 5.1.3. Marital Status

As stated above, migrants are predominantly young and single men. As presented in Figure 5.2, data from Bahir Dar reveal that the majority of seasonal migrants are unmarried men. Out of the respondents, 66.7 percent are single whereas 31.9 percent are married.

Figure 5.2: Marital Status of Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Data from the places of origin also confirm that seasonal out-migration of labour is predominantly carried out by single men. In 02 *kebele*, 55.3 percent are single while 39.5 are married. In Jibasra *kebele*, 70.5 percent are single and 29.5 are married. In Agita *kebele*, 51.2 are single and 48.8 are married.

Accordingly, data both at the destination and places of origin suggest that out-migration of this type is predominantly carried out by single men. This may be correlated to the fact that unmarried people have less family responsibilities at home, which in turn, eases the possibility of moving out to other places for wage earning employment. The other possible reason is that some of them are young who may not yet qualify for the age limit of marriage to establish their own households.

Table 5.3: Marital Status of Seasonal Out-Migrants at Places of Origin.

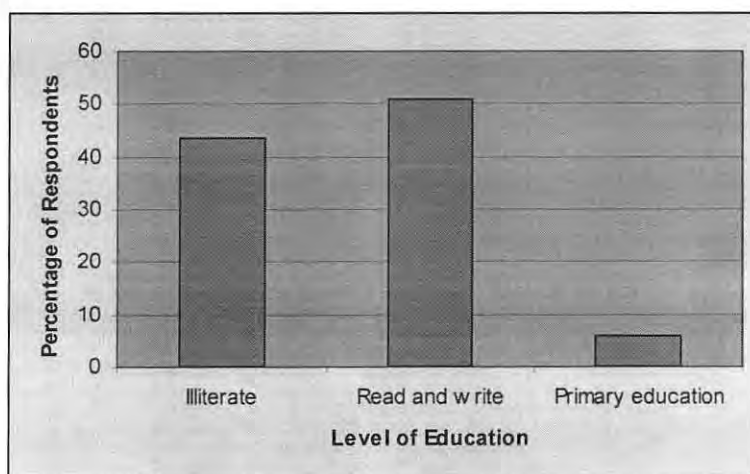
Marital status	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Single	21	55.3	43	70.5	21	51.2
Married	15	39.5	18	29.5	20	48.8
Divorced	2	5.3	—	—	—	—
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

#### 5.1.4. Education

Regarding education, the data from Bahir Dar suggest that migrants tend to be educated. About 56.5 percent of them are literate. Of these, 50.7 percent can read and write and 5.8 percent have primary education.

Figure 5.3: Educational Level of Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

In all the three rural villages of the study area more than three-quarters of seasonal out-migrants are educated. Table 5.4 indicates that out of the total seasonal out-migrants, 84.2

percent in 02 *kebele*, 78.7 percent in Jibasra *kebele* and 82.9 percent in Agita *kebele* are literate.

According to data from the destination and places of origin, the majority of seasonal out-migrants are literate. This is partly attributed to the recent expansion of primary education in many rural parts of the country. Hence, since many of them are young, they had had the opportunity to attend formal education in their respective home villages but unable to continue their education because of different reasons.

Table5. 4: Educational Level of Migrants at Places of Origin.

Level of education	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	6	15.8	13	21.3	7	17.1
Read and write	29	76.3	45	73.8	21	51.2
Primary education	3	7.9	3	4.9	13	31.7
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

### 5.1.5. Economic Characteristics of Migrants

Traditionally, migrants are perceived to be the poorest, and migration is carried out by those poor and destitute people. The common assumption is that people with fewer assets migrate more. But there is no as such easy generalization about the economic characteristics of migrants. De Haan (2000) stated that ‘poverty is not necessarily the main cause of migration, and poverty-migration links are complex and context specific’. Thus, the processes, determinants as well as the consequences of migration are complex and context specific, and it is misleading to generalize the economic characteristics of migrants (McDowell & de Haan, 1997). It is not only economic factor that motivate people to migrate but migration decision is the interplay between other factors such as social, cultural and institutional factors. Accordingly, the survey data from Bahir Dar (destination) and the places of origin suggest that it is not easy to generalize the economic characteristics of migrant as both the poor and the not poor households have migrant

members. Since land and oxen are the two most important assets in rural Ethiopia, I only took the size of landholdings and number of oxen so as to identify households' economic characteristics.

Out of the total respondents in Bahir Dar Town, three-quarters of them are landless and 58 percent of them have no oxen. But this does not allow to identify the asset status of migrants and hence difficult to generalize migrants are poor. This is due to the fact that seasonal migration of labour to the research site is over-represented by young and single men. These individuals are dependent family members who have not yet established their own households and may not consider their families' land and oxen as their own and may respond that they do not have land and oxen.

On the other hand, data from the places of origin show that the relation between out-migration with landholdings and oxen ownership of households differs from one area to another. In 02 *kebele*, households with migrant members have less landholding than the non-migrant households (see Table 5.5 and 5.6). Regarding the relation between oxen ownership and migration, households without or fewer oxen have more migrant members than the non-migrant households (see Table 5.7 and 5.8). In an interview held with an expert for Tach Gaint Woreda Agricultural and Rural Development Office, we could see that it is the landless and the poorest households that migrate for seasonal wage earning activities, not the better-off ones, especially young farmers who are not entitled for land ownership. In this particular *kebele*, the relationship seems inverse and migration is undertaken as coping (survival) strategy of poor households. The reasons why out-migration of labour is perceived negatively by people in this locality will be discussed in some detail later.

In Jibasra *kebele*, households with and without land both have migrant members (see Table 5.5 and 5.6). Regarding the relation between oxen ownership and out-migration, households who own two and more oxen have more migrant members than the non-migrant households (see Table 5.7 and 5.8). According to a key informant in Bahir Dar who came from Jibasra *kebele*, it is both the poor and better-off households who pursue

out-migration of labour. His father has four *timad* of land, two oxen, one cow, two heifers, one calf, one bull, and 8 sheep. According to him, his father is ranked under middle class status in the locality. Another informant who came from the same place reported that his parents have four *timmad* of land, two oxen, one cow, one bull, one calf, three sheep, four goats, and chickens. According to the wealth status of the locality, his parents are neither poor nor rich. In this *kebele*, migration and the asset status of a household has no relationship since both the better-off and poor households have migrant members and here migration is more often accumulation than coping. The reason for Jibasra is because of its tradition of migration. Labour migration of people is not perceived in terms of distress reason rather it is so as to make ones life better. It is not only the poor who migrate but it is also the better-off family.

In Agita *kebele*, the landless households have more migrant members (see Table 5.5 and 5.6). Besides, households with migrant members have fewer oxen than the non-migrant ones (see Table 5.7 and 5.8). Here, migration is more often coping than accumulation. My key informant also stated that migration is often carried out by the poor, not the better-off. Some one who has enough farmland and able to pay his fertilizer debt timely is hardly to migrate. In this particular *kebele*, out-migration of labour is often associated with some kind of risk and perceived negatively.

Table 5.5: Relationship between Migrant Households and Landholdings.

Landholdings (in <i>timmad</i> )	<i>Kebele</i> Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	14	42.4	10	25.6	10	27.8
1	6	18.2	—	—	—	—
2	10	30.3	2	5.1	4	11.1
3	3	9.1	10	25.6	10	27.8
4 and above	—	—	17	43.6	12	33.3
Total	33	100.0	39	100.0	36	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Table 5.6: Relationship between Non- Migrant Household and Landholdings.

Landholdings (in <i>timmad</i> )	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	1	3.7	1	9.1	—	—
1	7	25.9	—	—	—	—
2	12	44.4	5	45.5	7	36.8
3	4	14.8	3	27.3	5	26.3
4 and above	3	11.1	2	18.2	7	36.8
Total	27	100.0	11	100.0	19	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Table 5.7: Relationship between Migrant Households and Oxen Ownership.

Number of Ox/en	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	11	33.3	1	2.6	—	—
1	18	54.5	13	33.3	21	58.3
2	4	12.1	20	51.3	13	36.1
3 and above	—	—	5	12.8	2	5.6
Total	33	100.0	39	100.0	36	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Table 5.8: Relationship between Non-Migrant Household and Oxen Ownership.

Number of Ox/en	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	4	14.8	—	—	—	—
1	12	44.4	6	54.5	4	21.1
2	11	40.7	4	36.4	10	52.6
3 and above	—	—	1	9.1	5	26.3
Total	27	100.0	11	100.0	19	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

## **5.2. Factors of Migration**

The motivation factors of migration vary from person to person, and across places. People pursue migration as a livelihood strategy for different reasons. Moreover, the determinants of migration are complex and context specific and hence cannot be generalized to all places and individuals (de Haan, 2000). As the study areas are different from one another, the determinants of migration vary among communities under study.

In the following section, attempts are made to illustrate the general factors of seasonal out-migration that drive rural people to pursue migration as a livelihood strategy. These include economic, social and cultural factors.

### **5.2.1. Economic Factors**

Although agriculture is the major economic activity and the sole source of people's livelihood in rural areas of the country, its productivity has been deteriorating over time. This is mainly due to the declining soil fertility, large population size, environmental degradation and other forms of natural calamity. These, in turn, have such important implications on the lives of rural inhabitants as food shortage arising from scarcity and less productivity of land, inability to repay debt, and lack of sufficient means of subsistence. Seasonal out-migration of labour is, therefore, one of the coping strategies undertaken by farmers to mitigate the problem.

#### **5.2.1.1. Land Shortage**

Since land is the basic asset of people's livelihoods in rural areas of the region, most of the other factors directly or indirectly emanate from this resource. The number of population has increased whereas the average landholding and its productivity have decreased overtime. In addition to the decline of land productivity, data from the survey and as described by many informants, scarcity of farmland and landlessness are important factors of seasonal out-migration of rural people seeking wage employment.

According to the field survey in Bahir Dar (destination), out of the respondents, more than three-quarters of them (78.3 percent) described that shortage of farm land is the major reason of migration (see Table 5.9). As presented in Table 5.10, the household survey data show that in 02, Jibasra and Agita *kebeles*, out of the sampled households, land shortage was identified as a factor of migration by 21 (63.6 percent), 32 (82.1 percent) and 27 (75.0 percent) respondents, respectively.

Table 5.9: Factors of Migration for Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Reasons of Migration	Frequency	Percent
Land shortage	54	78.3
To repay debt	43	62.3
To earn additional income	36	52.2
Large family size	22	31.9
Job opportunities at destination	18	26.1
To buy modern goods and clothes	16	23.2
To cover children's educational cost	2	2.9
Lack of sufficient means of subsistence	12	17.4
To cover festival expenditure	8	11.6
To pay tax	8	11.6
Others	7	10.1

Source: Field Survey 2007.

Table 5.10: Factors of Migration at Places of Origin.  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Reasons of Migration	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Lack of sufficient means of subsistence	26	78.8	4	10.3	6	16.7
Land shortage	21	63.6	32	82.1	27	75.0
To pay debt	17	51.5	29	69.4	31	86.1
To pay tax	10	30.3	21	53.8	15	41.7
To buy modern goods and clothes	9	27.3	18	46.2	13	36.1
Large family size	8	24.2	12	30.8	12	33.3
To earn additional income	7	21.2	26	66.7	18	50.0
Job opportunities at destination	6	18.2	14	35.9	4	11.1
To cover festival expenditure	4	12.1	8	20.5	7	19.4
To cover children's educational expense	2	6.1	3	7.7	2	5.6
Others	5	15.2	6	15.4	5	13.9

Source: Field Survey 2007.

Data from household survey reveal that the average family size of a household ranges between five to six children. On the other hand, according to data from the Regional Land Administration and Use Authority, the average landholding of a household is estimated at 1.1 hectare. This does not mean that land is proportionally distributed to all households. There are many households that do not own land at all. Data from Eastern Estie Agriculture and Rural Development Office show that, in Jibasra *kebele* alone, there are 210 households (20.9 percent) who are landless. The household survey also suggests that, out of the sampled households, those who are landless in Jibasra, 02, and Agita *kebeles* represent 22, 25, and 18.2 percent, respectively (see Table 5.5 and 5.6).

Nowadays, young peasants who have already established their households do not have their own farmlands and they rent land for cultivation on a share cropping basis. But, the output is too meager to feed their family. Hence, they have to look for other ways of cash earning sources to meet their households' demand and supplement their income from agriculture. One of the possible sources of income is obtained through seasonal out-migration of labour.

During the rural land redistribution of the region, land was simply allocated to a household without entitling each member of the family. In the reallocation process, those young and unmarried individuals were excluded and hence they become landless. These youngsters grow up and become heads of households themselves but they do not have their own land to claim. Currently, the young age group of the society constitute one-third of the total population of the region. In an interview held with an expert for the Regional Land Administration and Use Authority, it was found out that there is an intention to end up further land redistribution in the region. According to him, redistribution Vs landlessness is still a debatable issue and both have impacts in different ways and need to be addressed carefully. If land is redistributed, it will be vulnerable to further fragmentation and resource degradation, which in turn, lead to declining agricultural productivity. It is, therefore, a matter of choosing the less evil.

The problems of those landless young peasants have not been yet addressed in the new land registration and certification process of the region. In this regard, Yigremew (2007) states that the current land registration and certification process in the region may further aggravate the problem of landlessness for the youth. According to him, the new land registration is implemented based on the previous redistribution by formalizing the existing land possession, which in turn, leaves young farmers landless.

The newly implemented land registration process in the region is carried out without arranging other alternative livelihood option for young household heads. Thus, the rural development strategy shall consider the positive role of seasonal out-migration of labour as an alternative livelihood option in alleviating the problem of farmland and landlessness. According to the expert with the Regional Land Administration and Use Authority, we have so far a wrong perception towards land. Land has been perceived as the only remedy to resolve all our problems. In reality land is no more a viable means of finding solutions for our problems. He further emphasized that the average landholding of a household is very small and its fertility has decreased overtime. Moreover, many farmers are unemployed as the time required for agricultural activity is minimal and have no sufficient land to use their potential effectively. Thus, according to him, the strategy should rather focus on how to reduce the number of farmers who stick their livelihoods with agriculture. One of the possibilities is that young farmers need to migrate elsewhere and look for better paying jobs. They can also acquire new values and skills at destination.

Nowadays, according to informants, many of young farmers are paying land rent as well as maintaining their households' livelihoods from the income they earned from off-farm activities mainly seasonal out-migration of labour. The other means of getting land is through sharecropping arrangements. The landholder contributes land, whereas the partner contributes farm inputs, draft animals, and labour, for which the former pays in

grain. The case of *Ato Ashagre Tassew* from *Jibasra kebele* illustrates how landlessness pushes farmers to seek out-migration of labour:

*I am now 32 years old. I have two children and a total of four family members. But I have no land to till. I can only get land from others either as sharecropper or contractual form (land rent). When I share part of the output to the landholders, the remaining amount that I receive is not sufficient to maintain my household. So, I repeatedly migrate to Humera in search of wage employment to supplement the income from land. Once, in July, I went for sesame weeding, and in September for sesame cutting.*

There are also people who overcome their problem of landlessness and households' food shortage by engaging in a seasonal wage earning employment. An informant from 02 *kebele* said that he was a *derg* soldier for about nine years. In 1991, after demobilization, he returned home but he could not get land. For the last eleven years, he repeatedly migrated to Humera, during sesame weeding, sesame cutting and land preparation period. According to him, since he does not have land, he has to get cash to purchase grain for household consumption and to repay debt. Another key informant from *Agita kebele* stated that out-migration of labour is often carried out by the landless so as to supplement their income from agriculture and to repay fertilizer debt. During the FGD conducted at destination with seasonal migrants, it was stated that young farmers are landless and migrate seasonally elsewhere in order to get money to supplement their income, to repay debt and to cover household expenditure

Similarly, a 33 years old informant from 02 *kebele* has two children but has no land except the one *timmad* of land that he got from his father. Every year, he migrates to Humera to earn cash so as to supplement his income. Another informant from *Jibasra kebele*, a repeated seasonal migrant to Eastern Showa and Humera, married two years ago and has one child. But he has no land except the small plot of land he acquired from his parents. Since his plot of land is insufficient to maintain the household, he rent land from others. Hence, he migrated either to Humera or Eastern Showa. In Humera, he only stayed for a month so as to arrive timely for harvest season and not to run a risk of suffering from some illness.

During the FGD conducted both at destination and places of origin, farmland scarcity arising from high population growth, the decline of land productivity due to exhaustion of the fertility of the soil, landlessness, and other natural shocks such as hail storms, drought, and pests, which in turn, expose households to food shortage are the stated reasons for seasonal out-migration of labour.

Food shortage arising from scarcity of farmland and the subsequent need to earn additional income so as to supplement the income from land are also identified during the survey and described by informants as important factors driving rural inhabitants to other areas in search of employment opportunities. The data suggest that shortage of farmland and landlessness are the underlying reasons of seasonal out-migration of labour.

#### **5.2.1.2. Indebtedness**

Seasonal out-migration of people is often linked to indebtedness and the desire to earn cash for repaying debts (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2004). Data from destination and places of origin indicate that the need to repay debt is one of the major reasons for migration. The majority of people migrate seasonally since they are unable to repay debts and to avoid further incurring of debts.

As presented in Table 5.9, the survey data in Bahir Dar (destination) reveal that, out of the total respondents, 62.3 percent of them described their reason of migration as the need to earn money so as to repay their debt. According to the household survey data, in 02, Jibasra and Agita *kebeles*, the need to repay debts was stated as the reason for migration by 17 (51.5 percent), 29 (69.4 percent), and 31 (86.1 percent) respondents, respectively (see Table 5.10).

One of the major factors that drive rural people to move to other areas in search of wage employment is the need to repay their debt. During the FGD carried out in Bahir Dar, participants mentioned that unless they pay back their fertilizer debt within the specified time schedule, they will end up in jail or their property will be taken over. They even

borrow money from the local money lenders to meet the advance payment for fertilizer debt, for consumption and to cover their transport expense. The rate of monthly interest from money lenders ranges between 7 to 10 percent. It is during the months of June and September that the interest rate increases to 10 percent. In June, most farmers critically need money to meet the advance payment for fertilizer debt. In September, many people leave for work and seek money to cover the transport cost. The only option is to borrow money from local money lenders with high interest and when they come back home, they have to repay both the interest and the principal.

There are also many people who take credit from the Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI), a micro-finance institution, so as to use the money in productive investment. According to an ACSI expert, the interest rate is 18 percent annually and has to be repaid immediately after harvest season. The major source of income to repay both the principal money and its interest is the earnings obtained from seasonal off-farm wage employment. Since its interest rate is less than that of the local money lenders, the credit from ACSI may have positive contributions to the beneficiaries. It also stimulates farmers for off-farm wage earning employment to repay their credit timely, which in turn, enables them to create assets if they use the cash on productive investment.

My informants stated that they often repay their credit from the micro-finance institution and cover their fertilizer debt from the cash they obtained from off-farm wage employment. A key informant from Jibasra *kebele*, for instance, stated that two years ago he took a credit of 800 Birr from the ACSI to buy sheep and clothes. He was able to repay the credit after he earned money from Humera. According to him, the main reason to migrate every year for wage earning employment is to repay his debt. He often covers fertilizer debt and other related expenditures from the earning that he got from labour migration. Another informant from 02 *kebele* stated that he took a credit of 1,000 Birr from ACSI to raise sheep. But he paid it for the advance payment of fertilizer debt and bought goods for home consumption. He then migrated to Humera seeking wage employment in order to repay his credit. Then, he came back and paid part of his debt.

Farmers migrate to other places not only to repay debt but also to avoid further incurring from debt. My informant *Ato Mekuria Assefa* from *Agita kebele* stated his reason of migration and how he has benefited from the earning obtained from it in the following way:

*If I hadn't migrated seasonally to Humera and Mettema and earned income, I would have borrowed money from local money lenders. Moreover, I would have been imprisoned like other farmers who have failed to repay fertilizer debts. Now, I am not only free from any debt but also I have been able to repay fertilizer debt timely and cover the advance payment for it. I will pursue migrating elsewhere for work and never give up until my life gets significantly improved.*

Farmers' migration for seasonal wage employment is initiated by the need to repay fertilizer debts. During the FGD conducted in *Agita kebele*, it was stated that fertilizer is a very essential ingredient for their farm but the price has increased over time and farmers in the village are always worried about how to repay fertilizer debts. An informant from *02 kebele* stated that he repeatedly migrated to *Wollega* for coffee picking and stayed there up to three or four months. He went there to earn cash in order to pay fertilizer debt. He said his son also migrates to *Humera* every year for the same reason.

The following case of *Ato Melaku Asrat* from *Agita kebele* reveals how seasonal out-migration of labour has often been strongly linked to debt:

*Five years ago I went to Harar looking for wage employment and stayed there for five months, from August to December. I earned 1,265 Birr and brought back home items like three kilos of coffee, two sickles, one umbrella, and clothes for myself and my family. I also paid fertilizer debt with the cash I earned. I had had two cows and sold one to construct a house with corrugated iron roof. I went to the same place for the second time and earned 800 Birr and was able to repay fertilizer debt. I went to the same place for the third time and earned 950 Birr within five months of stay. I bought clothes for my family, covered the educational expense of my children, paid the fertilizer debt and tax, and covered festival expenditure. I migrated to the same place for the fourth time and earned 1,100 Birr with which I bought two sheep and paid the fertilizer debt. I also brought back home items like coffee, salt, sugar and other household utensils. Last year, I didn't go there since my wife got sick and there was no other family member who could take care of the agricultural work at home. Consequently, I have faced shortage of cash to repay the fertilizer debt and to cover other expenses at home. I still want to go to the same place for the next time provided that my wife would*

*recover from her illness. I do not want to migrate to any place other than Harar. This is because of my familiarity to this place and the availability of healthy environment. Earning 900 Birr within five months in a risk free environment is by far better than earning 2,000 Birr in a risky environment. In spite of the risk in Humera, the majority of people still migrate to either Humera or Mettemma.*

An informant from Jibasra *kebele* described that he has three *timad* of land with a total of six family members. He has only two oxen with which he tills his plot of land. He often pays back his fertilizer debt on time with the money he earns from migration, and thus never been imprisoned. According to him, debt collectors do not know his wife since she does not visit the prison place to provide food whereas wives of those individuals who fail to pay their debt on time are familiar to debt collectors.

The following case of *Ato Tigab Gelaw* from Jibasra *kebele* reveals that it is not only one factor that motivates people to migrate rather it is the interplay of a number of factors:

*I have two children who need my support and who are not yet old enough to work. On the other hand, I have no farmland for cultivation and thus I rent land on a share cropping basis. I have to take inputs with credit to maintain the fertility and enhance the output of the farm. In order to repay the credit, either I have to sell the grain in which I received from share cropping or other assets. If I failed to do so, I would be imprisoned. If I sell the grain and pay the debt, my children would go to bed hungry. In order to save the life of my children, I borrowed money from local money lenders with high rate of interest. So, had it not been for migration, I would have not sustained the life of my family.*

The above case reveals that although out-migration of labour for wage employment is caused by the desire to repay debt or to avoid further incurring from such debt, the financial capital obtained from it have important contributions to the households as they enable the purchasing of agricultural inputs which add to the productivity of land, the maintenance of households' food security, and increased social capital.

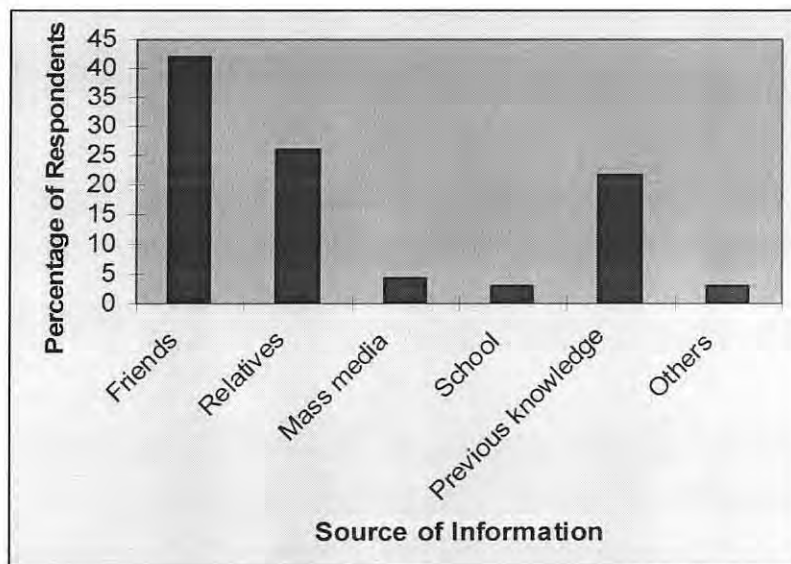
The data from destination and place of origin indicate that seasonal out-migration of people is often linked to the need to repay debts. According to survey data and informants, the majority of people migrate seasonally for wage earning employment since they are unable to repay debts and/or to avoid further incurring from such debts.

## 5.2.2. Social Factors

### 5.2.2.1. Social Network

Information flow and personal networks are important determinants of migration in the study area. Out of the total respondents, 97.1 percent of them have earlier information about the destination area before migration. The sources of information are friends, relatives, massmedia, and their own earlier experience. As presented in Figure 5.4, 42 percent of the respondents have obtained information about the destination from friends, 26.1 percent from relatives, 4.4 percent from massmedia, 2.9 percent from school and 2.9 percent from other sources and 21.7 percent have earlier migration experience to the destination area. All of my informants from Bahir Dar replied that they have earlier information about the destination area and they heard from friends who have earlier experiences. Thus, the data from Bahir Dar suggest that seasonal migrants have information about the destination area and the main source of information is more often friends.

Figure 5.4: Source of Information (Data from Bahir Dar).



Source: Field Survey 2007.

Once seasonal migrants go to the destination areas, they transmit information to the non-migrants in their return home and this becomes one of the causes for migration. A key informant from Agita *kebele* described that upon his arrival home, villagers who had no experience of migration gather around his house and ask information regarding the place where he stayed. They also asked him to take them with him for the next trip. But, according to him, he does not promise them out rightly since he has to get the consent of their families.

The following story is the case of Worku Fekadu, a key informant from Bahir Dar and illustrates how information is flowing from earlier migrants to those who stay behind:

*Upon arrival home friends and relatives of our village who have so far not migrated would gather and ask information about our migration experience. They frequently ask the type of work we were engaged in, the amount of money we earned, the items we brought back, the living condition at destination, the challenge we faced, and other related issues. Then after, they request us to take them with us for the next trip. Though we reply them positively for the time being, we have to get the consent of their families not to take risk for any inconvenience. Even students who are attracted by our clothes would be motivated to migrate along with us.*

Information flow is an important cause of seasonal out-migration of people. Earlier migrants tell their friends and relatives about the prevalence of job opportunities while they return home. But sometimes the information is misleading. According to informants from Bahir Dar and places of origin, there are occasions when migrants are misinformed about the labour market demand at destination. In an interview made with the expert for the Regional Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, it was learnt that migrants are often misinformed by middlemen and other agents about the labour market demand at destination areas. Because of this misleading information, many of them arrive early and get exposed to mistreatment and loss of money and even to different diseases. In a study conducted by Devereux et al. (2003), due to absence of information about the availability of employment opportunities in the destination areas, many of the migrants from Wollo depart without any information.

At regional level, there is no labour information center that provides the availability of employment opportunities to job seekers in other areas. Consequently, labour migrants are often exposed to misleading information. According to a middleman from Bahir Dar, migrants are sometimes motivated by misleading information. He stated that, in August 2006, investors who own sesame farm in Humera announced and posted an advertisement in Bahir Dar Town for a vacancy of 150,000 daily labourers with a payment of 100 Birr per day. This triggered an exodus of farmers to this area. Many people sold their oxen and other assets for transportation. Others also borrowed money from local money lenders. By this time thousands of people moved to Humera. On their arrival at destination, they were informed that the announcement was not genuine. Most of them returned home with grievance; some felt sick, and some decided to remain there. Many of them went there in the hope of getting better opportunities but they lost the assets that they had before. They were complaining about the government because according to them, it is the government that allowed to make such advertisement.

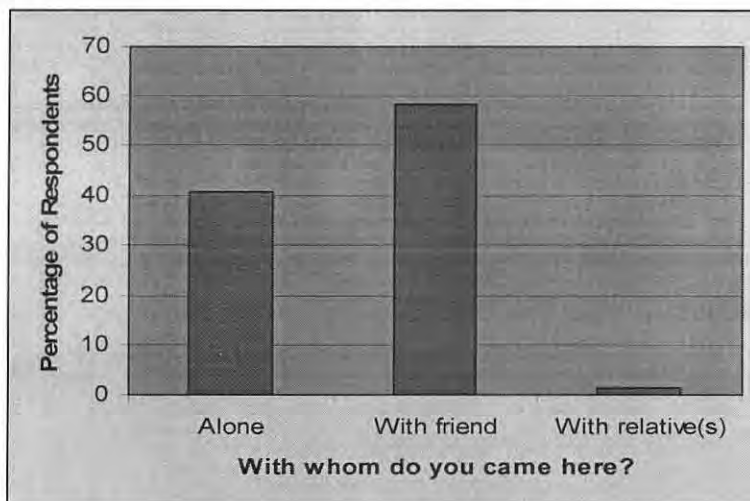
During the FGD in Bahir Dar, participants mentioned that when employers at Humera announced for a vacancy of 150,000 daily labourers for sesame cutting with 100 Birr per day, those employers at Eastern Showa, for *teff* harvesting, also announced and promised to pay the same wage as Humera for sesame cutting. Because of such information, some went to Eastern Showa while others left for Humera. Those who went to Eastern Showa earned the payment that was promised. But those who went to Humera did not get the promised wage and hence suffered a lot.

In addition to the information flow, out-migration of labour is usually motivated by looking other successful returnees. My informants stated that they came to Bahir Dar motivated by looking their friends who dressed modern clothes. According to them, even children of the better-off families in their village migrate without the consent of their families as they are motivated by returnees who dressed modern clothes and brought back items and money to their families. Children are usually motivated to migrate elsewhere because they hear what others have contributed to their families.

Informants stated that it is because of the flow of information and motivated by those successful returnee migrants that seasonal out-migration of labour has increased over time. Informants from urban residents also stated that the volume of labour migration has increased over the last five years. According to them, it is a very common scenario that from September to November long distance transportation has been crowded by these people causing shortage of transportation. During this time, the bus station and surrounding areas are crowded by these people.

Data from the study area suggest that personal networks are important factors of migration. It also determines the direction of migration. Figure 5.5 shows that out of the respondents, 58.8 percent migrated with friends, 40.6 percent migrated alone and only one person came with relatives. Thus, the data suggest that seasonal migrants more often have migrated with friends.

Figure 5.5: With whom migrants come to Bahir Dar?



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

A key informant from Bahir Dar stated that he has a plan to go to Humera by the coming July for sesame weeding provided that his brother allows to accompany him. Unless his brother is willing to go with him, he will not leave alone for fear that no one would help him while he faces accident.

As the data from Jibasra *kebele* indicate, there are cases in which up to three brothers of a household migrate together to the same place. This is to reduce risks at place of destination and to help each other while facing problems. Another informant from Agita *kebele* reported that before departure to Eastern Showa they first arranged themselves into groups of four individuals as employers assign for individuals to work on 50 by 50 meters (2500 m<sup>2</sup>) of farm plot and it is not affordable to feed individuals that exceed this number.

During the field survey, seasonal migrants were also asked if someone has arranged work for them before migration to the town. Most of them responded that no one has arranged work before their migration to the town. But more than 60 percent of the respondents stated that they have either relatives or friends who have come earlier to the town. The kinds of support they received from their relatives and friends are looking for job, helping in showing houses that rent floors and job waiting places.

### **5.2.3. Cultural Factors**

Culture is an important factor of migration that either encourages or discourages the out-migration of people for wage earning employment. The tradition of people to diversify livelihoods by earning additional income from other sources like off-farm wage employment through seasonal out-migration of labour differs from place to place. In the study areas the perceptions and attitudes of people towards migration is culturally embedded and it is strongly linked to the long established tradition of the society. Hence, the determinants of migration and perceptions of people towards migration and migrants are different in all the three study sites.

#### **5.2.3.1. Perception towards Migration in Jibasra Kebele**

In Jibasra *kebele*, unlike in Agita and 02 *kebeles*, out-migration of labour is an accepted norm for the people. According to data from Jibasra *kebele*, fathers, sons, brothers and relatives often migrate altogether. One of my informant at Jibasra *kebele*, she is wife of a

migrant, informed that she prepared dry food for her husband by the time he went to Humera. Another key informant also stated that wives of the non-migrants urge their husbands to migrate and earn income like their fellow villagers. This is because migration in this area is a tradition and perceived positively by the society.

My informants told me that out-migration of labour is the norm and it is undertaken by both the poor and the better-off. Here, migration is pursued more as a means of securing additional income than as a way of ensuring survival. My field observation also indicates that many houses of the migrant households are roofed with corrugated iron sheet. As they informed me, these houses are constructed from the remittance obtained from out-migration.

An informant from Jibasra *kebele* described about the reasons for the increase of seasonal out-migration of labour in their village that last year and before last year, it was his colleagues and his elders who migrated for labour. By next year, his youngsters would qualify the age limit (15 and above) and would join him and this would increase the number. Thus, migration in this area is a matter of age and there is quite a positive attitude towards the practice of migration. Children often migrate with adult family members as they are socialised into a culture of migration. As one qualifies for that particular age limit, he has to migrate. The local saying also reveals the positive impression of people towards migration by encouraging youngsters to migrate and earn income: 'A child who does not run at his early childhood is not useful.'

According to the household survey, more than 95 percent of the households support out-migration of labour and their reason to support is to earn additional income. An informant from Jibasra *kebele* stated that in September (it is the peak labour demanding time in Humera for sesame cutting and Eastern Showa for *teff* harvesting) no one stays behind in the village unless one is old, a child, a woman or disabled. Those who are above 15 years would not stay behind. An informant from Bahir Dar who came from Jibasra stated that

every year many people migrated to Humera and other places where work is available since it is the tradition of the villagers.

### **5.2.3.2. Perception towards Migration in 02 Kebele**

In 02 *kebele*, as opposed to Jibasra, there is a negative outlook towards out-migration. Migration is a coping strategy rather than just a means to earn additional income. It is undertaken by the poor, not the better-off households. My key informants from 02 *kebele* pointed out that villagers do not have a tradition of earning income from out-migration of labour. According to these informants, most people do not want to go away for work during slack season and even some people perceive out-migration of labour as worthless. For such people migration rather exposes to diseases.

According to an interview held with an expert for the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office, the society has a long established tradition of relying on food aid. For the last two decades the woreda is known for its food insecurity and the majority of people live on food aid. According to him, seeking for food aid is the norm whereas migration for work is a shame.

In the foregoing chapter, it has been stated that this woreda is identified as one of those food insecure and drought prone woredas of the region. It is also one of the Productive Safety Net Program targeted woredas of the region. Data from the Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office indicate that the number of people who are dependent on food aid for the last fourteen years has increased. This woreda has one of the largest food aid recipients of the country. In 2003, the number of food aid dependents had reached to 74,000. This time coincide with the country's largest food shortage period in which about 14 million people were exposed to food shortage at national level. The data also shows that in 02 *kebele* alone the number of people who have no other means of income than food aid is 468. In spite of the poverty and food insecurity, people in this area have a negative outlook towards earning money by engaging in the off-farm wage employment activity.

During the FGD, participants also revealed that an individual who migrates for work either seasonally or permanently has given lower status and reputation not only to himself but to his family. In an interview made with an expert for the Amhara Region Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau, it was learnt that people in the *woreda* have bad reputation towards migration and resettlement. According to him, although the poverty and food insecurity of the people in the *woreda*, they are not willing to resettle in other areas and even those who resettled have returned.

One of the reasons for the negative view of migration in this area is possibly the negative impact of food aid. Although it is beyond the objective of this study to address the impacts of food aid on migration, the programming of assistance and the selection criteria for aid have important implications for migration of people. Food for work and the recent Productive Safety Net Program have particularly important implications for migration because they significantly restrict mobility. Food for work and Productive Safety Net Program has been implemented in the agricultural slack season. But this is the time when seasonal out-migration of labour is undertaken as a livelihood strategy of poor households.

According to the *Woreda* Food Security Desk Head, the Productive Safety Net Program is implemented for a successive of six months, starting from January to June. Thus, if an individual who has involved either in the public works or direct support of the Productive Safety Net Program left her/his residence, he/she will lose his/her former support. Moreover, if some one who has received aid left her/his residence for a period of time, s/he will be cancelled from the aid list. Thus, according to data from 02 *kebele* the negative impact of food aid outweighs its positive impact. The other possible reason for the negative impression towards migration is possibly due to unsuccessful experiences of returnee migrants.

### **5.2.3.3. Perception towards Migration in Agita Kebele**

Data from *Agita kebele* show that migration is predominantly perceived negatively by the majority of the people and taken as a last option. According to the data, although both the

poor and the non-poor households are undertaking seasonal out-migration of labour, still there is a negative outlook towards migration. An informant from Agita *kebele* described that his family including his wife do not allow him to go to other places for work. My informant, she is wife of a seasonal migrant, replied that her husband repeatedly migrate to Humera without the consent of her. Moreover, many of my informants do not support out-migration of people. This is closely related to the prevailing culture and perception of people towards migration. Here, out-migration of people is often associated with accident or death and not encouraged by the society.

#### **5.2.4. Availability of Job Opportunities**

One of the factors that attract people to migrate elsewhere in search of wage employment is the availability of job opportunities. The expansion of construction works in Bahir Dar town and the increment of daily wages have attracted many rural people to migrate to town. Moreover, the expansion of private commercial farms following EPRDF's privatization policy and the attractiveness of the payment appears to be another major pull factor of seasonal out-migration of labour.

Out of the total respondents, 26.1 percent are motivated to come to town because of the availability of job opportunities in town. According to informants from Bahir Dar, the expansion of construction works in the town and increment of wage has attracted many rural people to come to town. There is a flow of information about the availability of job in other areas. Earlier migrants tell the prevalence of job opportunities to their relatives and friends while they return home.

It is the interplay of all these factors that drive rural people to migrate seasonally for wage earning employment. My respondents agree that the volume of seasonal out-migration of labour has increased over the last five years. In an interview made with an expert for the Amhara Region Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, the rate of seasonal labour migration has increased over time. He stated that the desire for better living, land shortage, decrease in agricultural output, information from earlier migrants, better job opportunity, especially construction works in the town and increment of daily wage are

the major factors of migration that motivate rural people to move to urban and other areas.

### 5.3. The Stream of Out-Migration

Data from places of origin suggest that the stream of seasonal out-migration is largely undertaken from rural-rural than rural-urban. The major destination areas of seasonal out-migration of labour are rural areas of other region such as Humera, Eastern Showa, and Wollega. This is partly due to the availability of better payment, similarity of works, and earlier experiences and familiarity to these areas. According to this data, inter-regional labour migration is greater than the intra-regional one.

Table 5.11 reveals that in 02 *kebele*, 60.5 percent migrate to rural areas and out of this, 57.9 percent migrate to rural areas of other region and 2.6 percent migrate to other rural areas of the region. 36.8 percent migrate to urban areas of the region or outside the region. In Jibasra, 88.5 percent migrate to rural area of other region whereas 11.4 percent migrate to urban areas of the region. Data from Agita suggest that 56.1 percent migrate to rural areas of other region while those who migrate to urban areas represent 31.7 percent. Out of the total out-migrants of the three *kebeles*, none of them migrates to Addis Ababa and the majority migrates to rural areas of other region.

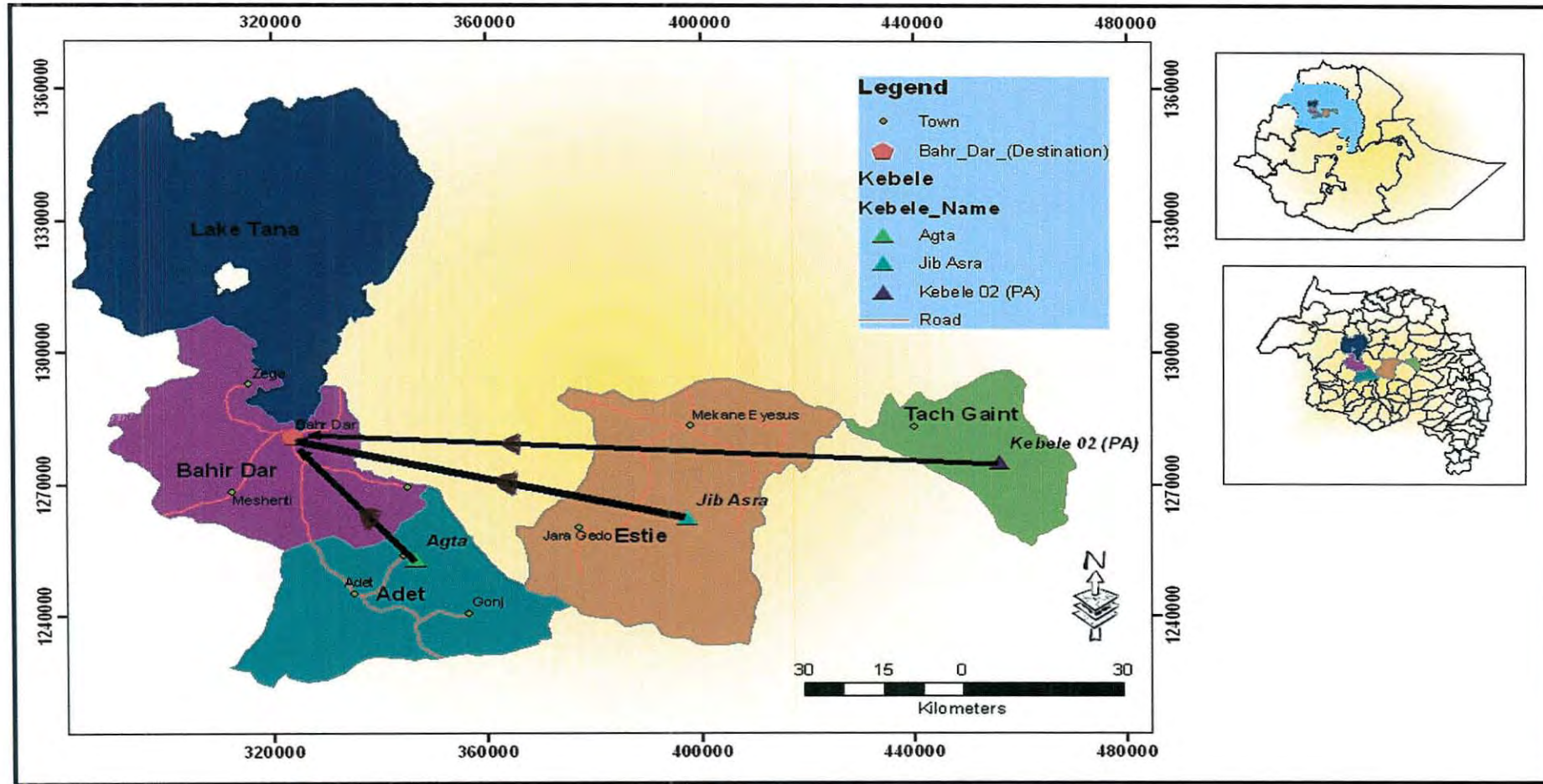
Table 5.11: Destination of Migration.

Destination	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Urban area of this woreda	–	–	1	1.6	–	–
Other urban area of this region	6	15.8	–	–	–	–
Urban area of other region	1	2.6	–	–	1	2.4
Bahir Dar	7	18.4	6	9.8	12	29.3
Addis Ababa	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other rural area of this region	1	2.6	–	–	–	–
Rural area of other region	22	57.9	54	88.5	23	56.1
Others	1	2.6	–	–	5	12.2
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Figure 5.6: Migration Direction to Bahir Dar Town (the thickness shows the volume of migration and the arrows show the direction of flow).

### Migration Direction Map



Source: GIS and Remote Sensing Lab, Addis Ababa University, Science Faculty.

#### **5.4. Migration Experiences**

To have a better understanding of the migration experiences of seasonal migrants, respondents were asked the number of earlier visit to Bahir Dar town. 70.1 percent said they came here for the first time and 29.9 percent had earlier experience to the town. They were also asked to specify the places visited before coming to Bahir Dar. Out of those who have experienced earlier migration to other places, other than Bahir Dar, 20 individuals had migrated to Eastern Showa, followed by 14 individuals to Humera, 4 to Mettema and 2 each to Wollega and Jimma whereas 27 individuals do not have experience of migration. Thus, most of them have earlier experiences of out-migration either to the same place or to other areas.

#### **5.5. Place of Preferences for Migration and Residence**

Seasonal migrants were asked about place of preference for future migration and permanent residence. 97.1 percent of the respondents in Bahir Dar prefer source areas (rural). This is mainly because of the rise of cost of living, absence of regular job and the bad living condition in the town.

Many of the informants said that urban life is not convenient for people like them who used to come seasonally. Because they cannot find job regularly and sometimes they go to bed without food. They informed that the living cost in town is high and as a result couldn't save enough money. The living condition in town, which will be discussed in detail later, is extremely bad, especially their sleeping room, which expose them to many diseases. According to informants, their daily expenditure is getting higher because they have to pay for floor rent, buy water, and for toilet. Their saving rate is minimal because the cost of living in town has increased whereas their daily wages remain very low.

Respondents were also asked what advice they would give to friends and relatives at place of origin regarding migration to urban area. More than three-quarters of the respondents replied discouraging them to move to urban areas because life in town is

very difficult. About one-quarter of them responded encouraging them to move to urban areas because life is better in urban than rural areas. Out of the respondents, three-fourth of them described life in urban is difficult.

A key informant from Bahir Dar replied that he will advise to his friends and relatives in home area in order not to come to town. This is because town like Bahir Dar is not conducive for people like him who want to save and return home. According to him, although there are job opportunities with good payment, the living condition in the town is not suitable. Another informant stated that he came to Bahir Dar for its access to his home and to earn cash during the absence of agricultural work. But his best choice is Humera for the attractiveness of the payment there.

Respondents at place of origin were also asked whether they would choose seasonal out-migration of labour as a coping mechanism if they anticipate loss of food/production. In 02, Jibasra, Agita *kebeles*, out of the sampled households, those who agreed to migrate are 35, 66 and 43 percent, respectively. The places of preference provided by them are presented in the following table:

Table 5.12: Place of Preferences for Migration (Data at Places of Origin).

Places	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Eastern Showa	4	19.0	9	27.3	7	29.2
Humera	6	28.6	11	33.3	5	20.8
Mettema	1	4.8	2	6.1	3	12.5
Wollega	2	9.5	3	9.1	2	8.3
Bahir Dar	3	14.3	—	—	1	4.2
Addis Ababa	—	—	—	—	—	—
Others	5	23.8	8	24.2	6	25.0
Total	21	100.0	33	100.0	24	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

Table 5.12 shows that in 02 *kebele*, out of the respondents, those who chose Humera are 28.6 percent, other places outside of the suggested alternatives are 23.8 percent, and

Eastern Showa, Bahir Dar, Wollega, and Mettema were chosen by 19.0, 14.3, 9.5 and 4.8 percent, respectively. None of them chose Addis Ababa. In Jibasra *kebele*, Humera, Eastern Showa, Wollega, Mettema and other places were chosen by 33.3, 27.3, 9.1, 6.1 and 24 percent, respectively. None of them chose Bahir Dar and Addis Ababa as their preference. In Agita *kebele*, Eastern Showa, Humera, Mettema, Wollega, Bahir Dar and other places were chosen by 29.2, 20.8, 12.5, 8.3, 4.2 and 25.0 percent, respectively.

Respondents were also asked why they chose this place as their preferences. The stated reasons were attractiveness of the payment, accessibility, conduciveness of weather, availability of accommodation, earlier experience and familiarity.

They migrated to Eastern Showa for *teff* harvesting and stayed from September to November and Wollega for coffee picking after the end of the agricultural harvest season at home. The FGD in Jibasra and Agita kebeles suggest that formerly people chose to migrate to Eastern Showa and Wollega than Humera for fear that the prevalence of diseases in Humera. It was also stated that, nowadays, the pattern of seasonal out-migration of labour has changed from Wollega to Humera and Eastern Showa. This is mainly because of the better payment in Humera and Eastern Showa than Wollega.

A key informant from Bahir Dar has a plan to migrate to Eastern Showa for the next time. According to him, in spite of the back breaking job in Eastern Showa, he insists on migrating there. This is mainly for the very reasons that the attractiveness of the payment, his earlier experience and familiarity to the area, the conduciveness of weather and availability of accommodation. Another informant from Bahir Dar also stated that for a seasonal migrant like him, Eastern Showa is more favorable place because of the conduciveness of the climate and the availability of accommodation like food and shelter.

Another informant from Bahir Dar has a plan to go to Humera by the coming September. This is mainly because the payment in Humera is attractive with less work load. He stated that one can able to earn a better income by working for two effective weeks at Humera

than working three or more months in other places. According to him, working in Humera is risk full and migrants move there taking options of dying or living. In Humera, in addition to the hostility of the temperature, there are a number of deadly diseases.

The FGD in Agita *kebele* informed that migrants often prefer to migrate to Humera and Metemma for better payment and short duration of stay to arrive timely for their agricultural work at home. If some one went to Wollega or Jimma for coffee picking, he could only earn up to 500 Birr within three months whereas in Humera one could earn a minimum of 1,000 Birr within a month time.

The place of preference by the majority of migrants tends to be rural areas than urban areas. This is mainly due to the fact that the similarity of works at destination, the better payment, familiarity and earlier experience to these places, and availability of accommodation. In spite of the hostile temperature, prevalence of deadly diseases, and the risk full environment in Humera, many of them still prefer this place for their future migration. This is because of the attractiveness of the payment, information flow from successful returnees, the short duration of stay (not more than a month time) to arrive home for harvesting time and their earlier experience and familiarity to the area.

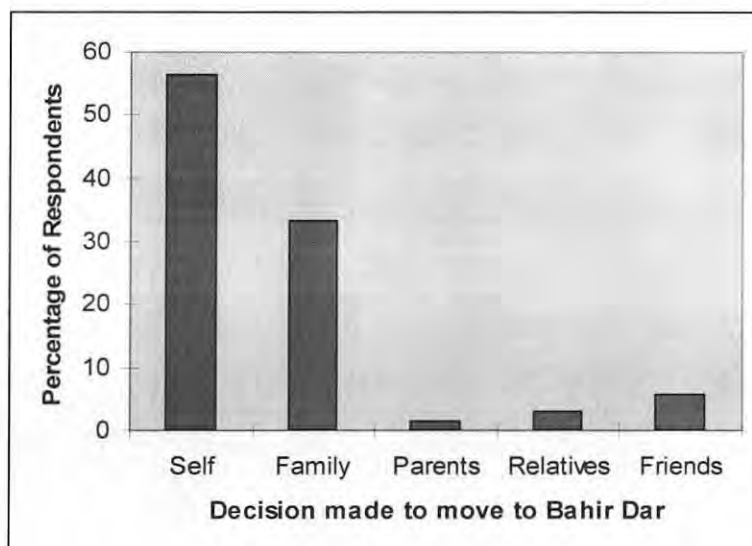
#### **5.6. Who Made the Decision to Migrate?**

Seasonal migrants were asked about how decision is made to migrate to other places for wage earning employment. Figure 5.7 reveals that 56.5 percent of the respondents migrate by their own decision and 33.3 percent migrate after discussion with their families. Thus, the data suggest that some of the respondents discuss with their families, but the decision to migrate is often determined by the migrant himself. Many of my informants replied that their families know their whereabouts.

An informant from Agita *kebele* who has experienced seasonal out-migration stated that he does not reveal information about his intention to migrate. This is mainly for fear that

his family would not allow him to do so as out-migration is usually associated with accidents and risks at destination. Thus, he made an independent decision to migrate without telling his family.

Figure 5.7: Who made decision to move to Bahir Dar?



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

The FGD in Jibasra *kebele* suggests that the duration of stay at destination is known and thus there is often a discussion within the family to decide who would migrate, where, with whom, and who should stay behind. It was also revealed that there are cases in which children migrate without the consent of their families. Here, the decision to migrate is usually taken more by the family and less by the individual. This is mainly correlated to the fact that migration in this area is culturally accepted and perceived positively.

Conversely, in 02 and Agita *kebeles*, there is less often family discussion before migration of family members and the decision to migrate is more often made by the individual himself but less often by the household. This is largely attributed to the long established outlook of the community that migration is often associated with some kinds of accidents and risks.

Table 5.13: Who made the decision to migrate?

The decision to migrate	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Self	24	72.7	7	17.9	32	88.9
Family	8	24.2	32	82.1	4	11.1
Friends	1	3.0	–	–	–	–
Total	33	100.0	39	100.0	36	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

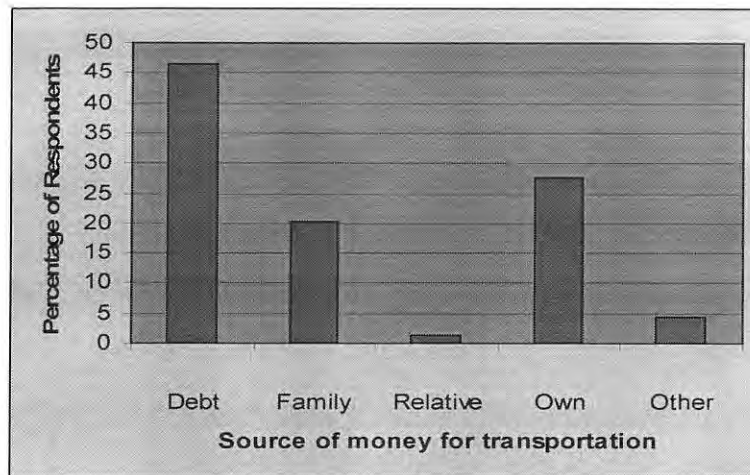
### 5.7. Remittances Management and the Decision to Use It

The decision to use the remittances differs from place to place. In 02 *kebele*, there is less often discussion within family how to use the remittances and it is more often determined by the migrant member himself. In about 70 percent of the households, the decision to use the remittance is determined by the migrant himself who brought the money. In Jibasra *kebele*, the decision about how to use the remittances is more often made through family discussion. According to the data from Jibasra *kebele*, in more than 80 percent of the households the decision to use the remittances is made through discussion among the whole family. In Agita *kebele*, about 66 percent of the households, the decision to use the remittances is more often taken by the migrant member himself and there is less discussion among family members.

### 5.8. Source of Money for Transportation

According to data from Bahir Dar (destination), the sources of money for transportation are debt, family, and own saving. Figure 5.8 shows that out of the respondents, 46.4 percent cover their transport cost through debt, 27.5 from own saving, and 20.3 from their family. Thus, the cost of transport for migration is more often covered from debt than other sources.

Figure 5.8: Source of Money for Transportation (Data from Bahir Dar Town).



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

But there are cases in which families cover the initial expenses of migration. An informant from Bahir Dar stated that when he first went to Eastern Showa his family covered the costs of transportation and money required for buying a sickle.

The data from places of origin also reveal that the source of money for transportation is more often obtained from debt. As presented in Table 5.14, in 02 *kebele* 63.6 percent, in Jibasra *kebele* 59.0 percent, and in Agita *kebele* 61.1 percent of the transportation cost was covered from indebted money.

Table 5.14: Source of Money for Transportation at Places of Origin.

Source	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Debt	21	63.6	23	59.0	22	61.1
Family	5	15.2	9	23.1	5	13.9
Relatives	–	–	–	–	1	2.8
Own	7	21.2	7	17.9	8	22.2
Total	33	100.0	39	100.0	36	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

### **5.9. When and How Often Does Seasonal Migration Take Place?**

Seasonal migration of labour is often undertaken during the agricultural slack period at home and the peak labour demand time at destination. According to earlier study by Wood (1983), each year between October and December there has been seasonal migration of farmers from Gojjam and Gondar into coffee growing areas seeking for employment opportunities. One of the reasons is that these areas produce only one crop a year, which is harvested in September and October (ibid). It is a very common event that people in the rural areas migrate to other areas during the off-seasons to find employment and return when there is a high demand for labour in the rural areas.

In order to have a better understanding about the time in which seasonal migration of labour is undertaken in the study area, it is important to have some hint about the agricultural calendar in which the major farming activities are practiced. But, the months in which the agricultural activities are practiced in the region vary from one area to another depending on the type of crops grown and the prevailing weather in that area and may not be similar across all places. It is rather to indicate the peak and slack farming periods of the study area. Thus, the agricultural peak period is from June to November whereas the agricultural slack period is from December to February.

Table 5.15: Major Agricultural Activities by Months.

Major Agricultural Activities	Months
Plowing (Land Preparation)	March-May
Sowing	June-July
Weeding	July-Aug.
Harvesting	Sep.-Nov.
Threshing	Nov.-Jan.

Source: Researcher's own knowledge

Data from the household survey at places of origin indicate that seasonal out-migration is undertaken during the farming slack season of the village. Moreover, the movement is largely determined by the peak labour demanding time of the destination. The duration of

stay at destination ranges from 1-5 months. Since the major destination of seasonal migrants in the study area is rural areas, predominantly Humera and Eastern Showa, their movement is timing to coincide with the peak labour demanding time of these areas. Although there are people who repeatedly migrate to the same farm or different places at different periods and for various activities, the majority reportedly migrate in September. This time coincide with the *teff* harvesting period in Eastern Showa and sesame cutting period in Humera. On the other hand, the major agricultural works available at home by this time is harvesting.

Table 5.16 shows that in 02 *kebele*, 50 percent of seasonal out-migration of labour is undertaken from September to November, 23.7 percent migrate between December to February, 15.8 percent of them migrate between March to May and 10.5 percent between June and August. In Jibasra *kebele*, 68.9 percent migrate from September to November, 16.4 percent between December and February, 1.6 percent migrate between March and May and 13.1 percent migrate between June and August. In Agita *kebele*, 56.1 percent migrate from September to November, 19.5 percent migrate between December and February, 9.8 percent migrate from March to May and 14.7 percent migrate between June and August.

Table 5.16: Duration of Seasonal Out-Migration (Data from Places of Origin).

Periods	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Sept.-Nov.	19	50.0	42	68.9	23	56.1
Dec.-Feb.	9	23.7	10	16.4	8	19.5
Mar.-May	6	15.8	1	1.6	4	9.8
Jun.-Aug	4	10.5	8	13.1	6	14.7
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

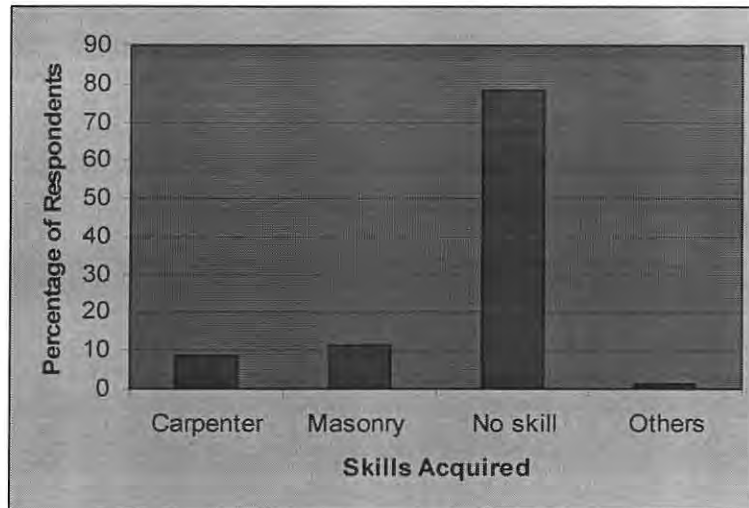
Source: Field Survey, 2007.

### 5.10. Skills Acquired by Migrants

The field survey in Bahir Dar indicates that the skill acquired by migrants at destination is negligible. Figure 5.9 reveals that out of the respondents, more than three-quarters of

them do not acquire any skill. 11.6 percent of the respondents acquire skill related to masonry works and 8.7 percent acquire a skill related to carpenter. As they are returnee migrants who stay in town for short periods they have no the opportunity to acquire new skills.

Figure 5.9: Skills Acquired among Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

The data at places of origin also suggest that seasonal migrants who have acquired new skills are negligible. A key informant from 02 *kebele* reported that he has acquired operating tractor and learned Arabic and Tigrigna language while he was in Humera. The majority of seasonal migrants move to rural areas where the major activity is farming, similar to the work at home. Thus, the similarity of work between sending and receiving areas and their short duration of stay at destination are the possible reasons for not acquiring new skills.

## 5.11. SUMMARY

In the foregoing parts, the demographic, social and economic characteristics of migrants have been discussed. Migrants, in the study area, tend to be young adult, single and educated. Both the poor and better-off households have migrant members.

The factors of migration that motivate people to migrate seasonally for wage earning employment are also discussed. In addition to the economic reason, social networks and information flow are important determinants of migration. The long established tradition of the people towards earning income from migration is also another important factor of migration. Moreover, the availability of employment opportunities in other areas and looking other successful returnee migrants are the factors that drive rural people to migrate seasonally for wage earning employment.

The stream of seasonal out-migration is predominantly carried out from rural to rural. The majority migrate to rural areas of other region namely to Humera and Eastern Showa. Most of them have earlier experiences of out-migration, either to the same place or in other areas. Regarding preferences of future out-migration and permanent residence, more than 90 percent of them prefer rural areas to urban areas. Migrants usually stay at destination from 1-5 months and the majority migrate in September as this time is the peak labour demanding time at the destinations whereas the agricultural activity at home demands relatively less labour that can be handled by other family member. Due to short duration of stay at destination, the skill acquired by migrants is negligible.

## Chapter Six: Impacts of Migration

In this chapter, the possible impacts of migration, major purposes of the remittances, the living and working conditions of migrants and the challenges they face in the host environment will be discussed. Both the positive and negative aspects of migration to the place of origin, destination and the migrants themselves will also be identified.

### 6.1. To Place of Origin

The impacts of migration in general, and seasonal migration, in particular, have been a widely held concern and remained a matter of dispute. Hence, there are two arguments whether or not migration of labor is beneficial or harmful for the livelihood of people. The possible negative and positive impacts of migration largely depend on the characteristics of migrants, the timing of migration and duration of stay, the structure of the household, and the amount of remittances investment at home.

#### 6.1.1. Impacts on Agriculture

Farmers usually migrate for seasonal wage earning employment during the slack period and return home for the peak agricultural period. This type of migration is also undertaken when the agricultural work at home demands less labour, timing their movement to coincide with the peak labour demanding time at destination.

Migration is perceived as a process of labor extraction that results in decline of agricultural productivity, including food production. However, seasonal out-migration of labour has less effect on the agricultural output in the study area as migrants return home during the peak farming periods. Tesfaye (2007, 2) in this case stated that:

*In fact, in this type of migration, which is the norm rather than the exception in rural Ethiopia, migrants return home during peak farming activities. Indeed, such*

*migration takes place in most parts of Ethiopia because peasants incur a high opportunity cost if they abandon their farmland.*

As stated in the preceding discussion, data from the places of origin show that it is during September in which the majority migrates to Eastern Showa for *teff* harvesting, Humera and Mettema for sesame cutting. This time coincide with the harvesting period at home. According to informants and the participants of FGD, the most critical time for their farm is sowing. Once the sowing period is over, other agricultural works can be managed by other family members. Moreover, those who migrated to Humera and Mettema stated that, since they only stay for a month time, they can arrive home for harvesting time. Although the labour demand by this time is getting less, it does not mean that there is no any agricultural work at home. Many of the informants from destination and the places of origin stated that people who work on migrants' field in their absence is family members. The household survey, as presented in Table 6.1, suggests that people who work on migrants' field in their absence is more often other family members who stay behind.

Table 6.1: People Who Works on Migrants' Field during their Absence.

People who work on migrants' field	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Relative(s)	1	3.0	2	5.1	1	2.8
Family	30	90.9	37	94.9	35	97.2
Other	2	6.1	-	-	-	-
Total	33	100.0	39	100.0	36	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

My informants from Bahir Dar informed that they came to town for its access so as to return home timely for the agricultural work. According to them, at this time the agricultural work at home demands less labour that can be managed by other family members. A key informant from 02 *kebele* pointed out that his absence does not have impact on agriculture works at home as his land holdings is small that can be handled by other family members that stay behind. Another informant from Jibasra *kebele* stated that seasonal out-migration does not create any problem upon agricultural works because

wives and other family members can handle it. My informant from Agita *kebele* stated that since many of them return soon and able to arrive for harvesting, it has less impact on agricultural works at home.

The opportunity cost of out-migration of labour for wage employment is greater than what they would have incurred from agriculture. Some of them put money to their wives to employ daily labourers in case there appears labour shortage. My informant from 02 *kebele* informed that while he went to Humera, he left up to 200 Birr for his wife so as to employ labourers provided that she could not handle by herself. According to him, he earns better payment from out-migration than what he would have obtained here. My key informant from Agita *kebele* also stated that he usually goes to Harar after sowing and the remaining agricultural work is undertaken by his wife. According to him, the most critical agricultural work is sowing whereas the remaining activities are less difficult that can be handled by other family members.

There are people who migrate three times annually. In the FGD conducted in Jibasra *kebele*, in July they move to Humera for sesame weeding and return home by the end of August. They move for sesame cutting to the same place by the mid of September and stay until mid-October. This time they only stay for a month time. They return home timely for harvesting. After they accomplish their harvest they went to cash crop areas like Wollega and Jimma for coffee picking. This time they stay for about two up to three months. Beginning from March they would engage in their agricultural work. It was stated that there are people who migrate to Eastern Showa for *teff* harvesting in September and stay until end of November.

Thus, as the data presented above suggest that seasonal migration of this type has minimal negative impact on agricultural output on the sending areas. This is due to the fact that migrants return home soon and arrive timely for the labour peak agricultural season. This type of migration is carried out when the agricultural work at home requires less labour that can be handled by other family member. In addition to this, since the

majority of migrants are young farmers who are landless or the size of household holdings is small that does not require many labourers makes the negative impacts of seasonal out-migration less critical. In a study conducted by Beyene (1983) and Worku (2006) also confirm that the impacts of seasonal out-migration on the agricultural output of the sending areas are very negligible.

### **6.1.2. Impacts on Household**

The impacts of out-migration of labour on the households have remained a matter of dispute. Its possible negative and positive impacts are complex and context specific which depends on the characteristics of those who move and stay behind, the earnings obtained at destination and the amount of remittances investment at home, and the timing of movement that coincide with other activities at home (Kothari, 2002). In the following sub-sections, attempts are made to identify both the positive and negative aspects of seasonal out-migration of labour on the households. Before that, the number of households who have experienced seasonal migration of labour from the three *kebeles* will be presented.

Data from places of origin show that seasonal out-migration of labour for wage earning employment has become one of the livelihood strategies of many rural households. Accordingly, in 02, Jibasra and Agita *kebeles*, out of the sampled households, 55, 78 and 65.5 percent of the households have one or more family members who have experienced seasonal out-migration of labour, respectively. It is important to note that since each study *kebele* is selected purposively for its experience of high magnitude of seasonal out-migration of labour, the figure presented here only illustrates the selected *kebele*. Nevertheless, the household survey data for each particular *kebele* suggest that this type of migration has considerably become a substantial aspect of the livelihood strategy of many rural households.

### 6.1.2.1. Positive Impacts

The positive impact of out-migration of labour to households' livelihoods is determined by the amount of remittances investment at home. During the FGD conducted at destination and places of origin and as stated by informants, seasonal out-migration of people has brought many benefits to many rural households. It was pointed out that seasonal out-migration of labour enables people to repay fertilizer debt timely and cover the advance payment for it, buy cattle, pay tax, construct corrugated iron sheet house, buy modern clothes, cover festival expenditure, educate children, cover family's medical expenditure, start small business, and buy water pump for irrigation.

In the preceding discussion, it was stated, nowadays, many of young farmers who have already established households are landless and only getting farmland through sharecropping basis. But the amount of output they received is insufficient to sustain households' livelihoods. Seasonal out-migration of labour for wage earning employment is, therefore, serving as one of the normal livelihood strategy often pursued by the rural poor to supplement their income from agriculture.

The following case example from Jibasra *kebele* may give a clear illustration how migration and the remittances obtained from it plays a crucial role in improving households' livelihoods:

*My name is Nega Agidew. I am forty five years old. I am living in Jibasra kebele. I have four children. Ten years ago, I went to Wollega for coffee picking and earned 400 Birr. In another time, I went to Showa borrowing money from local money lenders and earned 800 Birr. I paid back my debt and bought consumable goods to my family. In the third trip, I went to Humera for sesame cutting by borrowing money from local money lenders and earned 1,400 Birr and this time I bought ox after repaying my debt. But my ox died and bought another one by borrowing money from money lenders. To pay my debt, I should have to migrate any more. So, I went to Humera by borrowing money and this time, I earned 2,500 Birr and repaid my debt. I went to Humera for another time and earned 2,800 Birr and bought ox and donkey. Last year, I went to Humera for sesame cutting and earned 2,600 Birr with which I constructed a house roofed with corrugated iron sheet.*

Similarly, the FGD in Agita also reveal that there are families who were poor some years back but now improved their well-being as a result of remittances. The participants stated that had it not migrated elsewhere and earned cash, how those landless young farmers would have led their life. They expressed the role of migration in alleviating the land shortage:

*If there had not been migration, we would have killed each other for land. The productivity of our land has decreased from time to time which has lost its potential to feed our family. So, if we had not migrated and earned cash from wage employment, we would not have sufficient income to sustain our family.*

Out-migration of labour and the earnings obtained from it has an important role in improving the well-being of migrants. An informant from Agita informed me that he was working in an individual farmer house employed as a farmer with annual payment of only 100 Birr. But four years ago, he was advised by his friends and went to Humera. He earns some amount of money and able to buy an ox. He then after migrated to Humera every year and now he has built a house and thus improved his well being. Another informant from 02 *kebele* stated that he bought an ox with the money he earns from migration. But he will not buy additional oxen as he has no sufficient land to till. So he invests it on household consumption and buying sheep.

A young landless farmer from Jibasra expressed the role of migration to his family by comparing his income from farming and migration:

*Had it not been for shortage of land, the income derived from agriculture is greater than the earning from migration. Since I am landless and rent it on the basis of share cropping, the income I earn from farming is less than that of the wage from seasonal migration. Suppose that I got 4 quintals from one timad of land, I have to give half of it to the land owner. Besides, I have to cover the cost of inputs from my own share. Had there been no income earned from migration, I would have sold what is left of my share to pay the fertilizer debt. Therefore, seasonal migration of labour has enabled me to save grains for household consumption and relieved us from expenditure for purchasing grains. I also cover the cash required for the advance payment of fertilizer debt from the money that I earned from migration. If I hadn't migrated seasonally elsewhere and earned income, I would have indebted money with local money lenders. Moreover, I would have imprisoned like other farmers who have failed to repay their fertilizer debt. Now, I am not only free from incurring any debt but also I am able to pay fertilizer debt and cover the advance payment for it. I will never give up migrating elsewhere until my well-being is getting improved.*

Thus, in addition to alleviating the problem of land shortage and landlessness, the remittances obtained from migration contribute in improving the financial, natural, social and human capital of a household. My key informant from Bahir Dar who came from Jibasra *kebele* stated that he earned 1,000 Birr during sesame weeding and 1,400 Birr during sesame cutting in Humera. Out of this money, he contributed his father's share of 500 Birr to buy water pump with other nine villagers. According to him, he bought one bull with 700 Birr, gave 100 Birr to his young brother who attends his traditional education far from home and put 100 Birr for his transport expenses.

There are cases in which households who has nothing some years back now improve their life and able to hold assets by earning cash from Humera and Metemma. One of my informants from Agita *kebele* stated that before migration, since he had no oxen to till his land, he used to rent his land for others who own oxen. He went to Humera during sesame weeding and stayed from July to August. He returned home with the cash he earned there. In September, he went back again to Humera for sesame cutting. During this time, he stayed only for a month. He constructed a house and bought oxen with the money he earned from migration. After buying his own oxen, he began to till his land.

In an interview held with an expert for the Regional Land Administration and Use Authority, it was learnt that in rural areas of the region, many farmers are unemployed because they have no sufficient land to use their potential effectively and hence the time required for agricultural activity is less. Therefore, young farmers need to migrate elsewhere and look for job to earn cash. They can also acquire new values and skills at the destination.

The other impact of the out-migration of family member is in smoothing the household food consumption at home, which in turn, improves households' food security. Many of my informants stated that their absence would contribute in decreasing the number of consumers in the household. Tesfaye (2007) in this case stated that: 'peasants undertake

seasonal migration as a coping strategy to reduce their household size temporarily (the number of mouths to feed) as well as to earn and remit money from income they obtain from farm and off-farm activities in recipient areas.'

Given the scarcity of farmland and landlessness in the area, added with the lower agricultural productivity and absence of employment opportunities, what would have been the fate of these people, if they had not migrated elsewhere and earned income? Seasonal out-migration of labour for wage earning employment is, therefore, an important component of the livelihood strategy of the rural poor so as to diversify their livelihood portfolios and supplement their income they obtain from agriculture.

#### **6.1.2.2. Negative Impacts**

In addition to its positive role, out-migration of labour has negative impacts on the households at places of origin. There are cases in the study area in which migrants brought back transmittable disease (cholera) and the whole family died of it. Moreover, out-migration of a family member creates burden on those who stay behind. A woman, wife of a seasonal migrant from Agita *kebele*, stated how she is burdened during the absence of her husband:

*Since there is no male child who has able to manage the family at home, I have suffered in taking care of cattle from robbery. I engage the whole day at agricultural work and pass the whole night in taking care of our property from theft. Thus, I was burdened with many responsibilities.*

The other negative impact of out-migration of labour is that it aggravates the inequality between the migrant and non-migrant households. Since migration option is not open to all, women and the elderly are excluded. As a result, households that experience labour constraint and headed by female are not beneficiaries. The availability of labour becomes more critical when out-migration of labour coincide with the peak labour demanding time at destination and the agricultural works at home. Hence, large family size becomes an advantage so as to ensure labour availability for agricultural tasks at home, and to facilitate diversification into off-farm activities, which in turn, may exacerbate the inequality between the migrant and non-migrant households. As it was revealed during

the FGD and stated by informants, households that have sufficient plot of land and male family members have benefited more from seasonal out-migration of labour and the remittances obtained from it. This is because having male children alone without holding enough farmland means that the remittances would be invested on purchasing grain for household consumption rather than investing on other assets and migration is not a major break through for such a household.

## 6. 2. Major Purposes of Remittances

In order to understand the role of migration for the livelihoods of rural poor, it is better to understand how remittance is invested at home. Respondents were asked how they are using their remittance earned from migration in their return to home. Accordingly, data from destination indicates that, out of the respondents, the desire to repay debt (94.2 percent), buy clothes (88.4 percent), and cover festival expenditure (62.3 percent), constitute the three important uses of the remittances (see Table 6.2). Those who reported to buy cattle and construct/improve house were 8.7 and 4.3 percent. Other purposes of the remittances such as educating children and buying watch, radio, tape recorder were stated each by 2.9 percent of the respondents and 4.3 percent respondents use their earnings for other purposes. But, none of the respondents has invested their earnings for starting new business. This is mainly due to the fact that the rise of cost of living in the town and the increase in expenditure, which in turn, lower the rate of saving by migrants to start new business.

Table 6.2: Major Purposes of Remittances among Respondents in Bahir Dar.  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Earnings Usage	Frequency	Percent
Pay debt	61	88.4
Buy clothes	65	94.2
Cover festival expenditure	43	62.3
Purchase food grains	17	39.1
Buy cattle	6	8.7
Construct/improve house	3	4.3
Educate children	2	2.9
Buying watch, radio, tape recorder	2	2.9
Start new business	-	-
Other	3	4.3

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

The household survey data from 02 kebele reveal that, out of the sampled households, 81.8, 72.7 and 51.5 percent use the remittances for purchasing food grains, repaying debt and buying clothes, respectively. Other purposes of the remittances such as buying cattle, covering festival expenditure, constructing/improving their houses, educating their children, and buying watch, radio, tape recorder 33.3, 24.2, 21.2, 15.2, 9.1 percent, respectively. None of them has started new business using the remittances (see Table 6.3). Accordingly, the three important uses of the remittances are purchasing food grains, repaying debt and buying clothes.

Table 6.3: Major Purposes of Remittances at Places of Origin.  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Earnings usage	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Purchase food grains	27	81.8	3	7.7	2	5.6
Pay debt	24	72.7	31	79.5	34	94.4
Buy clothes	22	51.5	27	69.2	23	63.9
Buy cattle	11	33.3	14	35.9	9	25.0
Cover festival expenditure	8	24.2	13	33.3	7	19.4
Construct/improve house	7	21.2	9	23.1	5	13.9
Educate children	5	15.2	6	15.4	3	8.3
Buying watch, radio, tape recorder	3	9.1	5	12.8	3	8.3
Start new business	—	—	—	—	1	2.8
Others	4	12.1	3	7.7	4	11.1

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

As presented in Table 6.3, in Jibasra kebele, out of the sampled households, the three most important purposes of the remittances are repaying debt, purchasing clothes and buying cattle responded by 79.5, 69.2 and 35.9 percent, respectively. The other purposes of the remittances were identified as covering festival expenditure, constructing/improving house, educating children, buying watch, radio, tape recorder, and purchasing food grains by 33.3, 23.1, 15.4, 12.4 and 7.7 percent, respectively. None of the respondents has started new business using the remittances. According to the household survey data from Agita kebele, the three most important uses of the remittances are repaying debt, purchasing clothes, and buying cattle (see Table 6.3).

Remittances are also invested to cover festival expenditure, construct or improve houses, educate children, and purchase other consumable goods.

The following case of *Ato Misganaw Haile* from *Jibasra kebele* may suggest how remittances are invested by migrants at places of origin:

*I went to Showa two times where I stayed for three months, from September to November. In the first trip, I earned 700 Birr with which I bought clothes for me and my family, covered festival expenditure, and paid fertilizer debt. In the second trip, I earned 1,200 Birr with which I constructed a corrugated house for my parents. The rise in the income of the second trip was the result of an increment of wage which in turn was caused by the shift of labour to Humera and the resultant lack of labour.*

An informant from *Agita kebele* described that in September he went to Humera for sesame cutting and stayed for a month. He earned 1,100 Birr with which he bought three sheep, clothes for his family, tape recorder and other items like sugar and coffee. Another informant from *Jibasra kebele* stated that he went to Eastern Showa for *teff* harvest. He stayed there for three months, from September to November. In his first trip, he earned 1,100 Birr with which he bought a bull, two goats and clothes for himself and his family. During his second trip, he earned 1,700 Birr and constructed a corrugated house to his parents.

During the FGD conducted in 02 *kebele*, participants stated that the majority of people migrate either to Humera or Metemma. But there are successful and unsuccessful migrants. Some migrants improve their well-being by buying oxen and constructing a house while others face risks of injury and diseases.

A middleman from Bahir Dar stated that there are people who bought water pump using the cash earned from Humera and Eastern Showa. According to him, there are many people whom he knows very well who have started business activities like petty trading using the remittances. Many of my informants from Bahir Dar explained that they constructed a house roofed with a corrugated iron sheet for themselves and for their families using remittances earned from Humera and Eastern Showa. According to these informants, it is a

very common practice to buy cattle. The informants stated that the income they are obtaining now in Bahir Dar town is much lower than what they were earning in Humera or Eastern Showa. This is mainly because of the rise of costs of living and higher expenditure in town. Since their earnings and saving rate is lower while they are in Bahir Dar than other places, the amount of remittances invested at home is very small.

### **6.3. The Impacts of Migration on Destination**

Although the impact of migration on the host environment is still debatable, in the following section, I will present both the positive and negative impacts of labour migrants to the destination.

#### **6.3.1. Positive Impacts**

Labour migrants have contributed to the development of the host environment by overcoming a seasonal labour bottleneck and thus enabling national product to increase (Devereux et al. 2003; Ellis, 2003). Rural-urban labour migrants have considerably played an important role in supplying cheap labour to the town. The majority of these people are working in the low paid job fields of the town such as construction activities, domestic works, *chat* cultivation, and other manual employment activities in which other urban residents are less interested to participate. Thus, the largest percentage of the manual labour demand of the town has been supplied by migrant labourers.

According to information from contractors in the town, it is rural-urban labour migrants who have been contributing the largest share of labour demands to the construction activities of the town. In an interview made with urban residents about the impacts of rural-urban migration to the town, it was stated that labour migrants have contributed to the development of the town. According to them, it is with these people cheap labour that most of the town's construction has built which would have otherwise been costly. A middleman from Bahir Dar stated that the volume of construction works in the town has expanded overtime and the major sources of labour are rural-urban migrants. Rural-urban labour migrants are contributing by providing cheap labour and remained the principal

source of labour supplier to the town. Thus, these people are playing greater role in the development of the town.

Figure 6.1: Migrant labourers working in a road construction.



Source: Photograph during the fieldwork.

### **6.3.2. Negative Impacts**

The negative impacts of rural-urban migration on the host environment include exerting pressure on urban infrastructure and social services, increasing urban unemployment and delinquency, and polluting the environment.

According to my informants from urban resident, it is rural-urban labour migrants who are polluting the town as they do not make use of toilet. He also blamed those service givers who are renting floor for labourers without furnishing their houses with lavatory services.

My informants from labourers also explained that they do not make use of toilet in order not to pay 0.10 cents for public toilets. They also stated that since they live in a floor rented room which is not equipped with toilet, they use vacant places of the town. One of my key informant replied that by the time he arrived in Bahir Dar town, he was suffering with lack of toilet because he did not know where the public toilet is found. Many of other labourers also share similar experiences. During the field survey, I also observed that many daily labourers were using open spaces of the town as a toilet, which in turn, has considerably polluted the area.

According to an expert from the Regional Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, it was learnt that rural-urban migrants exert impacts on urban social services like for example creating crowding effect on health services, water consumption, polluting the environment, and in spreading crime. Rural-urban migrants are also blamed as agents of transmittable disease. An informant from urban resident stated that last year there was a cholera epidemic in the town which was believed to be brought via labour migrants from Humera.

My informants from migrant labourers reported that some urban people complained about rural-urban labour migrants as if they came to town for additional income and consider them as labour competitors. It was also stated that some urban dwellers, especially the young have negative attitude towards labour migrants because they considered them as a burden to the town by creating unemployment and reducing the daily wage.

In an interview held with a police officer, it was found out that there are registered crimes committed by labour migrants in the town. They often fight each other and the main source of conflict is labour competition among them. But, the recorded data show the crime committed by migrants as a whole, and do not make distinction between the returnee and permanent migrants. My informants emphasized that it is those permanent migrants not the returnee one who commit crime in the town. The police officer also revealed that these people are not registered by the *kebele* and have no identity card.

Hence, if they face any accident, no one could help them and nobody knows whether these people are criminal or not.

Thus, data from informants and observation suggest that rural-urban labour migration has both positive and negative impacts on the host environment. The positive impacts of labour migration on the study area are providing cheap labour force to the labour demand of the town and overcoming labour shortages, which in turn, contribute to the development of the destination area. On the other hand, the negative impacts of labour migration include creating crowding effect on infrastructure and other services, polluting the environment, increasing unemployment and spreading crime.

#### **6.4. The Impacts of Migration on Migrants**

To have a better understanding of the impacts of migration on migrants, it is essential to identify the working and living conditions of labour migrants in the host environment. Thus, in the following section, the types of occupations they often engage, amount of income they earn, the challenges and risks they face at destination, and the type of items taken home in return trip will be presented.

##### **6.4.1. The Working and Living Conditions of Migrants at Destination**

###### **6.4.1.1. Occupation at Destination**

According to the field survey in Bahir Dar town, seasonal migrants engage in the informal services of manual works that does not require skills. They often engage in activities such as construction works, digging wells, *chat* cultivation, domestic works and loading and unloading activities. As shown in Table 6.4, 94.2 percent of the respondents engage in construction works, 56.9 percent work in digging wells, 30.4 percent engage in *chat* cultivation, 10.1 percent work in loading and unloading activities, 8.7 percent engage in domestic works and 4.3 percent involve in other activities.

Table 6.4: Type of Occupation Undertaken by Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Currently working on:	Frequency	Percent
Construction works	65	94.2
Loading and unloading	7	10.1
<i>Chat</i> cultivation	21	30.4
Domestic works	6	8.7
Digging wells	37	56.9
Others	3	4.3

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

A key informant from Bahir Dar stated about his job and the income he earned:

*Now I am working in construction works like digging well and mixing cement. I also work in the cultivation of chat. I earn 10-15 Birr per day and spend up to 6 Birr. Though the payment here is good but my expenditure is high and I couldn't save money as I want. When I decided to come here, I had had a plan to save up to 400 Birr in two months time. It is to cover the cash required for advance payment of fertilizer debt and for the cost of transport to go to Showa. But, I can not save money as I wish for lack of job regularly, and the rise in the cost of living. I will save up to 150 Birr within two months and return home by the end of March. This will cover the advance payment needed for fertilizer debt and my cost of travel to Showa.*

Figure 6.2: Migrant labourers waiting for daily job.



Source: Photograph during the fieldwork.

In the preceding discussion, it was stated that the major destinations of seasonal migration are rural areas where the main occupation is agricultural works. Data from the three study villages reveal that, although there are people who migrate for construction works to urban areas, seasonal migrants dominantly migrate for activities such as sesame cutting, *teff* harvesting, and coffee picking (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Type of Occupation at Destination (Data from places of Origin).

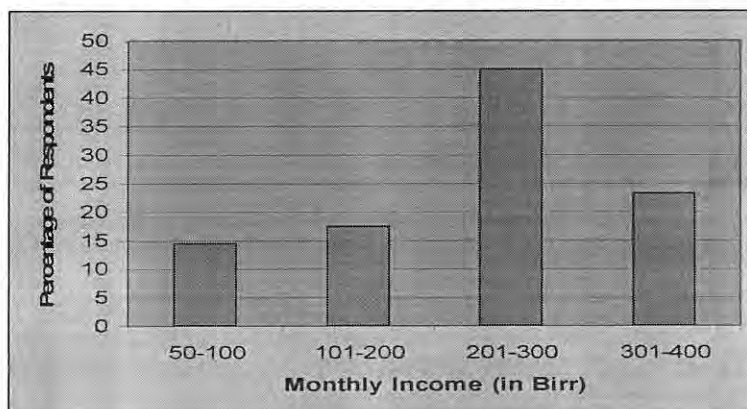
Occupations	Kebele Names					
	02		Jibasra		Agita	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Coffee picking	7	18.4	3	4.9	2	4.9
Sesame cutting	4	10.5	38	62.3	13	31.7
Cotton picking	1	2.6	-	-	-	-
Construction works	11	28.9	3	4.9	11	26.8
<i>Teff</i> harvesting	11	28.9	10	16.4	5	12.2
Sesame weeding	1	2.6	4	6.6	1	2.4
Others	3	7.9	3	4.9	9	22.0
Total	38	100.0	61	100.0	41	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

#### 6.4.1.2. Monthly Incomes of Migrants

The impacts of labour migration to households' economy as well as on migrants themselves depend on the amount of income earned at the destination. Table 6.1 reveals that 45 percent of the respondents monthly earn from 201 to 300 Birr. More than three-quarters of them earn an amount less than or equal to 300 Birr a month.

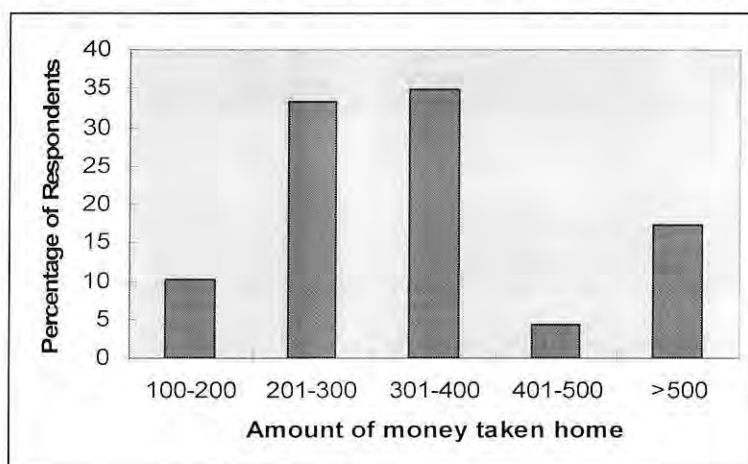
Figure 6.3: Monthly Incomes of Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar Town.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

In order to understand about the role of migration, it is better to know the amount of money and other items that will be taken home in a return trip. The availability of job, the amount of wage paid, the cost of living and other factors have important implication on the amount of money incurred. Figure 6.2 shows that, out of the respondents, 34.8 percent return home with money ranges between 301 and 400 Birr. 33.3 percent of the respondents take money home between 201 and 300 Birr. Those who take greater than 500 Birr represent 17.4 percent.

Figure 6.3: Amount of Money Taken Home in a Return Trip by Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar.



Source: Field Survey, 2007.

During the field survey, seasonal migrants in Bahir Dar were also asked if there are any items that will be taken home in return trip. Out of the total respondents, two-third of them agreed that they will take some kinds of items back home. The types of items taken home include consumable goods, clothes, farming implements, educational materials and household utensils.

The following case from Agita *kebele* may give some illustration about the working and living conditions of migrants at destination:

*As we group ourselves into four, employers assign us a 50 by 50 meter plot of cultivated land to be harvested on a contract basis. To accomplish the job timely, we work from dawn to dusk with a short lunch break. This type of job is back breaking. Our employers in Showa provide us food and shelter service. It is*

*mainly because of this that many of us prefer to go to Showa. We receive our payment as soon as we completed the contract and keep the money either with the employer or one of us. After finishing a certain cultivated land we will go to the next one. Some employers cut our payment without any reason. But this happens to be in some areas. Nowadays, employers in Showa come to the bus station at Addis Ababa and take labourers to their place. This is due to the fact that the prevalence of job opportunity in Humera with better payment which attracted most migrant labourers. In addition to this, the rise of the price of teff has contributed to the improvement of the payment for harvesting. Three years ago, the common price for harvesting a 50 by 50 meters plot of cultivated land was 30 Birr. But now it rises up to 160 Birr.*

#### **6.4.1.3. Challenges at Destination**

The difficulties and problems that migrants often face at destination include lack of shelter (housing), inability to get social services and amenities, absence of regular job, social discrimination, inability to get access to medical facilities, mistreatment and exploitation, harassment, exposure to illness, harshness of weather, and robbery. In addition to the above problems, migrants often face shortage of transport, especially in September (the peak labour demanding time at destination) and are also exposed to misleading information about the labour market in the destination area.

Data from Bahir Dar suggest that the major problems in which labour migrants often face are lack of shelter (housing), inability to get social services and amenities, the rise in the cost of living, lack of food and related consumable items, social discrimination, labour exploitation, harassment, exposure to illnesses such as malaria, typhoid, and asthmatic, and lack of access to medical facilities. Table 6.6 indicates that 92.8 percent of the respondents faced with problem of housing. Thus, lack of shelter (housing) is one of the serious problems that majority of labour migrants often faced upon arrival in Bahir Dar town. 83.6 percent of the respondents confronted with inability to get social services and amenities whereas 47.8 percent faced with lack of food and other related consumable items. 36.2 percent faced with inability to find job, 30.4 percent confronted social discrimination, 15.9 percent of the respondents faced labour exploitation and 10.1 percent faced with other problems.

Table 6.6: Problems and Difficulties Faced by Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar (at Destination).  
(Multiple Response is Possible)

Difficulties	Frequency	Percent
Lack of shelter (housing)	64	92.8
Labour exploitation	11	15.9
Social discrimination	21	30.4
Lack of food and related consumable items	33	47.8
Inability to get social services and amenities	56	83.6
Inability to find job	25	36.2
Others	7	10.1

Source: Field Survey, 2007.

The problem of housing is, therefore, found to be one of the most serious problems of labour migrants. Data from the survey and informants suggest that almost all of them are living in floor renting houses by paying 0.50 cents per night. These floor renting houses are found in *kebele* 6 and 12 where these areas are located close to the bus station. Aschalew (2006) confirms that one of the severe problems that labour migrants in Bahir Dar faced is lack of shelter and as a result they live in shanty floor renting houses located in *kebele* 4, 6 and 12. Informants reported that the number of people who are sleeping in one room exceeds 25 people and they do not know each other to identify who is who. During day time, the owner of the house is using this same room for selling local beer and *areqe*. Thus, the room is full of sniff and lack hygiene. The researcher also observed that such floor renting houses are suffocated and overcrowded by labour migrants. The low quality and poor hygienic conditions of these houses exposed labourers to various diseases.

Out of the total respondents, about one-third of them have experienced illness after arrival in Bahir Dar town. The type of diseases they have been caught are malaria, typhoid, asthmatics and tuberculoses, and most of them reported that they have frequently caught with malaria disease.

The other problem faced by labourers in the town is their vulnerability to robbery. According to informants, many of them were victims of plundering by those burglars. In

an interview made with service givers, it was mentioned that labour migrants often move in groups for their safety and if they hadn't moved and lived together, they would have exposed to plundering. The researcher also observed that they usually found themselves in group while they wander, eat, and entertain. This could be one of their coping mechanisms in protecting themselves from robbery and helping each other during accident.

Labour exploitation is the other problem reported by informants. According to an expert from the Social and Labour Affairs Bureau, there were cases in which employers took over and deny the wages of daily labourer and there are people who delayed their wages. In spite of the severity of the problem, there was no substantial attempt taken by any concerned body to address the issue. Moreover, there is no fixed wage of payment for daily labourers and it varies between 10 and 15 Birr. Labour market information center is totally absent. Thus, in the absence of fixed wage payment and labour market information added with less bargaining power of labourers, labour exploitation is more likely.

The other problems in which labour migrants encounter in the town are harassment and discrimination. According to informants, some urban residents harass them in different ways. This involves splashing water and chasing to keep them away from the place where they sit or stand. The researcher himself frequently observed while they were chased. I asked the person who was chasing away these people. He stated that labour migrants created a problem on their business because they stand or sit in mass and prevent easy flow of customers by closing roads. I also asked the policeman who were chasing migrant labourers away from the areas where they usually wait for work. According to him, they have created a problem on traffic flow since they gathered in mass on the main road. My key informants revealed that some urban dwellers, especially youngsters do not consider them as human being and insult them while they were walking along the road and sitting in verandah.

The other important issue is the relationships within labourers in the host environment. All of my informants agreed that there is no harmonious relationship between seasonal and earlier migrants in the town. There is also an observable distinction in terms of life style between seasonal migrants on the one hand and earlier migrants on the other. According to informants, earlier migrants spend more than the seasonal one. Because the later one are returnee migrants who wanted to save more and thus their dinning, drinking and sleeping places are different from the former one. In an interview made with service givers, it was emphasized that there is a difference between those earlier and seasonal migrants in terms of their way of life style. The later one are very objective and their main concern is how to save money and return timely to their home whereas earlier migrants seem to be negligence towards their future life. They are extravagant and do not use their money properly. Informants also stated that earlier migrants hate the seasonal one because of the competition over job in which employers usually prefer the later for cheap labour.

The other important distinction emphasized by informants is that unlike earlier migrants, seasonal migrants do not have partners while they stay in town. According to them, even commercial sex workers know how seasonal migrants who often dress a garment made of colored cotton tread, locally called *gojjam azene*, are very concerned towards saving.

Data at place of origin suggest that the major problems faced by labour migrants both during their journey and at place of destination are robbery, illness, mistreatment, lack of information about job opportunities at destination, labour exploitation, and lack of social services. According to the field survey, in 02, Jibasra and Agita *kebeles*, out of the respondents who experienced problems either at destination or during journey are 45.5, 47.2 and 61.1 percent, respectively. Among the stated problems, exposure to illness was reported as the major problem of migrants.

An informant from 02 *kebele* revealed that while he was in Humera, he repeatedly caught with diseases like malaria and typhoid and he was also beaten by snake. Another

informant from Agita *kebele* stated that there are plunders who took over their money while they returned home from work places.

During the FGD in Jibasra *kebele*, participants mentioned that one could be able to earn a better income by working for two effective weeks at Humera than working three or more months in other places. But staying and working in Humera is risk full. Migrants who go to Humera take options of dying or living. In addition to the hostile temperature, there are a number of deadly diseases including malaria and typhus. In spite of the severity of health problems in Humera, there is no adequate medical facility.

According to the key informants, most people fear to go to Humera because this place is locally known for its harshness of weather and deadly disease like malaria. People usually go to this place by taking their own risk. It was stated that there were many people who died of while they had been there and after arrival home. Informants from Jibasra reported that even there was an incidence that a man who used to bring transmittable disease (cholera) and the whole family died. As stated by one of my informants from 02 *kebele*, in Humera, since the weather is very hot during day time, they work at night when it gets cooler using battery.

Based on the data from field survey and informants as well as the researcher's own observation, the common problems that migrants often face at place of destination and during their journey are increment of cost of living in the town, vulnerability to diseases, absence of regular job, risk of injury at work place, mistreatment, misleading information about the destination area, robbery, labour exploitation, and lack of access to basic services such as water, toilet, sleeping place and health service.

## **6.5. SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the positive and negative impacts of migration to the places of origin, destination and the migrants themselves have been discussed. It also discussed the major purposes of the remittances, the living and working conditions of migrants and the challenges they face in the host environment and during their journey.

It has been stated that the possible negative and positive impacts of migration largely depend on the characteristics of migrants, the timing of migration and duration of stay, the structure of the household, and the amount of remittances investment at home. Seasonal out-migration of labour has less effect on the agricultural activity of the sending areas. This is mainly due to the fact that farmers engage in this type of activity timing their movement to coincide with the agricultural slack season and when the agricultural work at home requires less labour that can be handled by other family members.

Nowadays, seasonal out-migration of labour has considerably become a substantial aspect of the livelihood strategy of poor households. The remittances obtained from this type of migration have brought many benefits to many rural households. It enables people to repay fertilizer debt timely and cover the advance payment for it, buy cattle, pay tax, construct corrugated iron sheet house, buy modern clothes, cover festival expenditure, educate children, cover family's medical expenditure, buy water pump for irrigation, and alleviate the problem of land shortage and landlessness. Conversely, it has negatively affected households by creating burden on women (wives of migrants) and bringing back transmittable diseases to the family of origin.

Regarding the impacts of migrants on the host environment, it has been discussed that they have contributed positively by supplying cheap labour to the development of the town. On the other hand, labour migrants negatively affect the town by exerting pressure on urban social services, expanding crimes, and polluting the environment. They often engage in the informal services of manual works that does not require skills. The challenges that they often face at destination and during their journey include lack of shelter (housing), inability to get social services, absence of job regularly and the rise in the cost of living, social discrimination, inability to get access to medical facilities, mistreatment and exploitation, harassment, exposure to illness, harshness of weather, and robbery.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **7.1. Conclusions**

This study has attempted to provide a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges of seasonal out-migration of labour as a livelihood strategy of rural people. Different techniques were employed to generate the necessary data from both primary and secondary sources. Key informant interviews, focus group discussions, field observations and household sample survey were employed to acquire the primary data. Review of secondary documents, both published and unpublished, was carried out to supplement the primary sources.

Many rural people migrate from their home village to Bahir Dar town and elsewhere during the slack agricultural period and return in the peak periods of agricultural activities at home. Seasonal out-migration of labour for wage earning employment is now considerably becoming a substantial aspect of the livelihood strategy of people living in the study area. It is often pursued by both the poor and better-off households so as to diversify and maintain households' income, save and invest in rural areas, smooth households' food consumption, and reduce risk and vulnerability. Seasonal migrants, in the study area, tend to be young, single men and educated. Women participation in this type of migration is negligible.

The major factors that drive people to migrate for seasonal wage earning employment are mostly attributed to economic, social and cultural factors. Shortage of farmland, landlessness, indebtedness, lack of sufficient means of subsistence, the desire to earn additional cash so as to supplement agricultural income are the main reasons of seasonal out-migration of labour. The flow of information from earlier migrants, social networks and the long established tradition of the people are also important factors of migration. The availability of employment opportunities at destination, especially the expansion of construction works in Bahir Dar town and the increment of daily wages have attracted

many rural people to migrate to the town. Moreover, the expansion of private commercial farms following government's privatization policy and the attractiveness of the payment appears to be another major pull factor of seasonal out-migration of labour.

The stream of seasonal out-migration is predominantly carried out from rural to rural. The majority migrate to rural areas of other region namely to Humera, Eastern Showa, and Wollega for sesame cultivation, *teff* harvesting and coffee picking, respectively. This is correlated to the fact that the attractiveness of the payment, similarity of works between the place of origin and destination, earlier experiences and familiarity to these areas, and the flow of information from earlier migrants. Most of them have earlier experiences of out-migration either to the same place or to other areas. Regarding preferences of future out-migration and permanent residence, many of them prefer rural areas to urban areas. This is partly due to the bad living facilities available for migrants in town, absence of regular job, and the rise of cost of living in the town, etc. Migrants usually stay at destination from 1-5 months and the majority migrate in September as this time is the peak labour demanding time at the destination, particularly in Eastern Showa, Humera and Mettema. Due to their short duration of stay and the similarity of works at destination, the skill acquired by migrants is negligible.

Seasonal out-migration of labour has both positive and negative impacts on the households at the place of origin, on the host environment as well as on the migrants themselves. The timing of movement which coincides with the agricultural slack season together with the relatively less labour demanding period for agricultural works at home makes the impacts of seasonal out-migration on agriculture less critical. The remittances obtained from this type of migration has served rural households to earn cash so as to repay their debt, supplement their income from agriculture, buy cattle, pay tax, construct corrugated iron sheet house, cover households' expenditure, and alleviate the problem of land shortage. Labour migrants also positively contribute to the development of the recipient area by supplying cheap labour power. In addition to the remittances, labour migrants bring back home some kind of items such as household utensils, consumable goods, clothes and educational materials.

On the other hand, out-migration has negative effects on households by creating burden on women (wives of migrants) and bringing back transmittable diseases to the family of origin. Moreover, it exerts pressure on social services in the town, increase unemployment, and pollute the environment. Problems that relate to housing, inability to get social services, absence of regular job, social discrimination, labour exploitation, exposure to illnesses, misleading information, shortage of transportation, and robbery are the common types of hardship which labour migrants often face at destination and during their journey.

Although seasonal migration of labour is and, has been one of the substantial aspects of the livelihood strategy of many rural households, the attention given to it so far is very little. Rather than viewing as a livelihood option of the rural poor which contributes in reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of people, labour migration is still perceived negatively and the awareness among officials and policy makers towards migration is inadequate. As a result, there is no legal support system that facilitates migration as a positive choice and such important issue is missing from Ethiopia's development strategic document.

## **7.2. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded for future development interventions as well as for well-designed policy that promotes seasonal out-migration of labour as a livelihood strategy of rural people.

1. Nowadays, seasonal out-migration of labour is found to be a normal livelihood strategy pursued by many rural households in the study area. It is undertaken during the normal and poor farming periods by both the poor and better-off households. Thus, in order to make seasonal labour migration a more useful component of the livelihood strategies of rural households, the rural development strategy should be directed towards promoting a policy that maximizes the benefits incurred from labour migration and minimizes the risks and harmful effects associated with migration. Moreover, by considering the positive contribution of off-farm seasonal wage

- employment towards improving the livelihoods of the rural poor, the strategy should consider labour migration as an alternative livelihood option in increasing assets, reducing poverty, alleviating the problem of farmland and landlessness, and transforming rural people from primary to secondary sector.
2. Unless employment opportunity is available in the recipient areas, out-migration of rural people has adverse effects on the destination. Thus, in order to make benefits out of labour migration for the poor, commercial farms and agro-industries should be expanded. Due attention should be given to the growth and expansion of towns as it contributes in facilitating the flows of goods, services, skills and ideas, and creating job opportunities to rural people, which in turn, strengthen rural-urban linkages.
  3. Many labour migrants are exposed to misleading information about the availability of job opportunity at destinations. Thus, the regional government should set up a labour market information unit that provides information to labour migrants about the availability of job opportunities.
  4. Though labour migrants are serving as the principal sources of labour power to the development of the recipient areas, they often face many challenges and risks during their journey as well as in their stay at the place of destination. For instance, due to the absence of adequate social services like medical facilities, water and shelter, they are exposed to diseases. They are also vulnerable to robbery, labour exploitation, harassment, social discrimination and shortage of transportation systems. Thus, the government should:
    - urge investors, particularly in Humera and Mettema, and other areas to fulfill basic facilities,
    - provide adequate protection for the safety of labour migrants from robbery,
    - arrange enough transport system during the peak departure and return periods,
    - formulate minimum wage employment, and
    - enhance migrants' awareness about labour legislation and their rights through training.
  5. Since labour migrants lack skills related to masonry and carpenter works, they often engage in the low-paid, unskilled jobs in the town. Thus, in order to enhance the returns from wage labour, skill training should be given in their home areas.

6. To prevent excessive rural-urban migration, government and non-government organizations should give emphasis on rural development activities which can generate employment opportunities for the rural people.
7. In addition to reducing local moneylenders' exploitation of migrants, access to micro-credit provisions is now motivating people to engage in off-farm wage earning employment activities, which in turn, plays a pivotal role in creating assets so as to improve the livelihoods of many rural people. Thus, micro-finance institutions such as ACSI should be encouraged.

Although this study has attempted to investigate the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration of labour as a livelihood strategy of rural people, there are still many different areas which need further detailed study. Thus, for a comprehensive understanding of the links between migration and the livelihoods of rural people, the researcher suggests the following researchable topics for future study:

- Why some people migrate and others remain behind? The social, cultural and institutional factors for migration and not-migration. What is the impact of migration on those who move and those who stay behind?
- The working and living conditions of labour migrants in the major destination areas namely, Humera, Mettema, Eastern Showa, and Wollega.
- What is the impact of migration on the sending and receiving areas?
- The social net-works of earlier migrants with their families of origin.
- What is the impact of migration on the migrant and non-migrant households?
- The impacts of food for work and Productive Safety Net Program on off-farm wage earning activities.
- The role of small towns in terms of facilitating the flow of goods and services, and in creating job opportunities to the nearby rural people. The type and extent of rural-urban linkages, and the factors responsible in shaping such linkages.
- The role of peri-urban and urban agriculture, especially *chat* cultivation and horticulture to the livelihoods of people living in urban and the surrounding rural areas.

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Appendix I: List of Interviewed Officials and Experts

1. *Ato* Bayih Tiruneh, Regional Land Administration and Use Authority expert, March 3, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
2. *Ato* Mulugeta Berihun, Health Officer at Felege Hiwot Hospital, March 13, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
3. *Ato* Agaghe Berhanu, Amhara Credit and Saving Institution expert, March 27, 2007, Bahir Dar Town
4. *Ato* Nibretu Nigatu, Regional Social and Labour Affairs Bureau expert, March 10, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
5. *Ato* Tiruneh Mussie, Tach Gaint Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office expert, February 3, 2007, Arb Gebeya Town.
6. *Ato* Tarekegn Ayele, Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau expert, March 13, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
7. Inspector Tilahun Yigzaw, Regional Police Commission Officer, March 21, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
8. *Ato* Dires Zerihun, Chairman of *Kebele* 12, March 2, 2007, Bahir Dar Town.
9. *Ato* Adamu Negusse, Eastern Estie Agriculture and Rural Development Office expert, February 27, 2007, Mekane Eyesus Town.
10. *Ato* Molla Minaye, Yilmana Densa Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office expert, March 30, 2007, Adet Town.

Appendix II: List of Informants<sup>5</sup>

No	Name	Age	Sex	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Remark
1	<i>Ato</i> Asrat Birhanu	40	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 4, 2007	Middleman
2	<i>Ato</i> Misiker Alemu	36	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 8, 2007	Middleman
3	<i>Ato</i> Misganaw Haile	37	M	Jibasra Kebele	February 26, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
4	<i>Ato</i> Agmas Kassie	42	M	02 Kebele	February 4, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
5	<i>Ato</i> Assefa Ayalew	33	M	Bahir Dar town	March 15, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
6	<i>Ato</i> Asmamaw Maru	48	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 14, 2007	Urban Resident
7	<i>Ato</i> Tagele Agegn	24	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 22, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
8	<i>Ato</i> Mulugeta Asnake	27	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 23, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
9	<i>Ato</i> Azmeraw Wale	29	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 19, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
10	<i>Ato</i> Wubet Fekadu	22	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 13, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
11	<i>Ato</i> Tile Getahun	26	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 16, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
12	<i>Ato</i> Melaku Asrat	33	M	Agita kebele	March 29, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
13	<i>Ato</i> Mekuria Assefa	31	M	Agita kebele	March 28, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
14	<i>Ato</i> Abebaw Bekele	42	M	Agita kebele	March 27, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
15	<i>Ato</i> Yalew Temesgen	34	M	Agita kebele	March 27, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
16	<i>Ato</i> Ashagre Tassew	32	M	Jibasra Kebele	February 24, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
17	<i>Ato</i> Nega Agidew	44	M	Jibasra Kebele	February 25, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
18	<i>Ato</i> Tigab Gelaw	29	M	Jibasra Kebele	February 25, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
19	<i>Ato</i> Atnafu Birrara	30	M	02 kebele	February 3, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
20	<i>Ato</i> Biset Getnet	38	M	02 kebele	February 5, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
21	<i>Ato</i> Adugna Fetene	31	M	02 kebele	February 4, 2007	Seasonal Migrant
22	<i>Ato</i> Aynalem Gezahegn	52	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 13, 2007	Contractor
23	<i>Woizero</i> Silenat Demisse	42	F	Bahir Dar Town	March 19, 2007	Service Giver
24	<i>Woizero</i> Dassash Haile	45	F	Bahir Dar Town	March 20, 2007	Service Giver
25	<i>Woizero</i> Almaz Tibebe	30	F	02 kebele	February 3, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
26	<i>Woizero</i> Zemenay Taye	28	F	02 kebele	February 5, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
27	<i>Woizero</i> Abeba Zerihun	26	F	Jibasra kebele	February 24, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
28	<i>Woizero</i> Mebrat Dagne	32	F	Jibasra kebele	February 26, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
29	<i>Woizero</i> Workie Tassew	25	F	Agita kebele	March 26, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
30	<i>Woizero</i> Alemitu Geremew	30	F	Agita kebele	March 27, 2007	Wife of a Seasonal Migrant
31	<i>Ato</i> Moges Abate	46	M	Bahir Dar Town	March 14, 2007	Urban Resident

<sup>5</sup> Real names are changed with pseudonyms

Appendix III: Questionnaire Survey for Households at Place of Origin

**Part I**

Identification

1. Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of the enumerator \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name of village division of the interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II**

Data related to the head of a household (HHH)

4.0	Name of household head
4.1	Sex 1. M            2. F
4.2	Age
4.3	Religion 1. Christian            2. Muslim            3. Other(specify)
4.4	Education 1. Illiterate            2. Read and write 3. primary education
4.5	Ethnicity
4.6	Marital status 1. Single            2. Married 3. Divorced

**PART III**

5. Demographic data

The following data should be completed by asking the head of a household

No	HH members Name	Sex	Age	Relation to HH head	Marital status	Occupation		Education
						Primary	Secondary	
1								
2								
3								
		1. M__  2. F__		1. Daughter 2. Son 3. Wife 4. Father 5. Mother 6. Other (specify)  _____	1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced	1. farmer 2. trader 3. Pottery 4. herder 5. weaving 6. housewife 7. smith 8. others (specify)____	1. farmer 2. trader 3. Pottery 4. herder 5. weaving 6. housewife 7. smith 8. others (specify)  _____	1. illiterate 2. read & write 3. primary education 5. others(specify)  _____

**PART IV**

Migration

6. Have you and/or any one of your family member experienced seasonal out-migration?

1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_

7. If yes, describe the migratory experience in your HH:

No	Name	Sex	Age	Education	Relation to HH head	Occupation		Marital status	Place of migration	Duration of stay	Type of work
						Primary	Secondary				
1											
2											
3											
		1. M ___ 2. F ___		1. illiterate 2. read & write 3. primary education 4. others (specify) _____	1. head of HH 2. daughter 3. son 4. wife 5. father 6. mother 7. others (specify) _____	1. farmer 2. trader 3. pottery 4. herder 5. weaving 6. housewife 7. smith 8. others, (specify) _____	1. farmer 2. trader 3. pottery 4. herder 5. weaving 6. housewife 7. smith 8. others, (specify) _____	1. single 2. married 3. divorced 4. other (specify) _____	1. urban area of this woreda 2. other urban area of this region 3. urban area of other region 4. Bahir Dar 5. Addis Ababa 6. rural area of this woreda 7. other rural area of this region 8. rural area of other region 9. neighboring country 10. others (specify) _____	1. Sept-Nov 2. Dec- Feb 3. Mar- May 4. Jun- Aug	1. coffee picking 2. sesame cutting 3. cotton picking 4. construction work 5. teff harvesting 6. others (specify) _____

8. If your answer is “Yes” for question no 6, then:

8.1 Who made the decision to migrate?		8.2 Who cover the cost of transportation?		8.3 People who work on migrants field in their absence		8.4 Reasons for migration	
	1.Yes 2.No		1.Yes 2.No		1.Yes 2.No		1.Yes 2.No
1. self 2.family 3.parent 4.relative(s ) 5.friend(s) 6. others( specify ) _____		1. debt 2. family 3. relatives(s) 4.his/her own 5. other (specify) _____		1. relatives 2. family 3. hired labor 4.others (specify) _____		1.land shortage 2.to re pay debts 3. to earn additional income 4. large family size 5. job opportunities at destination 6. to buy modern goods & clothes 7.to cover children’s educational cost 8. lack of sufficient means of subsistence 9. to cover festival expenditure 10. to pay tax 11. other (specify )_____	

9. The following are about the frequency of seasonal migration, use of the remittance, and who made decision to use the remittance:

9.1 How often is seasonal migration undertaken?		9.2 Who made the decision to use the remittance?		9.3 Use of the remittance	
	1.Yes 2.No		1.Yes 2.No		1.Yes 2.No
1. during drought 2. during normal year 3. every year 4. others( specify) _____		1. head of household 2.by the whole family 3. migrant him/herself 4. others( specify ) _____		1. buying clothes for myself and my family 2. buying cattle 3. pay debt 4.purchase food grains 5.covering children's educational expense 6.construct/improve house 7.start new business (petty trade) 8.cover festival expenditure 9.buying watch, radio, tape recorder etc 10.other( specify)_____	

11. Is there any skill acquired by migrants? 1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_

11.1 If yes, the type of skill acquired is:	1. Yes	2. No
1. Language		
2. Driving		
3. Carpenter		
4. Masonry		
6. Others(specify) _____		

12. Do you face any difficulty due to migration of any one of the members of your household? 1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_

12.1 If yes, the difficulty you face is:	1. Yes	2. No
1. Burden of responsibilities		
2. Labour extraction		
3. Absence of youngster in the village		
4. Others(specify) _____		

12.2 If no, the reason is:	1. Yes	2. No
1. Presence of other family members who stay behind		
2. Availability of daily labourers in the village		
3. The duration of stay is short and hence able to arrive for harvesting		
4. Others(specify) _____		

13. Is there any household member who has ever faced any accident due to migration at the place of destination? 1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_

13.1. If yes, explain the kind of accident \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you support migration? 1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_

If yes, the reason is	1. Yes	2. No
1.means of earning additional income (creating assets)		
2.means of acquiring new skills, values and experiences		
3.means of reducing food consumption at home		
4.means of overcoming land shortage		
5.means of getting relief from debt		
6.Others(others) _____		

15. What are the problems related to migration?	1. Yes	2. No
1. robbery		
2. illness		
3. mistreatment and exploitation		
4.inability to get job regularly		
5.lack of social services		
6.Others(others) _____		

16. If you anticipate decrease in the level of food/production, would you choose seasonal migration as a coping mechanism? 1. Yes \_\_\_ 2. No

16.1 If yes, where do you want to go?	1. Yes	2. No
1. Showa		
2.Humera		
3.Mettema		
4.Wollega		
5.Bahir Dar		
6.Addis Ababa		
7.Others(specify) _____		

16.2. explain the reasons you choose this place: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART V**

17. Size of landholding

No	Land type	Unit in local measurement ( <i>Timmad</i> )
1	Cultivated land	
2	Grazing land	
3	Forest land	
4	Settlement land	
5	Lands for grass/hay	
6	Others(specify) _____	
	Total	

18. The type and number of livestock you own

No	Type	Number of animals
1	Cow	
2	Oxen	
3	Bulls	
4	Calves	
5	Heifers	
6	Sheep	
7	Goats	
8	Donkeys	
9	Chicken	
10	Bee hives	
11	Mule	
12	Horse	
13	Others,(specify) _____	

Appendix IV: Questionnaires for seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar Town

**PART I**

**Identification**

1. Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of the enumerator \_\_\_\_\_
3. Place of interview \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II**

1. Name of the interviewee \_\_\_\_\_
2. Place of origin (source area):  
 1.woreda \_\_\_\_\_ 2. kebele \_\_\_\_\_ 3.village(*got*) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sex  
 1. M \_\_\_\_\_ 2.F \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age \_\_\_\_\_
5. Religion  
 1. Christian \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Muslim \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Other(specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_
7. Marital status  
 1. Single \_\_\_\_\_ 2.Married \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Level of education  
 1. illiterate \_\_\_\_\_ 2. read and write \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. primary education \_\_\_\_\_ 4. others,(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART II**

Migration

9. Reasons for migration

9.1. Reasons for Migration	1. Yes	2. No
1. large family size		
2. land shortage		
3. to earn additional income		
4. to pay tax		
5. to pay debt		
6. desire to buy modern clothes and goods		
7. availability of employment opportunities in the town		
8. to cover festival expenditure		
9. to cover children's educational expense		
10. lack of sufficient means of subsistence		
11. others( specify) _____		

10. Have you visited any other place before coming here? 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_

11. If yes, places visited before:

a. Showa b. Humera c. Mettema d. Wollega e. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have relatives or friends who have come here earlier? 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_

13. If yes, what types of support offered by the relative or friend? (Multiple response is possible)
1. financial assistance
  2. food and housing
  3. looking for job
  4. other( specify ) \_\_\_\_\_
14. Do you have children? 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_
15. If yes, how many?
- a. one
  - b. two
  - c. three
  - d. four and above
16. Number of earlier visits to the same place
- a. first time
  - b. second time
  - c. third time
  - d. fourth time
17. On average duration of stay in the town each time
- a. one month
  - b. two months
  - c. three months
  - d. four months
  - e. five to six months
18. With whom do you come here?
1. alone
  2. with family
  3. with friend
  4. with relative(s)
  5. other(specify) \_\_\_\_\_
19. Monthly income (birr)
1. 50-100
  2. 101-200
  3. 201-300
  4. 301-400
  5. 401-500
  6. > 501
20. Major purpose served by the money earned

20.1 Earnings used for	1. Yes	2. No
1. buy clothes for myself and family		
2. buy cattle		
3. pay debt		
4. purchase food grains		
5. educate children		
6. construct/improve house		
7. start new business (petty trading)		
8. cover festival expenditure		
9. buying watch, radio, tape recorder		
10. Others( specify) _____		

21. Do you think the payment here is attractive?  
 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_
22. If yes, the amount of income you earn here is  
 1. greater than the rural income  
 2. less than the rural income  
 3. has no difference  
 4. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
23. What jobs are you currently working on? (Multiple responses are possible)  
 1. construction  
 2. loading and unloading  
 3. domestic works  
 4. digging wells  
 5. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
24. Where do you sleep?  
 1. verandah  
 2. floor rent  
 3. house rent  
 4. relative houses  
 5. others, (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
25. After your arrival here, have you experienced any illness?  
 1. Yes \_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_
26. If yes, the type of disease you have caught: (Multiple responses are possible)  
 1. Malaria  
 2. TB  
 3. Hepatitis  
 4. Asthmatics  
 5. Other, (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
27. How do you get meal? (Multiple responses are possible)  
 1. through purchase      2. I myself cook   3. from relative(s)  
 4. Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
28. Is there any one who has arranged work to you before your arrival here?  
 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_
29. Is there any skill that you have acquired here?  
 1. Yes \_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_
- 29.1. If yes, the kind of skill you acquire is:  
 1. language  
 2. driving  
 3. carpenter  
 4. building  
 5. chat cultivation  
 6. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 29.2. If no, the reason is:  
 1. short duration of stay  
 2. similarity of the job  
 3. lack of concern  
 4. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

30. Do you send back home money?

1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_

31. If yes, means of sending (Multiple responses are possible)

1. self travel 2. other People 3. bank  
4. others, (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

32. Frequency of sending birr:

1. every month 2. once in every two months  
3. once in every three months 4. once in every four months  
5. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

33. The amount of money taken home in a season is:

1. 100-200 birr  
2. 201- 300 birr  
3. 301- 400 birr  
4. 401- 500 birr  
5. > 500 birr

34. Items taken home in return trip:

1. household utensils  
2. consumable goods  
3. clothes  
4. farming implements  
5. others

35. Occupation in home area: (Multiple responses are possible)

1. Farmer  
2. Trader  
3. Smith  
4. Pottery  
5. Other( specify) \_\_\_\_\_

36. People who work on the field in your absence: (Multiple responses are possible)

1. Relatives 2. Family 3. hired labourers  
4. Others, (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

37. Place of preference for permanent residence

1. Source area (rural)  
2. Town 3. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

38. What is the problem resulting form migration

- a. robbery  
b. illness,  
c. mistreatment and exploitation  
d. harshness of weather at destination  
e. inability to get job regularly  
f. lack of social services g. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

39. Who made the decision for you to move to Bahir Dar?

1. Self 4. Relatives  
2. Family 5. Friends  
3. Parent(s) 6. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where did you get the money for transportation?  
 1. debt    2. family    3. relative    4. your own  
 5. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
41. Immediately after your arrival here, what is/are the main difficulty/ difficulties you were facing as a direct result of moving out from place of birth? (Multiple responses are possible)  
 1. lack of shelter (house)  
 2. lack of food and related consumer items  
 3. inability to obtain social services and amenities  
 4. inability to find job  
 5. cultural difference  
 6. others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
42. What advice would you give to your friend(s) or relative(s) in your previous place of residence/place of birth regarding migrating to town?  
 1. encourage them to move here  
 2. encourage them not to move here  
 3. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
43. What is the main reason you would give this advice?  
 1. Life is difficult here  
 2. Life is better here  
 3. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
44. Did you have any information about the destination area before you left your home village?  
 1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No \_\_\_\_\_
45. If yes, what was the main source of information? (Multiple responses are possible)  
 1. relative(s)    2. friend(s)  
 3. massmedia (radio, TV etc)  
 4. school    5. my previous knowledge    6. others, (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## PART IV

46. Size of land holding at the place of origin:

No	Land type	In <i>Timmad</i>
1	Cultivated land	
2	Grazing land	
3	Forest land	
4	Settlement land	
5	Lands for grass/hay	
6	Others (specify)	
	Total	

47. The type and number of livestock you own

No	Type	Number of animals
1	Cow	
2	Oxen	
3	Bulls	
4	Calves	
5	Heifers	
6	Sheep	
7	Goats	
8	Donkeys	
9	Chicken	
10	Bee hives	
11	Mule	
12	Horse	
13	Others,(specify)	

**Appendix V: Interview Guides for Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar Town**

- In what locality (name) and household (e.g. Parents') were you born?
- When did you come here?
- Do you plan to stay here or to move? Why?
- How did you decide where to go?
- How did you get the information to migrate to your destination?
- Who told you about their migration experiences and what did they tell you?
- Why you prefer to migrate to Bahir Dar town?
- Perception towards seasonal migration
- What kind of job are you currently working on?
- Amount of daily/monthly income
- How does your income compared with your expenses? Do you save?
- Remittance investment: What do you do with the money you earn here? Why?
- Who will make the decision to invest the remittance?
- Had any one of your household, family or kin migrated before? If yes, did this influence your decision?
- What attracted you to migrate to towns?
- What are the reasons that pushed you to leave the rural area?
- What were the resources required to travel to your destination?
- How did you cover these costs?
- What happened during your travel?
- Do you take credit? If so, from whom?
- Where do you live?
- Who helped you when you arrived here? In what ways?
- Who harmed you while you are here? In what ways?
- Have you faced any problem in the course of your stay here?
- What are the things that you feared?
- Do you have relatives, friends, and people from your area here? If so, what kind of support do you get from them?
- Do you have links with other migrants? If so, what kind?
- Do you have any partners here? If so, do you have children here?
- Do you suffer from any illness while you are here? What kind of illness and what did you do about it?

- Do you know the availability of association or organization in relation to migrants here?
- Are you a member of any association or organization while you are here?
- What were your links with long term residents from your ethnic group?
- How is your migration experiences compared with what you were told by earlier migrants?
- Do you send money or goods back to your family? If so what kind, how much?
- What skills/ experiences you acquired from your migration?
- Does migration change your way of life?
- Does migration affect your values and beliefs?
- Do you consider being a migrant as part of your identity?
- How are migrants viewed by people in the town?
- How migrants are viewed by people in the village?
- How did your migration affect your family that stayed behind?
- What are the bad experiences from migration?
- What are the benefits for your family back home?
- What are the harms of your migration for your family back home?
- How do you compare your well-being with that of non-migrants of your age in the village?
- What are the good experiences form migrations?
- Do you intend to continue to migrate in the future? If yes, to where? With what aim?
- Will you migrate differently next time? If yes, where? With whom? Do what? Why?
- If you do not want to migrate any more why not?
- Who is responsible to your family while you are here? Who work in the field in your absence?
- Landholding size at home
- Livestock possession (size and type)

#### **FGD Guidelines for Seasonal Migrants in Bahir Dar Town**

- What are the reasons that pushed you to leave the rural area?
- What are the pull factors that attract you to migrate to towns?
- Have the rates of seasonal migration increased or decreased over the last five years? Why?
- What are the benefits of seasonal labor migration for individuals, households and the community?
- Is there anyone who has been successful through seasonal labor migration? Explain his/her success story
- How do you invest your remittance while you return back home?
- What do you want to tell to those people who stay behind in rural village? Why?
- How do you compare life in the town and rural areas?
- Do you want to migrate any more in the future? If yes, why? Where? If no, why?
- How migrants are perceived by urban people?
- Is there anything the government can do in relation to seasonal migration?

#### **Interview Guides for Informants at the Place of Origin**

- How did you decide where to go?
- How did you get the information to migrate to your destination?
- Who told you about their migration experiences and what did they tell you?
- Perception towards seasonal migration
- Amount of money and type of items you brought back home
- Remittance investment: What do you do with the money you earn? Why?

- Who will make the decision to invest the remittance?
- Had any one of your household, family or kin migrated before? If yes, did this influence your decision?
- What attracted you to migrate?
- What are the reasons that pushed you to migrate?
- What were the resources required to travel to your destination?
- How did you cover these costs?
- What happened during your travel?
- Do you take credit? If so, from whom?
- Have you faced any problem in the course of your travel and stay there?
- Do you suffer from any illness while you were there? What kind of illness and what did you do about it?
- How is your migration experiences compared with what you were told by earlier migrants?
- What skills/ experiences you acquired from your migration?
- Does migration change your way of life?
- Does migration affect your values and beliefs?
- How migrants are viewed by people in the village?
- How did your migration affect your family?
- What are the bad experiences from migration?
- What are the benefits for your family?
- What are the harms of your migration for your family?
- How do you compare your well-being with that of non-migrants of your age in the village?
- What are the good experiences form migrations?
- Do you intend to continue to migrate in the future? If yes, to where? With what aim?
- Will you migrate differently next time? If yes, where? With whom? Do what? Why?
- If you do not want to migrate any more why not?
- Who is responsible to your family in your absence? Who work in the field in your absence?
- Landholding size
- Ox/en possession

### **FGD Guidelines at the place of Origin**

- What are the factors of migration?
- Have the rates of seasonal migration increased or decreased over the last five years? Why?
- What are the benefits of seasonal labor migration for individuals, households and the community?
- Is there anyone who has been successful through seasonal labor migration? Explain his/her success story
- What are the bad and good experiences from migration?
- How remittances are invested?
- What is the impact of seasonal out-migration on agriculture?
- Who work on the migrants' field in their absence?
- How migration and migrants are perceived?
- Is there anything the government can do in relation to seasonal out-migration of labour?

### **Interview Guides to women (wives of the migrants) in the village**

- . What specific tasks do you perform because your husband is a migrant?
- . How the decision was made when your husband migrated?
- . What kinds of items did your husband bring back?
- . What do you do with the money brought back by your husband?
- . Who decides on how to spend the money?
- . What is your perception towards migration?
- . How wives of migrants are perceived by the villagers?
- . How do you compare your well-being with that of non-migrant households of the village?

### **Interview guides for urban residents in Bahir Dar Town**

- What is your perception towards rural-urban labour migrants in the town?
- Do you think that migrants exert pressure on town's social service? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- What kinds of pressure do they exert up on urban social service?
  - Did the rate of rural –urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- Do you think migrants' right is respected here?
- What possible measures should be taken by the government in relation to rural –urban migration?

### **Interview guides for kebele administrators in Bahir Dar Town (kebele 12 and 6)**

- What sort of support your office has offered to migrants in their stay in town?
- Do labour migrants create burden on the town? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- What kind of pressure do they exert on urban social service?
- Do you register rural-urban labour in-migrants in your kebele?
- How migrants are perceived by urban dwellers?
- Do migrants commit crime?
- Do you think migrants' right is respected here?
- What sort of challenge do migrants often face?
- What is your perception towards seasonal migration?
- Do you support or oppose rural –urban migration? Why?
- Did the rate of rural –urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- What should the government do in relation to rural-urban migration?

### **Interview guides for middlemen in Bahir Dar Town**

- What is your perception towards seasonal migrants who are coming to Bahir Dar town?
- What is the impact of seasonal migrants on the town?
- How migrants are perceived by urban dwellers?
- How are migrants treated by employers?
- How do you see your relation with migrants?
- What do they tell you about their reason to migrate seasonally from their place of origin to other areas?
- What sorts of challenge are faced by migrants?
- What are the opportunities incurred by seasonal labour migrants as a result of migration?
- Do you support or oppose rural –urban migration? Why?
- What kind of support do they often require from you?
- What opportunities are available for seasonal migrants in the host?

- What kind of advice and/or assistance do you offer to them?
- Did the rate of rural –urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- What possible measures would you suggest for the government in relation to seasonal labour migration?

### **Interview guides for service givers in Bahir Dar Town**

- Do you allow giving credit for migrants?
- Do migrants put pressure on the town? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- What kind of pressure do they put on urban social service?
- Do you think that the service they have been getting here is sufficient to lead a healthy life?
- Do they appreciate or complain about your service?
- Are they satisfied or dissatisfied about their living condition in the town?
- What is their reason to be satisfied or dissatisfied?
- What do they tell you about their reason to migrate seasonally from their place of origin to other areas?
- How are migrants perceived by urban dwellers?
- What challenges do migrants face while staying in the town?
- Did the rate of rural –urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- When is your busiest month of the year in which your market reaches its peak?
- In which seasons of the year does the number of labour migrants increase or decrease? Why?
- What is your perception towards rural-urban migration?
- Do you support or oppose rural –urban migration? Why?
- Is there anything that the government shall do in relation to rural -urban migration?

### **Interview guides for Police Officers in Bahir Dar Town**

- Do labour migrants commit crime?
- How often?
- What kinds of crime are reported and how serious are they?
- What challenges do labour migrants face in their stay in town?
- What is your perception towards rural-urban migration?
- Do you think migrants' right is respected here?
- How migrants are perceived by urban dwellers?
- Do you support or oppose rural –urban migration? Why?
- What the government should do in relation to rural-urban migration?

### **Interview guides for Health Center in Bahir Dar Town**

- Do labour migrants come to your health center for treatment while facing sickness?
- For which kinds of disease are they often vulnerable?
- Did the rate of their vulnerability to diseases decrease or increase in the last five years?
- What are the major causes for such diseases?
- Do they get enough treatment in your health center?
- What sort of advice and/or assistance do you offer to them?
- What is your recommendation in order to protect these people from such vulnerability?
- What should the government and other stakeholders do to minimize and/or protect them from such diseases?

### **Interview guides for contractors (employers) in Bahir Dar Town**

- What is your perception towards seasonal labour migration?
- Do you support or oppose rural –urban migration? Why?
- Do you think their daily payment is sufficient here?
- What challenges do labour migrants face while staying in the town?
- Do you pay their daily wage on time?
- Do they complain about their wage?
- What kind of job do labour migrants often engaged?
- Where do you find them?
- What opportunities are available for seasonal migrants in the host?
- Does the daily wage of labourers vary from season to season? Why?
- When does the wage of the daily labour increase or decrease?
- Do they create burden to the town? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- How are migrants perceived by urban dwellers?
- What do they tell you about their reason to migrate seasonally from their place of origin to other areas?
- What kind of support do they often look for from you?
- What kind of advice and/or assistance do you offer to them?
- Does the rate of rural –urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- Is there anything that the government shall do in relation to seasonal migration?

### **Interview guides for the Social and Labour Affair Office in Bahir Dar Town**

- What kind of support do labour migrants often require from your office?
- What type of assistance do you offer to them in their stay in town?
- Did the rate of rural-urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- What is your perception towards seasonal migrants who are coming to Bahir Dar town?
- Do you support or oppose seasonal labour migration? Why?
- What challenges do labour migrants face while staying in the town?
- What is the impact of rural-urban migration in the town?
- Do they create burden to the town? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- What opportunities are available for seasonal migrants in the host?
- Do you think migrants' right is respected here?
- How migrants are perceived by urban dwellers?
- How labour migrants are treated by employers, middlemen and others?
- Do you register rural-urban labour in-migrants in the town?
- Is there any legal provision that protects labour migrants against violation of their rights?
- How do you deal migrants' affair especially when they face problem?
- Do you think their daily payment is sufficient here?
- What the government should do in relation to seasonal labour migration?

### **Interview guides for NGOs who are working with rural-urban labour migrants in Bahir Dar Town**

- For how long your organization has been working in addressing problems related to rural – urban migrants?
- What kind of support do labour migrants often demand from your organization?
- What sort of support do you offer to them?
- What challenges have you faced in providing support to labour migrants?
- Do you support or oppose seasonal labour migration? Why?
- Do they create burden to the town? Or do they contribute to the development of the town?
- Do you think migrants' right is respected here?

- Have you ever attempted to use them as a productive labour force in any of your development project activities?
- Do you support or oppose seasonal labour migration? Why?
- What opportunities are available for seasonal migrants in the host?
- What is the impact of rural-urban migration in the town?
- What challenges do labour migrants face while staying in the town?
- Did the rate of rural-urban migration increase or decrease in the last five years?
- Is there anything that the government shall do in relation to seasonal migration?

**Interview guides for the Regional Disaster Prevention and preparedness Bureau and for Tach Gaint Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office:**

1. What is the impact of food aid and safety net program on people's outlook towards earning additional income other than agriculture?
2. Does food aid or safety net program restrict people's mobility to other areas such as seasonal migration of people to Humera, Wollega, Shoa, Bahir Dar and other places?
3. Does food aid and/or safety net program encourage or discourage seasonal migration of people like for example engaging oneself in off farm and non –farm activities to earn income from other sources? If yes, how?
4. What would happen for an individual who left his/her residence for a certain period of time?
  - Would he/she lose his/her former aid obtained from government and/or other sources?
  - Would these individuals be cancelled from aid list?
5. Who migrates?
  - Is it those who are under safety net or out side of the safety net?
  - Is it the landless or those who own land?
  - Is it the poor or the better off households?
  - Is it those households who have larger families or small families?

**Interview Guides for the Regional Land Administration and Use Authority**

1. When did land distribution take place in the region/ woreda?
  - How was it conducted?
  - Was there any restriction upon the distribution of land in terms of age, sex and other criteria?
2. Does the existing land proclamation encourage or discourage migration like for example mobility of people from place to place for off farm and non –farm activities to earn income? If yes, how?
3. What would happen for an individual's land if he/she left his/her residence for a certain period of time? Would he/she lose his/her former land holding?
4. Who migrates?
  - Is it the landless or those who own land?
5. Do you support or oppose migration? Why?
6. Is there anything that the government shall do in relation to seasonal migration?

**Interview guides for Amhara Credit and Saving Institution**

- when did your institution start its work?
- do you have any criteria to lend money to your clients? If yes, what are the criteria?
- did you gather feedbacks from your clients so far? If yes, what kind of feedback have you received?
- does your intervention create inequality between users and non-users?
- who benefits? Is it the users or the non-users?

- for what purpose do you give credit?
- what do they do with the money?
- how do they pay back their debt?
- what kind of measure do you take if someone fails to pay back his/her debt?
- how much is its interest rate?
- has your clients increased or decreased over the last five years?
- how much area did you cover so far?
- do you think that being indebtedness could be a cause for seasonal labour migration of people to other areas?

## 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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